

JOHN LORD

ANCIENT
STATES AND
EMPIRES

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Ancient States and Empires / For Colleges and Schools:*

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PREFACE

This work is designed chiefly for educational purposes, since there is still felt the need of some book, which, within moderate limits, shall give a connected history of the ancient world.

The author lays no claim to original investigation in so broad a field. He simply has aimed to present the salient points—the most important events and characters of four thousand years, in a connected narrative, without theories or comments, and without encumbering the book with details of comparatively little interest. Most of the ancient histories for schools, have omitted to notice those great movements to which the Scriptures refer; but these are here briefly presented, since their connection with the Oriental world is intimate and impressive, and ought not to be omitted, even on secular grounds. What is history without a Divine Providence?

In the preparation of this work, the author has been contented with the last standard authorities, which he has merely simplified, abridged, and condensed, being most indebted to Rawlinson,

Grote, Thirlwall, Niebuhr, Mommsen, and Merivale,—following out the general plan of Philip Smith, whose admirable digest, in three large octavos, is too extensive for schools.

Although the author has felt warranted in making a free use of his materials, it will be seen that the style, arrangement, and reflections are his own. If the book prove useful, his object will be attained.

Stamford *October, 1869.*

BOOK I.

ANCIENT ORIENTAL NATIONS

CHAPTER I.

THE ANTEDILUVIAN WORLD

The Creation.

The history of this world begins, according to the chronology of Archbishop Ussher, which is generally received as convenient rather than probable, in the year 4004 before Christ. In six days God created light and darkness, day and night, the firmament and the continents in the midst of the waters, fruits, grain, and herbs, moon and stars, fowl and fish, living creatures upon the face of the earth, and finally man, with dominion “over the fish of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and cattle, and all the earth, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.” He created man in his own image, and blessed him with universal dominion. He formed him from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. On the seventh day, God rested from this vast work of creation, and blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, as we suppose, for a day of solemn observance for all generations.

The garden of Eden.

He there planted a garden eastward in Eden, with every tree pleasant to the sight and good for food, and there placed man to dress and keep it. The original occupation of man, and his destined happiness, were thus centered in agricultural labor.

Adam and Eve.

But man was alone; so God caused a deep sleep to fall upon him, and took one of his ribs and made a woman. And Adam said, “this woman,” which the Lord had brought unto him, “is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” Thus marriage was instituted. We observe three divine institutions while man yet remained in a state of innocence and bliss—the Sabbath; agricultural employment; and marriage.

Primeval Paradise.

Adam and his wife lived, we know not how long, in the garden of Eden, with perfect innocence, bliss, and dominion. They did not even know what sin was. There were no other conditions imposed upon them than they were not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which was in the midst of the garden—a preeminently goodly tree, “pleasant to the eyes, and one to be desired.”

Situation of Eden.

Where was this garden—this paradise—located? This is a mooted question—difficult to be answered. It lay, thus far as we know, at the head waters of four rivers, two of which were the Euphrates and the Tigris. We infer thence, that it was situated among the mountains of Armenia, south of the Caucasus, subsequently the cradle of the noblest races of men,—a temperate region, in the latitude of Greece and Italy.

Glory of Eden.

We suppose that the garden was beautiful and fruitful, beyond all subsequent experience—watered by mists from the earth, and not by rains from the clouds, ever fresh and green, while its two noble occupants lived upon its produce, directly communing with God, in whose image they were made, moral and spiritual—free from all sin and misery, and, as we may conjecture, conversant with truth in its loftiest forms.

But sin entered into the beautiful world that was made, and death by sin. This is the first recorded fact in human history, next to primeval innocence and happiness.

The temptation.

The progenitors of the race were tempted, and did not resist the temptation. The form of it may have been allegorical and symbolic; but, as recorded by Moses, was yet a stupendous reality, especially in view of its consequences.

The Devil.

The tempter was the devil—the antagonist of God—the evil

power of the world—the principle of evil—a Satanic agency which Scripture, and all nations, in some form, have recognized. When rebellion against God began, we do not know; but it certainly existed when Adam was placed in Eden.

His assumption of the form of a serpent.

The form which Satanic power assumed was a serpent—then the most subtle of the beasts of the field, and we may reasonably suppose, not merely subtle, but attractive, graceful, beautiful, bewitching.

The disobedience of Eve.

The first to feel its evil fascination was the woman, and she was induced to disobey what she knew to be a direct command, by the desire of knowledge as well as enjoyment of the appetite. She put trust in the serpent. She believed a lie. She was beguiled.

The Fall of Adam.

The man was not directly beguiled by the serpent. Why the serpent assailed woman rather than man, the Scriptures do not say. The man yielded to his wife. “She gave him the fruit, and he did eat.”

The effect.

Immediately a great change came over both. Their eyes were opened. They felt shame and remorse, for they had sinned. They hid themselves from the presence of the Lord, and were afraid.

