

a yet more glorious day. Beyond the social and political confusions of the present they see the new Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God.

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*THE WORDS "WITCH" AND "WITCHCRAFT":
THEIR PROPER AND IMPROPER USE IN
HISTORY AND LITERATURE.¹*

No one can have read with intelligence and care writings dealing with Magic and allied phenomena without being impressed with the loose and careless way in which the words "witch" and "witchcraft" have been employed. We have a capital instance of this in the A.V. and other older English versions of the Bible in which we read of "witches" and of "witchcraft," though the ideas which the majority of people connect with these terms were unknown to Bible writers and indeed wholly unknown in Bible times. Misled by our translators, commentators on the Bible and writers on theological and allied subjects have said much which we, with our fuller and more accurate information, know to be incorrect. It is the aim of this paper to show the origin of the confusion and to make suggestions with a view to greater accuracy in the employment of these and related terms.

The word "witch" seems to note etymologically one who knows. It is derived from the A.S. "wicca," which, though strictly masculine, came very early to be used of the male and female irrespective of sex. For a long time the English word "witch" stood for a male rather than a female. In Wycliff's (d. 1384) translation of Acts viii. 9 Simon Magus is called a "witch." In the "Vision of Piers

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Plowman" by Langland (d. 1400) we have the words "he was a witch" (xvi. 69). In Malory's *Mort d'Arthur* it will be remembered that Merlin is called a "witch." There are many examples of this usage in the writings of Shakespeare. See *Cym.* I. 6, l. 166, "He is . . . a witch." The masculine sense of witch exists still in spoken English. In a small hut by the sea, two miles to the South of Criccieth N.W., there lives a long-haired, haggard old man whom the people about speak of as a "witch": I heard him so called last week (March 30, 1913). The word wizard is commonly regarded as the masculine of "witch," and it is so given in grammars; it has, however, not only no etymological connexion with the latter, but it comes from a different language, i.e., from the French "guisart." Since the thirteenth century the term "witch," has come to be used more and more exclusively of a woman, and in particular of such a woman as is supposed to have sold her soul to the devil on condition of receiving in return supernatural power over living beings and property. It is of such a person that the modern mind thinks when the word "witch" is mentioned. In his *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) Reginald Scot (d. 1599) says: "Witches are women who be commonly old, lame, blear-eyed, pale, full of wrinkles . . . so as what mischief, mischance or calamities or slaughter is brought to pass they are easily persuaded the same is done by themselves." In John Wilson and Thomas Bag-nell's *Complete Christian Dictionary*, 7th edition, 1661, a work of great learning for its day, there is a long article on "Witch and Witchcraft," in the course of which we are told that the word "witch" denotes, besides other things, "a woman who exerciseth devilish arts such as be named in Deuteronomy xviii. 10; Leviticus xix. 26; Exodus xxii. 18." The present writer pleads that as this sense of "witch" is commonest in English literature it is the

one that should be always followed, so that misunderstanding may be avoided. Unfortunately a goodly number of English writers of eminence follow the example set by the authors of the A.V. of the English Bible and use "witch" in the sense of "sorceress" or "female magician," i.e., they give the word "witch" the sense of a female agent who practises the magical art. This, as I think, inaccurate employment of the word arises for the most part from the lack of words with distinct connotation in our language. In this respect we are at a great disadvantage as compared with the Germans, for they have two separate terms for male and female magician (sorcerer and sorceress), viz., *Zauberer* and *Zauberin*. And in addition there is in the same language a word of unambiguous meaning equivalent to our "witch" in the sense the word bears in the old English writers just quoted, i.e. *Hexe*. I am not speaking of the etymology or history of the German words mentioned, I am dealing merely with their conventional meaning in modern German literature. The French language is not much richer than our own in separate unambiguous words corresponding to the German *Zauberer*, *Zauberin* and *Hexe*. For the first the French use *sorcier*; for the second and third one word is made to do duty, viz., *sorcière*. In Old French, however, one meets with "devine" (or "deoyne") in the sense of the German *Hexe* and the English "witch." This word occurs, spelt "devyne," in "Le Mistère du Vieux Testament," where the so-called "witch of Endor" is thus designated. The French language has the advantage of our own in that it has a masculine and a feminine form corresponding to our magician, viz., *magicien*, f. *magicienne*. The English word was, in Old English, sometimes of common gender. We, of course, have sorcerer and sorceress: but sorcery is strictly divination—divining by lots (sortilège)—not magic, and there-

fore the sorcerer is a diviner, not a magician. The second meaning, "magician," came, however, in time to be attached to the word. It is no doubt owing to the poverty of the English language in the respect named that "witch" has come to be used largely by excellent scholars and writers in the sense of a female magician or a sorceress as well as in the sense which, in my opinion, properly belongs to it.

