

ARTICLE II.

ON THE ORIGIN OF THE PRIMITIVE HISTORICAL
TRADITIONS OF THE HEBREWS.¹

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SINCE the books of the Old Testament began to be subjected to the universally valid principles of scientific investigation, and the connections of the oldest civilized peoples to be traced, the inquiry after the origin of the accounts found in the first nine chapters of Genesis relating to the primitive history of mankind has been repeatedly agitated. Resemblances to these materials, some of them quite striking, can be numerously cited in the literatures and traditions of other nations. At first it was the myths and traditions of the classical nations that were adduced for comparison. Afterwards, when the Indian-Iranian literature was unfolded, it disclosed surprising points of contact with some at least of those biblical traditions, which were regarded as all the more important on account of the high estimate of the antiquity of these literatures, and the strong belief in an original connection between the Indo-germanic and Semitic languages and peoples. These presuppositions have been relinquished, to a great extent, in consequence of the more thorough investigations of the last decade; and simultaneously, through the advancing disinterment and decipherment of the cuneiform memorials, there has been opened to view a primitive Semitic civilization and literature which far surpasses in age not merely the classical and Aryan, but also the oldest biblical writings.

It was long ago known, from the extant fragments of Berosus, that the Babylonians had an account of the flood

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remarkably agreeing with the biblical one, although its great age was not yet known, and many considered it an imitation of that in the Bible. All uncertainty upon that subject ceased after G. Smith, in the year 1872, discovered upon a tablet from the library of Sardanapalus, the cuneiform account of the flood, forming an episode of a great epic (called after Izdubar), which must have already assumed written form in Babylonia about the year 2000 B.C. When, then, the same explorer believed he had discovered, upon other tablets of mythological purport, the old Babylonian parallels to the histories of creation, paradise and the fall, including also the tower of Babel, and after he had given in his Chaldaean Genesis a preliminary sketch of their contents, the view quickly spread not only within, but also outside of the circle of Assyriologists, that the entire material of the primitive histories of the Hebrews had its origin in Chaldea, where, under the influence of a civilized people not Semitic (Sumeric-Akkadian), it impressed itself upon the Semites. What this position yet lacks of actual proof cannot fail, as the advanced party thinks, to appear through farther discoveries. And they already go so far as to maintain that this whole stock of primitive traditions in Genesis was first received and adopted and incorporated into the Scripture in Babylonia, through the Jews who were there exiled by Nebuchadnezzar. But, in fact, such judgments only confirm the old experience that enthusiasm often excessively overestimates the capacity of a newly discovered scientific source. To show this, and to lead the way back to a more reasonable verdict, is the aim of the following exposition.

I must observe, in introduction, that if our biblical primitive traditions actually agreed with the cuneiform recitals as thoroughly and as precisely as is now assested, the conclusion would of course be inevitable that they were first written down by the Babylonian Jews. In respect of that part of these primitive histories which sprang out of the so-called Priests' Document (as Gen. i., v., and in part vi.-ix.), such a result would command the glad adherence of those critics

who exerted themselves on other grounds to lower this Priests' Document to the post-exilic period; but in respect of the other part, belonging to the so-called Jahvistic Document (as Gen. ii.-iv., and in part vi.-viii.), it would entirely contradict the hitherto unanimous and well-founded assumption of the higher age of this document. Independently, however, of this literary difficulty which would ensue, considerations of fundamental importance would present themselves. In the first place, as must be admitted, the disposition of the Jews in Babylon towards their oppressors was such that it seems simply incredible that they should have appropriated whole sections out of the mythological writings or traditions of those same persons, and placed them at the very head of their statute-book. The national and religious antipathy was too strong in that period to admit of the formation of a mythological syncretism. There is, moreover, no example of adoption of Babylonian belief or superstition of that date, and even indifferent things, like the Babylonian names of the months, the Jews appropriated only slowly and after they had come into general use under the Persian dominion. Then, too, the Babylonian myths now under consideration, even in their oldest shape accessible to us, that of the cuneiform writing (how much more so in the sixth century and later), were so overgrown and permeated with a polymorphous doctrine of the gods, and with grossly sensual views, that it would not have been possible for even an eminent religious faculty such as the Jews altogether failed to retain in those centuries, to reconstruct them, so to speak, according to a purer original form, and to present them anew in the monotheistic simplicity, beauty, and truth in which they occur in the Bible.