The penalty.

God pronounced the penalty—unto the woman, the pains and sorrows attending childbirth, and subserviency to her husband; unto the man labor, toil, sorrow—the curse of the ground which he was to till—thorns and thistles—no rest, and food obtained only by the sweat of the brow; and all these pains and labors were inflicted upon both until they should return to the dust from whence they were taken—an eternal decree, never abrogated, to last as long as man should till the earth, or woman bring forth children.

Introduction of sin.

Thus came sin into the world, through the temptations of introduction Satan and the weakness of man, with the penalty of labour, pain, sorrow, and death.

Expulsion from paradise.

Man was expelled from Paradise, and precluded from re-entering it by the flaming sword of cherubim, until the locality of Eden, by thorns and briars, and the deluge, was obliterated forever. And man and woman were sent out into the world to reap the fruit of their folly and sin, and to gain their subsistence in severe toil, and amid, the accumulated evils which sin introduced.

The mitigation of the punishment.

The only mitigation of the sentence was the eternal enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the Serpent, in which the final victory should be given to the former. The rite of

sacrifice was introduced as a type of the satisfaction for sin by the death of a substitute for the sinner; and thus a hope of final forgiveness held out for sin, Meanwhile the miseries of life were alleviated by the fruits of labor, by industry.

Industry—one of the fundamental conditions of life.

Industry, then, became, on the expulsion from Eden, one of the final laws of human happiness on earth, while the sacrifice held out hopes of eternal life by the substitution which the sacrifice typified—the Saviour who was in due time to appear.

With the expulsion from Eden came the sad conflicts of the race—conflicts with external wickedness—conflicts with the earth—conflicts with evil passions in a man's own soul.

Cain and Abel.

The first conflict was between Cain, the husbandman, and Abel, the shepherd; the representatives of two great divisions of the human family in the early ages. Cain killed Abel because the offering of the latter was preferred to that of the former. The virtue of Abel was faith: the sin of Cain was jealousy, pride, resentment, and despair. The punishment of Cain was expulsion from his father's house, the further curse of the land for *him*, and the hatred of the human family. He relinquished his occupation, became a wanderer, and gained a precarious support, while his descendants invented arts and built cities.

The descendants of Cain.

Eve bear another son—Seth, among whose descendants

the worship of God was preserved for a long time; but the descendants of Seth intermarried finally with the descendants of Cain, from whom sprung a race of lawless men, so that the earth was filled with violence. The material civilization which the descendants of Cain introduced did not preserve them from moral degeneracy. So great was the increasing wickedness, with the growth of the race, that “it repented the Lord that he had made man,” and he resolved to destroy the whole race, with the exception of one religious family, and change the whole surface of the earth by a mighty flood, which should involve in destruction all animals and fowls of the air—all the antediluvian works of man.

The deluge.

It is of no consequence to inquire whether the Deluge was universal or partial—whether it covered the whole earth or the existing habitations of men. All were destroyed by it, except Noah, and his wife, and his three sons, with their wives. The authenticity of the fact rests with Moses, and with him we are willing to leave it.

The probable condition of the antediluvian world.

This dreadful catastrophe took place in the 600th year of Noah's life, and 2349 years before Christ, when world was 1655 years old, according to Ussher, but much older according to Hale and other authorities—when more time had elapsed than from the Deluge to the reign of Solomon. And hence there were more

people destroyed, in all probability, than existed on the earth in the time of Solomon. And as men lived longer in those primeval times than subsequently, and were larger and stronger, “for there were giants in those days,” and early invented tents, the harp, the organ, and were artificers in brass and iron, and built cities—as they were full of inventions as well as imaginations, it is not unreasonable to infer, though we can not know with certainty, that the antediluvian world was more splendid and luxurious than the world in the time of Solomon and Homer—the era of the Pyramids of Egypt.

The ark.

The art of building was certainly then carried to considerable perfection, for the ark, which Noah built, was four hundred and fifty feet long, seventy-five wide, and forty-five deep; and was constructed so curiously as to hold specimens of all known animals and birds, with provisions for them for more than ten months.

The Divine covenant with Noah.

This sacred ark or ship, built of gopher wood, floated on the world's waves, until, in the seventh month, it rested upon the mountains of Ararat. It was nearly a year before Noah ventured from the ark. His first act, after he issued forth, was to build an altar and offer sacrifice to the God who had preserved him and his family alone, of the human race. And the Lord was well pleased, and made a covenant with him that he would never again

send a like destruction upon the earth, and as a sign and seal of the covenant which he made with all flesh, he set his bow in the cloud. We hence infer that the primeval world was watered by mists from the earth, like the garden of Eden, and not by rains.

The tradition of the deluge.