That the revisers of our English Bible in 1884 were of opinion that the word "witch" has no proper place in our Bible is proved by the fact that in the only two instances of its occurrence in the A.V. they substitute for it "sorceress" in the one case and "sorcerer" in the other. It will be shown further on that they did not carry out fully the process of revising by excluding also words of cognate origin ("witchcraft," etc.). The two passages in which the A.V. contains the word "witch" are Exodus xxii. 18 and Deuteronomy xviii. 11. The first verse is translated in the A.V. thus: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch (R.V. 'sorceress') to live." In the second passage the "witch" (R.V. "sorcerer") appears in a long list of classes of persons with whom the worshipper of Yahwe is to have no dealings. The Hebrew word is in both cases the active participle of the verb *קִשְׁשָׁה* (*Kishshēph*), properly *קָשַׁשׁ* (*Kashshēph*), which is identical with the Assyrian verb *Kashapu*, to practise magic, strictly, according to Langdon, by the use of spittle. But in Exodus xxii. 18 the participle is feminine *מְכַשְׁפָּה* (pausal form of *מְכַשְׁפָּה*), a sorceress. In the Deuteronomy (xviii. 11) passage we have a masculine participle (*מְכַשֵּׁף*) which in the A.V. is nevertheless translated "witch," but which the Revisers translated "sorceress," showing that even in 1611 this word could be treated as masculine as well as feminine. No scholar, however, will have much doubt that the Hebrew words denote in the one case a female and in the other a male magician. It is not abso-

lutely certain that the so-called feminine ending in מְכַשְׁפָּה has reference to gender. It may be the ending denoting the so-called noun of unity—one agent of the kind intended (cf. קְהֵלָה), or it may be the ending implying the plural such as is common in Arabic, Hebrew, etc. That the use of " witch " in the A.V. has led to a misunderstanding of these passages and also of the superstitions by which the Hebrews were surrounded, and to which they often yielded, is proved by an examination of commentaries and other theological works. Let me give one example from the *Complete Christian Dictionary* of John Wilson and Thomas Bagnell already cited. In the article " Witch," the authors quote Exodus xxii. 18, " Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," and add: " By witch is here meant any one that hath any dealings with the devil, by any compact or confederacy whatever." I should like to know how many sermons have been preached which have blundered in the same way and for the same reason.

The expression " the witch of Endor " occurs frequently in literature and especially in common parlance, but it is not found in the English Bible. In 1 Samuel xxviii., where alone this character is spoken of, the Hebrew words אִשְׁת־אֹיֵב בְּעֵלְת־אֹיֵב are translated in the A.V. and the R.V. " a woman that hath a familiar spirit." A literal rendering would be " a woman who is mistress of an *ōb* " or " ghost "; i.e. one able to compel a departed spirit to return in order to answer certain questions. This woman was therefore a necromancer, a species of diviner. We do sometimes think of a witch as telling fortunes but hardly as calling back the dead to reveal the secrets of the spiritual world. We have in Babylonian a similar phrase *mushêlû êkimmu*=" he who calls up spirits from the dead "; i.e., in German, *Totenbeschwörer* : so Alfred Jeremias, *Das Alte Testament im Lichte des Alten Orients*,² p. 491² note 2, Eng.

ed. II. 184, note 2. It is significant that the English translator of this German work (C. L. Beaumont) renders the German *Totenbeschwörer* by "sorcerer or witch," both of which are inaccurate translations. We meet with necromancy also among the Egyptians: see Budge, *Egyptian Magic*, p. 23.

The word "witchcraft" occurs thrice in the A.V. of the English Bible. In 1 Samuel xv. 23 "the sin of witchcraft" (A.V. and R.V.) should be as in the R.V.m., "the sin of divination," the last word representing the Hebrew דִּוְנָה , *gesem*, the commonest Biblical word for divination. The phrase "used witchcraft" (2 Chron. xxxiii. 6 of King Manasseh) is correctly rendered in the R.V. "practised sorcery," the Hebrew verb (קִישְׁשֶׁפֶת *kishshēph*) being that whence the participles in Exodus xxii. 18 and Deuteronomy xviii. 11 translated "witch" in the A.V. are derived. The cognate Assyrian verb *kashapu* is that generally used for practising black magic. The word translated in the A.V. "witchcrafts" in Galatians v. 20 (*φαρμακεία, pharmakeia*) is the ordinary Greek term for magic or sorcery, and it is rightly translated by the latter (sorcery) in the R.V. It denotes, however, literally "the act of administering drugs" and later "magical potions." It came naturally to stand for the magician's art, as in the present passage and as also in Wisdom xii. 4, xviii. 13, and in the LXX of Isaiah xlvi. 9, where it represents the Hebrew plural noun קִישְׁפִּים (*k'eshaphim*), translated "sorceries": cf. the cognate verb קִישְׁשֶׁפֶת (*kishshēph*), Assyrian *kashapu*, already considered more than once. The plural "witchcrafts" (in A.V. and R.V.) stands for the Hebrew noun just mentioned קִישְׁפִּים in 2 Kings ix. 22, Micah v. 12 and Nahum iii. 4, but in all these passages a proper rendering would be "sorceries" or "magical arts." "Witchcrafts" is inaccurate and misleading.