But these are only preliminary reflections. Upon examination of the facts themselves, it will appear that the agreement of the Hebrew with the Chaldaean primitive traditions is neither so great nor so thorough as to establish the immediate derivation of the former from the latter.

The Babylonian cosmogony, as it is handed down partly

in Damascius, partly in Berosus, starts like the Hebrew from chaos, and begets from this a swarm of monstrous beings, then a line of gods and goddesses, until finally Bel forms heaven and earth, the stars, and the individual creatures. What up to the present time can be advanced with certainty from G. Smith's so-called creation-tablets is known from Schrader's learned presentation. It does not essentially exceed what has long been known. The affinity between the Babylonian and biblical doctrine of creation amounts to this,—that both proceed from chaos, that is, an original material out of which came all else (among the Babylonians even the gods), and that both describe it as a dark, watery, unregulated confusion, in which none of the beings and forms of the later time was present. Such an original chaotic material is surely like the primal element of all that appears, as conceived by the earliest of men as soon as they began to reflect upon the origin of things, exactly corresponding because all also that man makes presupposes a material, and his fabrication is always simply an elaboration of substance that is without form and arrangement.

If closer thought and description of this primal matter were desired, the conception of it as watery was suggested through observation of the sea, of inundations of rivers with their influences on the soil, of water and its efficacy for vegetation; it must be obscure, devoid of light, because there were no stars yet, and light, where it enters, is above all a principle of orderly arrangement. How simple and obvious the whole idea is, best appears from the common claim to it among the most diverse of the ancient nations. According to *Manu*, 1, 5 sq., the all was first darkness, undiscernible, indistinguishable, as in the embrace of sleep; according to the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, chap. 17, a chaotic flood (called Nun) was the original basis of all; we pass over so late representations as those in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Where the conception first arose it is now impossible to ascertain; that it might have spontaneously arisen in several places is undeniable; at all events, it belongs to the oldest

common property of the nations. But if a borrowing on the part of the Hebrews is to be assumed, then, indeed, the Phœnician source lies much nearer than the Babylonian. The Phœnician cosmogonies, likewise, according to Philo Byblius, proceeded from the blowing of dark air (*πνοή ἀέρος ζοφώδους*) and the gloomy, dark chaos (*χαῶς θολερὸν ἐρεβῶδες*) and in this, through the agency of *πόθος* and of *πνεῦμα* arose *Μῶτ*, that is the stuff explained by some as slime, by others as a putrid aqueous mixture, out of which then grew the different objects (Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 1, 10, 1). Only among the Phœnicians, not among the Babylonians so far, can the expression for chaos from Gen. i. 2, *אֵינָה*, be cited in the form *Βάαν* (1, 10, 5); among the Phœnicians, as among the Chinese, Indians, Egyptians, Greeks, and Finns, but not, so far, among the Babylonians, is found the world-egg, of which there is also a hint in *רַחֵץ מַיִם*, Gen. i. 2. That the chaos in the Bible is not created establishes no special resemblance to the Babylonian myth; universally, where a chaos is known, it is the antecedent condition of the cosmogony; a created chaos is a nonentity; if the conception of an almighty God is perfected to the point that he is conceived of as author of even the material, then the intervention of chaos in the doctrine of creation must logically cease, for such a God will not furnish the material first and then the form, but both together. But now, beyond this commencement, the Babylonian theory affords no farther essential similarity to the biblical; on the contrary, the divergence at once begins. The first to emerge out of chaos are the gods and goddesses (just as among all other heathen) as to which naturally there can be no account among the Hebrews. What the order or succession of the separate works of creation was among the Babylonians, we do not up to the present time know; but the order in Genesis (except, perhaps, the place of the stars) is so plainly afforded by the nature of the case that not even if a similar order were discovered among the Babylonians would any imitation be proved on one side or the other. From the extant and legible remains only so much appears certain, that the

Babylonian representations, like the Indian and classical, enter much more than the Hebrew into the particulars of the manifold things, beings, and forces. If weight be attached to the alleged occurrence,¹ in these Babylonian accounts, of *ubaššimâ ilâni*, "the gods had made good," after each creative work, and this be compared to the biblical "and God saw that it was good," — then objection is to be made both to the "each" and the "after," and the proof that the expression is rightly translated is not yet produced; it would not be strange, however, should this latter be shown, that representations enlarging so fully upon details in the case of some of the pre-eminently glorious works of creation, as stars or men, should also specially magnify this glory.