“The memory of the Deluge is preserved in the traditions of nearly all nations, as well as in the narrative of Moses; and most heathen mythologies have some kind of sacred ark.” Moreover, there are various geological phenomena in all parts of the world, which can not be accounted for on any other ground than some violent disruption produced by a universal Deluge. The Deluge itself can not be explained, although there are many ingenious theories to show it might be in accordance with natural causes. The Scriptures allude to it as a supernatural event, for an express end. When the supernatural power of God can be disproved, then it will be time to explain the Deluge by natural causes, or deny it altogether. The Christian world now accepts it as Moses narrates it.

CHAPTER II.

POSTDILUVIAN HISTORY TO THE CALL OF ABRAHAM.—THE PATRIARCHAL CONSTITUTION, AND THE DIVISION OF NATIONS

The Noachic Code.

When Noah and his family issued from the ark, they were blessed by God. They were promised a vast posterity, dominion over nature, and all animals for food, as well as the fruits of the earth. But new laws were imposed, against murder, and against the eating of blood. An authority was given to the magistrate to punish murder. “Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall *his* blood be shed.” This was not merely a penalty, but a prediction. The sacredness of life, and the punishment for murder are equally asserted, and asserted with peculiar emphasis. This may be said to be the Noachic Code, afterward extended by Moses. From that day to this, murder has been accounted the greatest human crime, and has been the most severely punished. On the whole, this crime has been the rarest in the subsequent history of the world, although committed with awful frequency, but seldom till other crimes are exhausted. The sacredness of life is the greatest of human privileges.

Patriarchal constitutions.

The government was patriarchal. The head of a family had almost unlimited power. And this government was religious as well as civil. The head of the family was both priest and king. He erected altars and divided inheritances. He ruled his sons, even if they had wives and children. And as the old patriarchs lived to a great age, their authority extended over several generations and great numbers of people.

Noah pursued the life of a husbandman, and planted vines, probably like the antediluvians. Nor did he escape the shame of drunkenness, though we have no evidence it was an habitual sin.

Consequences of the sin of Noah.

From this sin and shame great consequences followed. Noah was indecently exposed. The second son made light of it; the two others covered up the nakedness of their father. For this levity Ham was cursed in his children. Canaan, his son, was decreed to be a servant of servants—the ancestor of the races afterward exterminated by the Jews. To Shem, for his piety, was given a special religious blessing. Through him all the nations of the earth were blessed. To Japhet was promised especial temporal prosperity, and a participation of the blessing of Shem. The European races are now reaping this prosperity, and the religious privileges of Christianity.

Settlements of his descendants.

Four generations passed without any signal event. They all

spoke the same language, and pursued the same avocations. They lived in Armenia, but gradually spread over the surrounding countries and especially toward the west and south. They journeyed to the land of Shinar, and dwelt on its fertile plains. This was the great level of Lower Mesopotamia, or Chaldea, watered by the Euphrates.

The Tower of Babel.

Here they built a city, and aspired to build a tower which should reach unto the heavens. It was vanity and pride which incited them,—also fear lest they should be scattered.

Nimrod.

We read that Nimrod—one of the descendants of Ham—a mighty hunter, had migrated to this plain, and set up a kingdom at Babel—perhaps a revolt against patriarchal authority. Here was a great settlement—perhaps the central seat of the descendants of Noah, where Nimrod—the strongest man of his times—usurped dominion. Under his auspices the city was built—a stronghold from which he would defy all other powers. Perhaps here he instituted idolatry, since a tower was also a temple. But, whether fear or ambition or idolatry prompted the building of Babel, it displeased the Lord.

The Confusion of tongues.

The punishment which he inflicted upon the builders was confusion of tongues. The people could not understand each other, and were obliged to disperse. The tower was left

unfinished. The Lord “scattered the people abroad upon the face of all the earth.” Probably some remained at Babel, on the Euphrates—the forefathers of the Israelites when they dwelt in Chaldea. It is not probable that every man spoke a different language, but that there was a great division of language, corresponding with the great division of families, so that the posterity of Shem took one course, that of Japhet another, and that of Ham the third—dividing themselves into three separate nations, each speaking substantially the same tongue, afterward divided into different dialects from their peculiar circumstances.

Dispersion of nations.

Much learning and ingenuity have been expended in tracing the different races and languages of the earth to the grand confusion of Babel. But the subject is too complicated, and in the present state of science, too unsatisfactory to make it expedient to pursue ethnological and philological inquiries in a work so limited as this. We refer students to Max Muller, and other authorities.

The settlements of the children of Japhet.

But that there was a great tripartite division of the human family can not be doubted. The descendants of Japhet occupied a great zone running from the high lands of Armenia to the southeast, into the table-lands of Iran, and to Northern India, and to the west into Thrace, the Grecian peninsula, and Western Europe. And all the nations which subsequently sprung from the

children of Japhet, spoke languages the roots of which bear a striking affinity. This can be proved. The descendants of Japhet, supposed to be the oldest son of Noah, possessed the fairest lands of the world—most favorable to development and progress—most favorable to ultimate supremacy. They composed the great Caucasian race, which spread over Northern and Western Asia, and over Europe—superior to other races in personal beauty and strength, and also intellectual force. From the times of the Greek and Romans this race has held the supremacy of the world, as was predicted to Noah. “God shall enlarge Japhet, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant.” The conquest of the descendants of Ham by the Greeks and Romans, and their slavery, attest the truth of Scripture.