The verb "bewitch" occurs in Acts viii. 9, 11 A.V. (of Simon Magus *bewitching* the people) and in Galatians iii. 1 A.V. and R.V. ("O foolish Galatians, who hath *bewitched* you?"). In the first passage the Greek verb is ἐξίστημι (*existimi*), which is properly rendered by the revisers "amazed"; in verse 13 the passive of the same verb is translated "he was amazed" (A.V. "he wondered"). In Galatians iii. 1 the verb is βοσκαίνω (*boskainō*), which is used of the blinding effect of the evil eye and has perhaps an occult reference, but it has nothing whatever to do with "witchcraft" as ordinarily understood.

Babylonian-Assyrian Words.

The two principal Babylonian-Assyrian verbs for describing the art of practising magic are (1) *kashapū*, which has been noticed, and (2) *ashipū*.

From the first verb we get the nouns *kashshapu*, a male magician or sorcerer, and *kashshaptu*, a female magician or sorceress. The masculine form is represented in the Hebrew Bible in the form קַשְׁשָׁף (*kashshāf* in Jeremiah xxvii. 9, the only place where it occurs, and it is there plural, קַשְׁשָׁפִים, translated in the EVV (A.V. and R.V.) "sorcerers." Of the methods adopted by the *kashshapu* we know little: but this much we do know. (1) That it means to put under a magical spell, i.e. that it denotes using black magic, the magic that injures or destroys. (2) That in this kind of magic spittle was used, though how we do not know. I have elsewhere ("Magic," etc., p. 48 *Encyc. Bibl.* vol. i. 1116) defended the view of Fleischer that the root in *kashshapu*, Hebrew, קַשְׁשָׁף, means to look dark, gloomy, cf. Arabic كَسَفَ *kasafa*, to be eclipsed, of the sun, moon, etc. Then to be distressed, and finally to seek relief by occult means. But this last meaning, which is what we want, is somewhat far removed from the Arabic verb كَسَفَ *kasafa*, from which

Fleischer argues, though this verb does mean to frown, look angry.

German scholars almost invariably represent *kashshaptu* and *ashiptu* by *Zauberin*, not by *Hexe*, though there are some exceptions. If the Assyrian *kashshapu* means a magician, *kashshaptu*, the feminine form, can only mean a female magician or sorceress, and it is certainly misleading if not incorrect to translate it by "witch," as is commonly done by good Assyriologists, as Sayce, Jastrow, C. H. W. Johns and W. R. Rogers. Those who like Marett (*Anthrop.* 202, 299) identify witchcraft with black magic have some justification for rendering *kashshapu* and *kashshaptū* by "wizard" and "witch," the English equivalents of this and similar words adopted by R. Campbell Thompson in his *Semitic Magic* (1908), p. xxiv. *et passim*. He (Marett) speaks also of *wizardry* and *witchcraft*, a useful distinction if we accept his nomenclature, which I at least do not for reasons to be immediately stated.

2. We have another pair of Babylonian-Assyrian nouns, *ashshipu*, f. *ashshiptu* (often spelt as the verb with one "š" or "sh"), but these are used in connexion with *white* magic even more than in connexion with the *black* species. In a good sense the words denote one who uses counter-magic, in German a *Gegenzauberer*, a *Beschwörer* (exorcist), one who casts out devils, who neutralises the evil working of evil spirits. This functionary is in reality a kind of priest whose rôle it is to exert influence upon the good gods or benevolent spirits, by prayer and other means, against the demons or malevolent spirits. But the same nouns are used also of persons who practise the black art, i.e. *ashshipū* and *ashshiptu*, besides being employed in the above favourable senses, are also used as the equivalents of *kashshapu* and *kashshaptu*. Whatever justification there may be for translating *kashshaptu* by "witch" does not

apply to the term *ashshiptu*, which means often a priestess.¹ The cognate Hebrew אֲשִׁיפָה (ashshāf), found only in Daniel, the Hebrew (i. 20 and ii. 2) and (modified) in the Aram. (ii. 10, etc.) parts, seem to mean an exorcist, one that practises countermagic (*Gegenzauberer*), see *Magic, Divination, Demonology among the Hebrews*, etc., by the present writer, p. 83. There are other Babylonian-Assyrian words which are sometimes Englished by "witch," such as *elinitu*, female magician, sorceress (*elinu* = high), and *Nertanītū*, a woman that casts a spell, a *nertu*, on a person.