The second portion of the Hebrew primitive traditions, the history of Paradise, is quite unique when viewed according to its fundamental thoughts. The depiction, to be sure, of a happy, blessed, golden primal age of mankind (under the direct dominion of the gods) pervades the ancient peoples of India, Persia, and Egypt, down to the classical nations, although among the other Semites, including the Babylonians, it is not, thus far, elsewhere to be met with. But in the characteristic that the first man of all, originally destined to life in communion with God, in his garden, becomes deprived of his blessed lot through an act of disobedience, and subjected to the whole host of evils, it is and can be found nowhere else, because no other people and no other religion had so profound conceptions of the destiny of man, and of sin, as the Hebrew. To speak definitely, there is thus far no trace of such a history of Paradise among the Babylonians. It is impossible to understand how many persons² continue to view as proof of a Chaldaean account of the fall the well-known picture on a seal in the British Museum, which was pressed into this service some years since by G. Smith and others. Two persons are seated before a tree of life with fruits, one

¹ G. Smith's Chaldaean Genesis by Delitzsch, pp. 71, 298 sq.; P. Haupt, The Cuneiform Account of the Flood, p. 21.

² As Lenormant, The Beginnings of History (New York, 1882), pp. 98, 99. Erd. Delitzsch, Where was Paradise? p. 90 sq.

on the left, the other on the right of it, each stretching out a hand towards the tree, and behind the left one stands erect a great serpent, towering somewhat above the person. That this left figure is a female one is by no means certainly to be known. But now let it be noticed; both figures are upon seats (without backs), both are clothed in long raiment, and have head-covering; if this clearly points to a period of civilization, even more does the circumstance that the right one has two horns on the head make it impossible to see in him the original man, and compel the conclusion that these horns are the distinguishing peculiarity of this figure, in like manner as the erect serpent behind the second is the peculiarity of that one, and so both are rather godlike beings, or at best priests of certain deities, who are either delighting themselves with the tree of immortality, or testifying their veneration for it.¹ Just as little is handed down or recovered among the Babylonians of a paradise or garden of God as the abode of the first human beings, as of their temptation and fall through the serpent. Even if it were certain that the region about Babylon was surnamed Karduniâs and Babylon itself Tintira (but it is disputed), and even if the name Karduniâs signified "garden (and not rather district) of the god Duniâs" and Tintira "grove of life," it would not follow that the underlying idea was that of a garden of God in the biblical sense, that is, of an abode of the first human beings before the fall, but only that this fertile spot, naturally regarded among the Babylonians with the highest admiration, was in some way consecrated to the local deity Duniâs. Equally weak is the indirect proof which Frd. Delitzsch lately thought he had furnished for the derivation of the tradition of Paradise from Babylonia when he attempted to show that in the geographical description of the garden of Eden (Gen. ii. 10-14) nothing else than the region about Babylon is designated, and so the Jews themselves have declared this spot to be their Paradise. For this attempt, undertaken with much learning and acuteness, is simply a

¹ C. P. Tiele in *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 1882, p. 258 sq.

stupendous failure, as is already, after less than a year, pretty generally acknowledged. He changes two of the four rivers of Paradise into canals, makes the most easterly the most westerly (as Pallakopas), misplaces the next easterly (as Schatt en Nil) between Euphrates and Tigris, makes the Tigris flow out of the Euphrates, and yet at the same time the lower course of the Tigris run in front of the land of Assyria, adds the whole land of Cush (Ethiopia) to Babylonia, makes Babylonia a gold-yielding region, which it never was, and overlooks the fact that fig-trees were never indigenous in the Babylonian lower country, not to mention that a Jew could never have entertained the thought of locating the future Paradise in the bitterly hated Babylon. The two cherubs, moreover, which according to Gen. iii. 24 guarded the entrance to the garden of God are also certainly not taken from Babylonia. What the Bible calls cherubs have not yet been found there. If it were proved, as is now asserted,¹ that the colossal winged bulls of Babylon which guarded the temples and palaces bore the name Kirubi, that would make it perfectly certain that the Hebrews could not have taken their idea of cherubs from that quarter. For the Hebrew cherub flies and bears the Deity through the airy spaces (Ps. xviii. 11); but to the colossal bulls that must have been difficult. The origin of the cherub from the storm-clouds is quite clear among the Hebrews; he was conceived of as griffin or eagle-like rather than as bull-like. The guardians of Paradise yet farther reveal their original existence through the sword that turned itself which they had with them (the vibrating flash of lighting), and have nothing to do with the colossal bulls. The only particular in the history of Paradise which is thus far placed in a clearer light by the Babylonian-Assyrian monuments is the tree of life which, outside of the history of Paradise was, confessedly, quite current in the figurative language of the Hebrew teachers of wisdom. We now know from the monuments