The settlements of the descendants of Shem.

The descendants of Shem occupied another belt or zone. It extended from the southeastern part of Asia Minor to the Persian Gulf and the peninsula of Arabia. The people lived in tents, were not ambitious of conquest, were religious and contemplative. The great theogonies of the East came from this people. They studied the stars. They meditated on God and theological questions. They were a chosen race with whom sacred history dwells. They had, compared with other races, a small territory between the possessions of Japhet on the north, and that of Ham on the south. Their destiny was not to spread over the world, but to exhibit the dealings of God's providence. From this race came the Jews and the Messiah. The most enterprising of the descendants of Shem

were the Phoenicians, who pursued commerce on a narrow strip of the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, and who colonized Carthage and North Africa, but were not powerful enough to contend successfully with the Romans in political power.

The descendants of Ham.

The most powerful of the posterity of Noah were the descendants of Ham, for more than two thousand years, since they erected great monarchies, and were warlike, aggressive, and unscrupulous. They lived in Egypt, Ethiopia, Palestine, and the countries around the Red Sea. They commenced their empire in Babel, on the great plain of Babylonia, and extended it northward into the land of Asshur (Assyria). They built the great cities of Antioch, Rehoboth, Calah and Resen. Their empire was the oldest in the world—that established by a Cushite dynasty on the plains of Babylon, and in the highlands of Persia. They cast off the patriarchal law, and indulged in a restless passion for dominion. And they were the most civilized of the ancient nations in arts and material life. They built cities and monuments of power. These temples, their palaces, their pyramids were the wonders of the ancient world. Their grand and somber architecture lasted for centuries. They were the wickedest of the nations of the earth, and effeminacy, pride and sensuality followed naturally from their material civilization unhallowed by high religious ideas. They were hateful conquerors and tyrants, and yet slaves. They were permitted to prosper until their vices wrought out their own destruction, and they

became finally subservient to the posterity of Japhet. But among some of the descendants of Ham civilization never advanced. The negro race of Africa ever has been degraded and enslaved. It has done nothing to advance human society. None of these races, even the most successful, have left durable monuments of intellect or virtue: they have left gloomy monuments of tyrannical and physical power. The Babylonians and Egyptians laid the foundation of some of the sciences and arts, but nothing remains at the present day which civilization values.

How impressive and august the ancient prophecy to Noah! How strikingly have all the predictions been fulfilled! These give to history an imperishable interest and grandeur.

CHAPTER III.

THE HEBREW RACE FROM ABRAHAM TO THE SALE OF JOSEPH

Abram.

We postpone the narrative of the settlements and empires which grew up on the banks of the Euphrates and the Nile, the oldest monarchies, until we have contemplated the early history of the Jews—descended from one of the children of Shem. This is not in chronological order, but in accordance with the inimitable history of Moses. The Jews did not become a nation until four hundred and thirty years after the call of Abram—and Abram was of the tenth generation from Noah. When he was born, great cities existed in Babylon, Canaan, and Egypt, and the descendants of Ham were the great potentates of earth. The children of Shem were quietly living in tents, occupied with agriculture and the raising of cattle. Those of Japhet were exploring all countries with zealous enterprise, and founding distant settlements—adventurers in quest of genial climates and fruitful fields.

Abram was born in Ur, a city of the Chaldeans, in the year 1996 before Christ—supposed by some to be the Edessa of the

Greeks, and by others to be a great maritime city on the right bank of the Euphrates near its confluence with the Tigris.

From this city his father Terah removed with his children and kindred to Haran, and dwelt there. It was in Mesopotamia—a rich district, fruitful in pasturage. Here Abram remained until he was 75, and had become rich.

The wanderings and settlements of Abraham.

While sojourning in this fruitful plain the Lord said unto him, “get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land which I will show thee.” “And I will make thee a great nation, and will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee. And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” So Abram departed with Lot, his nephew, and Sarai, his wife, with all his cattle and substance, to the land of Canaan, then occupied by that Hamite race which had probably proved unfriendly to his family in Chaldea. We do not know by what route he passed the Syrian desert, but he halted at Shechem, situated in a fruitful valley, one of the passes of the hills from Damascus to Canaan. He then built an altar to the Lord, probably among an idolatrous people. From want of pasturage, or some cause not explained, he removed from thence into a mountain on the east of Bethel, between that city and Hai, or Ai, when he again erected an altar, and called upon the living God. But here he did not long remain, being driven by a famine to the fertile land of Egypt, then ruled by the Pharaohs, whose

unscrupulous character he feared, and which tempted him to practice an unworthy deception, yet in accordance with profound worldly sagacity. It was the dictate of expediency rather than faith. He pretended that Sarai was his sister, and was well treated on her account by the princes of Egypt, and not killed, as he feared he would be if she was known to be his wife. The king, afflicted by great plagues in consequence of his attentions to this beautiful woman, sent Abram away, after a stern rebuke for the story he had told, with all his possessions.