In his invaluable books on (1) *Religion of Babylon and Assyria*, 1898, and (2) *Religious Beliefs in Babylonia and Assyria*, 1911, the whole published in a revised form in one German work, Jastrow couples "sorcerers" and "witches" so frequently that he leaves no doubt of his intention to regard "witch" as synonymous with "female magician" or sorceress (Ger. *Zauberin*, Fr. *magicienne*), just as is done in the A.V. of Exodus xxii. 18. See the first work mentioned, p. 267 ff., and the second, pp. 91, 304 (bottom line), 305 (lines 2, 7 ff.), 314 (line 7), 316 (line 13), etc. Both he (second work, p. 391) and Johns (*Babylonian and Assyrian Laws*, etc., 1904, p. 44) call the crime condemned in the Khammurabi Code, § 1 f., "witchcraft." But in this code the agent is a male (*awilum* or *avilum*) and the crime that of casting a spell. It is possible, of course, that *Awilum* has, like the Hebrew אָדָם (*adam*), the Greek *ἄνθρωπος* and the Latin *homo*, the generic sense human being, but even then it cannot denote a female agent exclusively, and *witchcraft* is not the word to describe the crime in question, though our word "bewitch" is, it must be admitted, a wonderfully convenient verb for the German *Bezaubern*, the Hebrew אֲשִׁיפָה and the Babylonian *kashapu*.

¹ Jastrow (*Hastings' Dict. Bible*, v. 555) says: "Ashipu was a priest who had charge of the exorcising rites."

Marett (*Anthropology*, 202, 210 f.) identifies witchcraft with Black Magic, making it consist (202) "in trafficking, or at any rate in being supposed to traffic, with powers of evil for sinister and anti-social ends." But note in reply (1) In witchcraft the agent is, properly speaking, a woman. (2) Both black and white magic are strictly magic and have the same underlying assumptions, those of magic, not those of witchcraft. Indeed, as previously pointed out, the Babylonian verb and noun *ashshipū* has reference to both kinds of magic. (3) One species of magic may be called "cosmic" or "impersonal," for it proceeds in total ignorance or forgetfulness of spiritual beings, gods, demons or ghosts. This cosmic or impersonal magic is of the black as well as of the white kind: but at least black cosmic magic is not witchcraft, even if black personal magic is. It is therefore impossible to equate "black magic" and "witchcraft."

The late Sir A. Lyall (*Asiatic Studies*, I. ch. iv. p. 99 ff.) handles the word witchcraft very loosely, for he uses it interchangeably with sorcery (magic) just as he substitutes witch for sorcerer and *vice versa*, without being conscious of any difference. He then proceeds to say what he means by witchcraft, distinguishing it from religion thus: In the latter we seek, he says, to influence deity by prayer and gifts. Our success depends largely on right words rightly used and appropriate gifts properly offered. Most thinkers would say that this embraces a good deal of what is known as magic. It would include a full half and more of what the Babylonians meant by *ashshipu*.

In witchcraft Lyall says man acts on his own. No longer recognising the existence of spiritual beings, gods, demons or ghosts, he follows a rough and ready logic of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. In other words, he identifies witchcraft with that half of magic which may be called

impersonal or cosmic. He defines a witch "as one" (male or female) "who professes to work marvels, not through the aid and counsel of the supernatural beings in whom he believes as much as the rest, but by certain occult faculties and devices which he conceives himself to possess." Now first of all, a witch in modern English is a woman. Then witchcraft surely in all cases takes note of spiritual beings—evil ones with whom alliances are made to secure the ends desired. The divergent definitions of witchcraft which have been given—and others could be added—prove surely the need for some understanding on the matter among anthropologists and historians of human culture.

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*DAVID'S "CAPTURE" OF THE JEBUSITE
"CITADEL" OF ZION (2 SAM. v. 6-9).*

I TAKE as the title of this paper the description which is commonly given of the contents of a very difficult passage. How great are the difficulties which beset the text of 2 Samuel v. 6-9 is well set forth in the new edition of Dr. Driver's *Notes*. Whether anything like a complete explanation of the passage is possible I will not undertake to say. But a fresh consideration of these four verses in connexion with their context does suggest that some of the chief difficulties arise from a misconception of the nature of the event which is here recorded. Was that event the capture of an almost impregnable citadel? Was it a great military exploit?

Certainly the Chronicler so understood it. In the parallel passage (1 Chron. xi. 4-7) "Jebus" or "the stronghold of Zion" is captured by a forlorn hope. David brings "all Israel" against the city; he calls for a volunteer to lead