¹ E.g. Lenormant, *Beginnings of History*, p. 126 sq.; Delitzsch, *Paradise*, p. 153 sq.

that it was rooted in the conception and mythology of the Semites themselves, and need no longer derive it from the Iranitic white Haoma tree or Gâokerena (Gokart). However, if we find among other peoples also, as the Indo-germans and even Tartars, altogether similar notions of trees and plants, and waters as well, which heal all diseases and give life, then we clearly see from the great extension of this idea that it was not specifically Semitic, but belonged to the most primitive imagery of mankind. In no case did the Jews first appropriate it in Babylonia (the Proverbs bear witness to it as pre-exilic), and they by no means thought of the tree of life in the hard hieratic form in which it appears upon the Babylonian-Assyrian monuments. As this tree of life goes back to the oldest times, so certainly does the mountain of the gods, with its divine treasures guarded by cherubs, on the slope of which lies the garden of God, according to the unequivocal evidence from Ezek. xxviii. 13, 14. This mountain of the gods (הַר מוֹצֵר בְּקִרְבְּהֶם אֱמֹנִין) was known from the derisive ode upon the king of Babylon, Isa. xiv. 13, as also from Ezek. xxviii. 14, 16, where it is called הַר קִרְשׁ אֱלֹהִים and הַר אֱלֹהִים, to be a Semitic, more precisely a probably Babylonian and Phoenician conception; it is now further proved from the Korsabad inscriptions, and from the prism-inscription of king Tiglath-pileser I. to be a Babylonian-Assyrian conception under the name E Harsaggal-Kurkura, and also Aralu.¹ But that this conception also was by no means first adopted by the Israelites during the Exile, but was an altogether more ancient heirloom among them (only repressed by the Mosaic system in its hostility to everything mythological), is seen from the appropriate allusion to it in Psalm xlvi. 3 (written about 700 B.C.) and from the fact that the north preserved a special sanctity among them (Lev. i. 11; Ezek. i. 4; cf. Job xxxvii. 22). Since it is known, besides, that the Indo-germanic peoples also figured to themselves the abode of their deity in the lofty mountains of the north (in

¹ Delitzsch, *Paradise*, 117 sq.; Lenormant, *Beginnings of History* (French ed.), ii. p. 123 sq.

their Kailâsa and Meru, in their Hara Berezaiti or Albordsch, as well as in Olympus) we are thus anew conducted to the most primitive notions of a larger circle of Asiatic civilized nations.

We pass now to the primitive genealogies, that of the Cainites, Gen. iv. and that of the Sethites, Gen. v. It was long ago considered remarkable that as in Gen. v. ten ancestors were reckoned from Adam to Noah, so also among the Babylonians, according to Berosus, there were ten kings before the deluge (Alorus or Adorus to Xisuthros). Conjecture has therefore been busy upon a connection of some kind or other between these two lists, both in the names and in the number of years ascribed to these persons; but it has hitherto been impossible to prove an actual one, and it will be difficult to do so in the future. This results from the following considerations. By the side of the line of the Sethites with its ten members stands the line of Cainites with its seven members, whose several names (with slight differences of sound in the present text that are by no means all original) reappear in the line of the Sethites also. If it is observed that of the three names in excess in the longer line, one is Noah (the man of the flood), and that the two others, standing together at the head, after Adam (Seth, Enos), are still obvious in their import and have a general sense like Adam and Cain (namely Enos "man," like Adam, and Seth "slip, shoot," like Cain, Cênân), and if to this it be added that the author from whom the line of Cainites came, related no flood (and so introduced no Noah as the hero of the flood), it will be easily recognized that the line with ten members was simply expanded from the one with seven, and it will be seen that any scientific consideration must set out from the line of Cain rather than from that of Seth. The meaning and intent, moreover, of the genealogy of the Cainites (Gen. iv.), as appears through the notices which at least in the case of some of its names are still added in our present text, is evidently this, to connect with the line of these names the gradual development of crafts, arts, and