The separation of Abraham and Lot.

The patriarch returned to Canaan, enriched by the princes of Egypt, and resumed his old encampment near Bethel. But there was not enough pasturage for his flocks, united with those of Lot. So, with magnanimous generosity, disinclined to strife or greed, he gave his nephew the choice of lands, but insisted on a division. "Is not the whole land before thee," said he: "Separate thyself, I pray thee: if thou wilt take the left hand, I will go to the right, and if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." The children of Ham and of Japhet would have quarreled, and one would have got the ascendancy over the other. Not so with the just and generous Shemite—the reproachless model of all oriental virtues, if we may forget the eclipse of his fair name in Egypt.

The settlements of Lot.

Lot chose, as was natural, the lower valley of the Jordan, a

fertile and well-watered plain, but near the wicked cities of the Canaanites, which lay in the track of the commerce between Arabia, Syria, Egypt, and the East. The worst vices of antiquity prevailed among them, and Lot subsequently realized, by a painful experience, the folly of seeking, for immediate good, such an accursed neighborhood.

Abram was contented with less advantages among the hills, and after a renewed blessing from the Lord, removed his tents to the plain of Mamre, near Hebron, one of the oldest cities of the world.

The first recorded battle in history.

The first battle that we read of in history was fought between the Chaldean monarch and the kings of the five cities of Canaan, near to the plain which Lot had selected. The kings were vanquished, and, in the spoliation which ensued, Lot himself and his cattle were carried away by Chederlaomer.

The victory of Abraham.

The news reached Abram in time for him to pursue the Chaldean king with his trained servants, three hundred and eighteen in number. In a midnight attack the Chaldeans were routed, since a panic was created, and Lot was rescued, with all his goods, from which we infer that Abram was a powerful chieftain, and was also assisted directly by God, as Joshua subsequently was in his unequal contest with the Canaanites.

Melchizedek.

The king of Sodom, in gratitude, went out to meet him on his return from the successful encounter, and also the king of Salem, Melchizedek, with bread and wine. This latter was probably of the posterity of Shem, since he was also a priest of the most high God, He blessed Abram, and gave him tithes, which Abram accepted.

The pride of Abraham.

But Abram would accept nothing from the king of Sodom—not even to a shoe-latchet—from patriarchal pride, or disinclination to have any intercourse with idolators. But he did not prevent his young warriors from eating his bread in their hunger. It was not the Sodomites he wished to rescue, but Lot, his kinsman and friend.

His prospects.

Abram, now a powerful chieftain and a rich man, well advanced in years, had no children, in spite of the promise of God that he should be the father of nations. His apparent heir was his chief servant, or steward, Elizur, of Damascus. He then reminds the Lord of the promise, and the Lord renewed the covenant, and Abram rested in faith.

Hagar.

Not so his wife Sarai. Skeptical that from herself should come the promised seed, she besought Abram to make a concubine or wife of her Egyptian maid, Hagar. Abram listens to her, and grants her request. Sarai is then despised by the woman, and lays

her complaint before her husband. Abram delivers the concubine into the hands of the jealous and offended wife, who dealt hardly with her, so that she fled to the wilderness. Thirsty and miserable, she was found by an angel, near to a fountain of water, who encouraged her by the promise that her child should be the father of a numerous nation, but counseled her to return to Sarai, and submit herself to her rule. In due time the child was born, and was called Ishmael—destined to be a wild man, with whom the world should be at enmity. Abram was now eighty-six years of age.

The renewed Covenant with Abraham.

Fourteen years later the Lord again renewed his covenant that he should be the father of many nations, who should possess forever the land of Canaan. His name was changed to Abraham (father of a multitude), and Sarai's was changed to Sarah. The Lord promised that from Sarah should come the predicted blessing. The patriarch is still incredulous, and laughs within himself; but God renews the promise, and henceforth Abraham believes, and, as a test of his faith, he institutes, by divine direction, the rite of circumcision to Ishmael and all the servants and slaves of his family—even those “bought with money of the stranger.”

The birth of Isaac.

In due time, according to prediction, Sarah gave birth to Isaac, who was circumcised on the eighth day, when Abraham

was 100 years old. Ishmael, now a boy of fifteen, made a mockery of the event, whereupon Sarah demanded that the son of the bondwoman, her slave, should be expelled from the house, with his mother. Abraham was grieved also, and, by divine counsel, they were both sent away, with some bread and a bottle of water. The water was soon expended in the wilderness of Beersheba, and Hagar sat down in despair and wept. God heard her lamentations, and she opened her eyes and saw that she was seated near a well. The child was preserved, and dwelt in the wilderness of Paran, pursuing the occupation of an archer, or huntsman, and his mother found for him a wife out of the land of Egypt. He is the ancestor of the twelve tribes of Bedouin Arabs, among whom the Hamite blood predominated.

The destruction of Sodom.

Meanwhile, as Abraham dwelt on the plains of Mamre, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah took place, because not ten righteous persons could be found therein. But Lot was rescued by angels, and afterward dwelt in a cave, for fear, his wife being turned into a pillar of salt for daring to look back on the burning cities. He lived with his two daughters, who became the guilty mothers of the Moabites and the Ammonites, who settled on the hills to the east of Jordan and the Dead Sea.

The duplicity of Abraham.

Before the birth of Isaac, Abraham removed to the South, and dwelt in Gerar, a city of the Philistines, and probably for the

same reason that he had before sought the land of Egypt. But here the same difficulty occurred as in Egypt. The king, Abimelech, sent and took Sarah, supposing she was merely Abraham's sister; and Abraham equivocated and deceived in this instance to save his own life. But the king, warned by God in a dream, restored unto Abraham his wife, and gave him sheep, oxen, men servants and women servants, and one thousand pieces of silver, for he knew he was a prophet. In return Abraham prayed for him, and removed from him and his house all impediments for the growth of his family. The king, seeing how Abraham was prospered, made a covenant with him, so that the patriarch lived long among the Philistines, worshiping "the everlasting God."

The Trial of Abraham.

Then followed the great trial of his faith, when requested to sacrifice Isaac. And when he was obedient to the call, and did not withhold his son, his only son, from the sacrificial knife, having faith that his seed should still possess the land of Canaan, he was again blessed, and in the most emphatic language. After this he dwelt in Beersheba.

Death of Sarah.

At the age of 120 Sarah died at Hebron, and Abraham purchased of Ephron the Hittite, the cave of Machpelah, with a field near Mamre, for four hundred shekels of silver, in which he buried his wife.

The marriage of Isaac.

Shortly after, he sought a wife for Isaac. But he would not accept any of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom he dwelt, but sent his eldest and most trusted servant to Mesopotamia, with ten loaded camels, to secure one of his own people. Rebekah, the grand-daughter of Nahor, the brother of Abraham, was the favored damsel whom the Lord provided. Her father and brother accepted the proposal of Abraham's servant, and loaded with presents, jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and raiment, the Mesopotamian lady departed from her country and her father's house, with the benediction of the whole family. "Be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them." Thus was "Isaac comforted after his mother's death."

Second marriage of Abraham.

Abraham married again, and had five sons by Keturah; but, in his life-time, he gave all he had unto Isaac, except some gifts to his other children, whom he sent away, that they might not dispute the inheritance with Isaac. He died at a good old age, 175 years, and was buried by his sons, Isaac and Ishmael, in the cave of Machpelah, which had been purchased of the sons of Heth. Isaac thus became the head of the house, with princely possessions, living near a well.

He deceives the Philistines.

But a famine arose, as in the days of his father, and he went to Gerar, and not to Egypt. He, however, was afraid to call

Rebekah his wife, for the same reason that Abraham called Sarah his sister. But the king happening from his window to see Isaac “sporting with Rebekah,” knew he had been deceived, yet abstained from taking her, and even loaded Isaac with new favors, so that he became very great and rich—so much so that the Philistines envied him, and maliciously filled up the wells which Abraham had dug. Here again he was befriended by Abimelech, who saw that the Lord was with him, and a solemn covenant of peace was made between them, and new wells were dug.

The affliction of Isaac.

Isaac, it seems, led a quiet and peaceful life—averse to all strife with the Canaanites, and gradually grew very rich. He gave no evidence of remarkable strength of mind, and was easily deceived. His greatest affliction was the marriage of his eldest and favorite son Esau with a Hittite woman, and it was probably this mistake and folly which confirmed the superior fortunes of Jacob.

Jacob and Esau.

Esau was a hunter. On returning one day from hunting he was faint from hunger, and cast a greedy eye on some pottage that Jacob had prepared. But Jacob would not give his hungry brother the food until he had promised, by a solemn oath, to surrender his birthright to him. The clever man of enterprise, impulsive and passionate, thought more, for the moment, of the pangs of hunger

than of his future prospects, and the quiet, plain, and cunning man of tents availed himself of his brother's rashness.

Jacob obtains the birthright. The despair of Esau.