occupations among men, and thus the advancing march of civilization. In this aim the genealogy of the Cainites so remarkably coincides¹ with the continuations of the Phœnician cosmogonies found in Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 1, 10, that (in spite of the obscurity of the names themselves), it may be confidently asserted that we are here upon Palestinian-Phœnician ground, but not upon Babylonian. But if the line with the ten members be an artificial (yet, as the names Seth, Enos show, genuinely Hebrew) expansion of the one with seven, then must the attempt to trace this back to the line of Babylonian kings before the flood be abandoned. If also the meaning and origin of these ten royal names of the Babylonians is still, in spite of all the labor expended, particularly by Lenormant in various writings, entirely obscure, so much is yet quite clear from their designation as kings, and from the long periods of their dominion, that another meaning and intent was at the basis of this list.² Now of course it might be argued that the expansion of the line with seven members into the one with ten of the Sethites is occasioned by the example of the ten Babylonian kings. But against this is the consideration that the custom of constructing lines of descent upon the basis of the constant number ten occurs elsewhere among the Hebrews when any derivation from the Babylonians is utterly out of the question (as *Gen. xi.* 10 sq.; *Ruth iv.* 18 sq.), as does also the plan of reckoning by the number seven (*Matt. i.*; *Luke iii.*); also that this same custom of constructing lists after these numbers ten or seven is equally demonstrable³ among almost all the ancient nations from China to the Egyptians, so that in this instance too, there would be no need at all of a borrowing from the Babylonians. The case would be different, to be sure, if the years of life ascribed to the Sethite patriarchs manifested a

¹ See my Commentary on Genesis, also Lenormant, *Beginnings of History*, p. 198 sq.

² The Revelations of Oannes (upon which Lenormant's *Beginnings of History* is to be consulted), connected, according to Berosus, with some of these reigns, are only externally joined to them, and show nothing of the nature of these reigns.

³ See Tuch, *Comm. on Genesis*, p. 97; Ewald, *History of the People of Israel* (3d German ed.), i. 375; Lenormant, *Beginnings of History*, p. 236 sq.

dependence upon the length of the reigns recorded in Berosus. But even the acuteness of Oppert¹ could attain no more successful result in combining the total of the reigns of the ten kings from Alorus (Adorus) to Xisuthros, 120 Saren = 432,000 years with the total of the periods from Adam to the flood, 1656 years according to the Masoretic text, than that one week of the Jews in this computation corresponds to five years of the Chaldees, and this reduction besides is excessively artificial and with no perceptible basis of fact. On the other hand, the individual periods of these kings and of those patriarchs are not thus reducible, and, more than all else, the Masoretic text is probably but very modern² in these numbers, so that in this case also the dependence of the older text upon the Babylonians is by no means probable.

Quite otherwise, apparently, is the case with the tradition of the flood, which we last consider. That of the Hebrews in the Bible, that of the Babylonians copiously extant in the reports of Berosus and in the cuneiform statements,³ present so much that is similar in the course and particulars of narration that here soonest one might be inclined to subscribe to the thesis of the Assyriologists. The preceding announcement of the flood to Xisuthros-Noah, the charge to build a vessel for the reception of the men and beasts to be preserved, the obeying of the same, the destruction of all life upon the land, are common traits, easily resulting, to be sure, from the nature of the case. In particular, there are mentioned in the Babylonian account, as in the Priests' Document, the vessel's dimensions, and the landing on a mountain (of the land of Nisir), and, as in the Jahvistic writing, the shutting of the door (but not by God), the sending forth of the dove (at intervals of a week), the offerings after deliverance had taken place, and the appeasing of the gods by the offerings.⁴ But against these special points of contact

¹ Gött. Gel. Nachr., 1877, No. 10.

² See Bertheau in the *Jahrb. f. deutsche Theologie*, xxiii. 657 sq.

³ P. Haupt, *The Cuneiform Account of the Flood*, 1881, and in the *Excurses* to Schrader's *Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament*.