But the birthright was not secure to Jacob without his father's blessing. So he, with his mother's contrivance, for he was *her* favorite, deceived his father, and appeared to be Esau. Isaac, old and dim and credulous, supposing that Jacob, clothed in Esau's vestments as a hunter, and his hands covered with skins, was his eldest son, blessed him. The old man still had doubts, but Jacob falsely declared that he was Esau, and obtained what he wanted. When Esau returned from the hunt he saw what Jacob had done, and his grief was bitter and profound. He cried out in his agony, "Bless me even me, also, O my father." And Isaac said: "Thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing." And Esau said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob—that is, a supplanter—for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright, and behold now he hath taken away my blessing." "And he lifted up his voice and wept." Isaac, then moved, declared that his dwelling should be the fatness of the earth, even though he should serve his brother,—that he should live by the sword, and finally break the yoke from off his neck. This was all Esau could wring from his father. He hated Jacob with ill-concealed resentment, as was to be expected, and threatened to kill him on his father's death. Rebekah advised Jacob to flee to his uncle, giving as an excuse to Isaac, that he sought a wife in Mesopotamia. This pleased Isaac, who regarded

a marriage with a Canaanite as the greatest calamity. So he again gave him his blessing, and advised him to select one of the daughters of Laban for his wife. And Jacob departed from his father's house, and escaped the wrath of Esau. But Esau, seeing that his Hittite wife was offensive to his father, married also one of the daughters of Ishmael, his cousin.

Jacob's wanderings.

Jacob meanwhile pursued his journey. Arriving at a certain place after sunset, he lay down to sleep, with stones for his pillow, and he dreamed that a ladder set up on the earth reached the heavens, on which the angels of God ascended and descended, and above it was the Lord himself, the God of his father, who renewed all the promises that had been made to Abraham of the future prosperity of his house. He then continued his journey till he arrived in Haran, by the side of a well. Thither Rachel, the daughter of Laban, came to draw water for the sheep she tended. Jacob rolled away the stone from the mouth of the well, and watered her flock, and kissed her, and wept, for he had found in his cousin his bride. He then told her who he was, and she ran and told her father that his nephew had come, Isaac's son, and Laban was filled with joy, and kissed Jacob and brought him to his house, where he dwelt a month as a guest.

He served Laban.

An agreement was then made that Jacob should serve Laban seven years, and receive in return for his services his youngest

daughter Rachel, whom he loved. But Laban deceived him, and gave him Leah instead, and Jacob was compelled to serve another seven years before he obtained her. Thus he had two wives, the one tender-eyed, the other beautiful. But he loved Rachel and hated Leah.

The quarrel with Laban.

Jacob continued to serve Laban until he was the father of eleven sons and a daughter, and then desired to return to his own country. But Laban, unwilling to lose so profitable a son-in-law, raised obstacles. Jacob, in the mean time, became rich, although his flocks and herds were obtained by a sharp bargain, which he turned to his own account. The envy of Laban's sons was the result. Laban also was alienated, whereupon Jacob fled, with his wives and children and cattle. Laban pursued, overtook him, and after an angry altercation, in which Jacob recounted his wrongs during twenty years of servitude, and Laban claimed every thing as his—daughters, children and cattle, they made a covenant on a heap of stones not to pass either across it for the other's harm, and Laban returned to his home and Jacob went on his way.

Meeting of Esau and Jacob.

But Esau, apprised of the return of his brother, came out of Edom against him with four hundred men. Jacob was afraid, and sought to approach Esau with presents. The brothers met, but whether from fraternal impulse or by the aid of God, they met affectionately, and fell into each other's arms and wept.

Jacob offered his presents, which Esau at first magnanimously refused to take, but finally accepted: peace was restored, and Jacob continued his journey till he arrived in Thalamon—a city of Shechem, in the land of Canaan, where he pitched his tent and erected an altar.

Here he was soon brought into collision with the people of Shechem, whose prince had inflicted a great wrong. Levi and Simeon avenged it, and the city was spoiled.

Jacob in Bethel.

Jacob, perhaps in fear of the other Amorites, retreated to Bethel, purged his household of all idolatry, and built an altar, and God again appeared to him, blessed him and changed his name to Israel.

Death of Rachel.

Soon after, Rachel died, on the birth of her son, Benjamin, and Jacob came to see his father in Mamre, now 180 years of age, and about to die. Esau and Jacob buried him in the cave of Machpelah.

Esau dwelt in Edom, the progenitor of a long line of dukes or princes. The seat of his sovereignty was Mount Seir.

The sale of Joseph.

Jacob continued to live in Hebron—a patriarchal prince, rich in cattle, and feared by his neighbors. His favorite son was Joseph, and his father's partiality excited the envy of the other sons. They conspired to kill him, but changed their purpose

through the influence of Reuben, and cast him into a pit in the wilderness. While he lay there, a troop of Ishmaelites appeared, and to them, at the advice of Judah, they sold him as a slave, but pretended to their father that he was slain by wild beasts, and produced, in attestation, his lacerated coat of colors. The Ishmaelites carried Joseph to Egypt, and sold him to Potaphar, captain of Pharaoh's guard. Before we follow his fortunes, we will turn our attention to the land whence he was carried.

CHAPTER IV.

EGYPT AND THE PHARAOHS

The original inhabitants of Egypt.