⁴ The seven days' delay until the beginning of the flood does not occur in the corrected translation of P. Haupt, neither the promise to send no further flood

stand as many and even more deviations. Not to dwell upon the fact that the whole Babylonian representation is saturated with rank polytheism, and the ethical sense¹ very decidedly withdrawn from prominence, it is to be particularly pointed out that the saved are more in number (namely the whole kindred of the king); the king also takes with him into the ship his gold and silver, his treasures and goods; ship-building and knowledge of navigation are presupposed, and the pilot of the ship made specially prominent; while the dimensions of the ship (upon which also Berosus and the cuneiform accounts are not in agreement), and more noticeably the duration of the flood,² finally, also, the fate of the hero after the flood, are very differently stated. What the Bible says of Enoch is here transferred to Xisuthros and his wife; by Berosus, moreover, to his daughter and the pilot. Accordingly, then, the biblical account does not look like a copy of the Babylonian (not forgetting that the Babylonians themselves had different versions of their account of the flood), but both appear as independent and peculiar representations of the event.

But now comes in the further consideration, that the whole coloring of the Chaldaean account is a specifically Babylonian one. A Babylonian king, a Babylonian city (Sippara, in the recension of Berosus; Schurippak,³ in the cuneiform) play a part therein; although the account is of the destruction of all life, the circle of view does not pass beyond the region of Babylonia; after the flood, the men who are saved (of whom there are many more than in the Bible) return again to Babylon, and restore everything there as it was before. Suppose, now, it were true⁴ that Babylonia was the original home of the tradition of the flood, what interest then would

in the future, but only the wish that in the future Bel would punish the transgression of men otherwise than by a flood.

¹ Notwithstanding what is asserted by Delitzsch, *Paradise*, p. 145 sq.

² Since the rising of the flood lasts only seven nights and six days, and then the recession begins.

³ On which see Lenormant, *Beginnings of History*, pp. 392, 393.

⁴ As Delitzsch, *Paradise*, pp. 116, 84 sq., seems to assume.

the many peoples have had, among whom it also occurs — what interest, particularly, the Israelites (either the most ancient or those of the Exile) — in adopting for themselves an account of pure Babylonian coloring and local limitation? According to the Bible itself, Babylonia is by no means the cradle of the first men; but they first journey there after the flood (Gen. xi. 1 sq.). And just as little did the many other peoples who had a tradition of the flood think of deriving mankind from Babylon. Then what should have actuated them to adopt such a Babylonian history of the deluge?

And, on the other hand, again, notwithstanding that among the Babylonians the tradition has a local setting, yet it shows no clear connection with the climatic conditions of the land — either the rising of the rivers in consequence of the autumnal rain in November, or the periodical inundations of both streams from the middle of March till the end of June. On the contrary, according to the account of Berosus, the beginning of the flood is placed on the fifteenth of Daesios (beginning of July), when the Babylonian streams have their lowest level;¹ and in the cuneiform account there is no specification at all of the time of the flood; while it is not unreasonably supposed that in the poem of Uruk, the history of Xisuthros and the flood is inserted in the eleventh canto, simply because the twelve cantos of the Izdubar poem correspond to the position of the sun in the twelve signs of the Zodiac, and in the eleventh place, in the month Schebat (February–March), the sun stands in the sign of the water-carrier. This is, however, only a very external connection.

Furthermore, from the mountain on which the ship landed (according to Berosus, a mountain of Armenia; according to the inscriptions, of the land Nisir²), it appears to follow quite certainly that the tradition itself first came to Babylonia

¹ On which account Lenormant, *Beginnings of History*, p. 413, considers a mistake to have been made in transmitting this date.

² East of the Tigris, on the other side of the lower Zab, Delitzsch, *Paradies*, p. 105.

from the north. It is not at all apparent why Xisuthros sails so far north. If his purpose thereby was to land on a mountain, the mountain chain forming the eastern boundary of the lower Tigris lay much nearer. Considering, further, that he had a duly constructed ship, with skilful pilot, it is quite inconceivable why he should not have floated about on the waters of the flood until the ship grounded upon the dry land, or else put out to sea, and there remained until the flood was over. The turn given the event can be understood only as the derivation of the new race of men from the north was an established feature of the Babylonian tradition. But then it is also certain that Babylonia was not the original home of the story of the flood.

The general conclusion must be that this account is no longer one of pure poetry, but of one or more actual facts, of which some confused knowledge was perpetuated among the most diverse nations, and which each one of them pictured and related in its own fashion. Of Semitic peoples in particular, the Phoenicians¹ probably, the Aramaeans² certainly (as well as the Phrygians) had their tradition of the flood — nations among whom a borrowing from Babylonia is not to be thought of. Their literatures have perished; but who can say but that, should their monuments come to be exhumed, their accounts of the flood might disclose agreements with the Hebrew which would be as striking as those with the Babylonian? In other words, from the fact that only from two ancient Semitic nations has a literature survived to us, and we have only from these two written accounts of the flood,—which have manifold agreement, but also manifold divergence,—it does not yet follow that the one must have borrowed from the other of them, instead of both repeating common traditions, which were also native among other Semitic nations.

¹ According to the notice of Fl. Josephus, *Ant.* 1, 3, 6, concerning Hieronymus Aegyptius.

² From the Syrian Hierapolis (Bambyce), according to Lucian, *de Dea Syr.* chap. 13, and perhaps from Damascus, according to Nicolaus Damasc., in Josephus, *Ant.* 1, 3, 6.

I trust that what precedes is sufficient to refute the proposition that the whole primitive history of the Hebrew books was borrowed from Babylonia, and the yet more untenable one that the part of the Priests' Document and of the Jahvistic Document in the Pentateuch relating to it was first composed in Babylonia. All wherein the Hebrew primitive history has points of contact with the Babylonian is also common property of many other nations. The Hebrew primitive history¹ has much to which indeed very strong correspondences have been found among other nations, but precisely among the Babylonians not so up to the present time. The part of the Hebrew traditional history in question is just as well connected with the Phœnician, or even better than with the Babylonian. Whether the primitive traditions of the Phœnicians, which seem to have come from the Persian Sea, did not have a closer connection with the Chaldaean, and thus indirectly or through their medium those of the Hebrews also, that is, again, another question. At all events, the proposition now maintained by many, on the ground of Gen. xi. 31, that the Hebrews immigrated from lower Chaldaea, cannot appeal for support to the alleged agreement of their primitive traditions; the less so, since elsewhere in Genesis and in the remainder of the Old Testament another tradition prevails, according to which they came rather from northern Mesopotamia. And in any case, it is simply inconceivable that the Jews should have first while in exile adopted and recorded those narrative pieces which relate to the primitive traditions. The utmost imaginable would be that late Jewish composers might have, with reference to what they had heard in Babylonia, altered, or (as, for example, the episode of the birds sent forth, Gen. viii. 6-12) interpolated, the accounts of their native books; but this conjecture is not necessary, and is unsupported by farther literary facts.

While the affairs of the ancient Aramaeans, so prominent among the Semites, are no better known than at present;

¹ Elsewhere also agreements present themselves with conceptions which were equally current in the Indo-germanic world as in the Semitic, e.g. Job iii. 8; xxvi. 13.

while, especially, no more is known than at present concerning that once far-ruling people in anterior Asia, the Chetas or Chattis, with its peculiar culture and letters, it is well to observe the utmost caution in positive assertion upon the connections of the civilization of the nations in anterior Asia. There is a whole circle of mythological representations and traditions which is common to the Indo-germanic and Semitic nations. How this community is to be explained—whether in prehistoric times and in certain regions an interchange took place between them, or whether even a common original home of both is to be supposed—cannot, thus far, be determined.

ARTICLE III.

THE THEOLOGY OF CALVIN—IS IT WORTH SAVING?

BY REV. EDWARD A. LAWRENCE, MARBLEHEAD, MASS.

SOME say yes, and some say no. Who are right depends on the answer to another question: What is Calvin's theology? It is just what John Calvin taught; nothing more, nothing less, and nothing otherwise. It has been criticised discriminately and indiscriminately. It has been commended as essentially biblical and Christian, and reprobated as anti-biblical, unchristian and cruel. The disrepute of the "Five Points of Calvinism" has reached the outmost bounds of Christendom. As it is the type of the Puritan and New England Theology adopted by the Congregational and Presbyterian churches, the great body of the Baptists of the Old World and the New, and is imbedded in our Confession of Faith now, after almost two centuries and a half, wisely undergoing revision, anything that seems to make it as a system, more distinct, and its merits and defects more visible, may not be untimely.

It is declared by an eminent preacher "not to be a system of remedial mercy, but quite the opposite, and as unscriptural