The first country to which Moses refers, in connection with the Hebrew history, is Egypt. This favored land was the seat of one of the oldest monarchies of the world. Although it would seem that Assyria was first peopled, historians claim for Egypt a more remote antiquity. Whether this claim can be substantiated or not, it is certain that Egypt was one of the primeval seats of the race of Ham. Mizraim, the Scripture name for the country, indicates that it was settled by a son of Ham. But if this is true even, the tide of emigration from Armenia probably passed to the southeast through Syria and Palestine, and hence the descendants of Ham had probably occupied the land of Canaan before they crossed the desert between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean. I doubt if Egypt had older cities than Damascus, Hebron, Zoar, and Tyre.

But Egypt certainly was a more powerful monarchy than any existing on the earth in the time of Abraham.

Their peculiarities.

Its language, traditions, and monuments alike point to a high antiquity. It was probably inhabited by a mixed race, Shemitic as well as Hamite; though the latter had the supremacy. The

distinction of castes indicates a mixed population, so that the ancients doubted whether Egypt belonged to Asia or Africa. The people were not black, but of a reddish color, with thick lips, straight black hair, and elongated eye, and sunk in the degraded superstitions of the African race.

The fertility of Egypt.

The geographical position indicates not only a high antiquity, but a state favorable to great national wealth and power. The river Nile, issuing from a great lake under the equator, runs 3,000 miles nearly due north to the Mediterranean. Its annual inundations covered the valley with a rich soil brought down from the mountains of Abyssinia, making it the most fertile in the world. The country, thus so favored by a great river, with its rich alluvial deposits, is about 500 miles in length, with an area of 115,000 square miles, of which 9,600 are subject to the fertilizing inundation. But, in ancient times, a great part of the country was irrigated, and abounded in orchards, gardens, and vineyards. Every kind of vegetable was cultivated, and grain was raised in the greatest abundance, so that the people lived in luxury and plenty while other nations were subject to occasional famines.

The productions of Egypt.

Among the fruits, were dates, grapes, figs, pomegranates, apricots, peaches, oranges, citrons, lemons, limes, bananas, melons, mulberries, olives. Among vegetables, if we infer from

what exist at present, were beans, peas, lentils, luprins, spinach, leeks, onions, garlic, celery, chiccory, radishes, carrots, turnips, lettuce, cabbage, fennel, gourds, cucumbers, tomatoes, egg-plant. What a variety for the sustenance of man, to say nothing of the various kinds of grain,—barley, oats, maize, rice, and especially wheat, which grows to the greatest perfection.

In old times the horses were famous, as well as cattle, and sheep, and poultry. Quails were abundant, while the marshes afforded every kind of web-footed fowl. Fish, too, abounded in the Nile, and in the lakes. Bees were kept, and honey was produced, though inferior to that of Greece.

The castes of Egypt.

The climate also of this fruitful land was salubrious without being enervating. The soil was capable of supporting a large population, which amounted, in the time of Herodotus, to seven millions. On the banks of the Nile were great cities, whose ruins still astonish travelers. The land, except that owned by the priests, belonged to the king, who was supreme and unlimited in power. The people were divided into castes, the highest being priests, and the lowest husbandmen. The kings were hereditary, but belonged to the priesthood, and their duties and labors were arduous. The priests were the real governing body, and were treated with the most respectful homage. They were councilors of the king, judges of the land, and guardians of all great interests. The soldiers were also numerous, and formed a distinct caste.

Egyptian dynasties.

When Abram visited Egypt, impelled by the famine in Canaan, it was already a powerful monarchy. This was about 1921 years before Christ, according to the received chronology, when the kings of the 15th dynasty reigned. These dynasties of ancient kings are difficult to be settled, and rest upon traditions rather than well defined historical grounds,—or rather on the authority of Manetho, an Egyptian priest, who lived nearly 300 years before Christ. His list of dynasties has been confirmed, to a great extent, by the hieroglyphic inscriptions which are still to be found on ancient monuments, but they give us only a barren catalogue of names without any vital historical truths. Therefore these old dynasties, before Abraham, are only interesting to antiquarians, and not satisfactory to them, since so little is known or can be known. These, if correct, would give a much greater antiquity to Egypt than can be reconciled with Mosaic history. But all authorities agree in ascribing to Menes the commencement of the first dynasty, 2712 years before Christ, according to Hales, but 3893 according to Lepsius, and 2700 according to Lane. Neither Menes nor his successors of the first dynasty left any monuments. It is probable, however, that Memphis was built by them, and possibly hieroglyphics were invented during their reigns.

But here a chronological difficulty arises. The Scriptures ascribe ten generations from Shem to Abram. Either the generations were made longer than in our times, or the seventeen

dynasties, usually supposed to have reigned when Abram came to Egypt, could not have existed; for, according to the received chronology, he was born 1996, B.C., and the Deluge took place 2349, before Christ, leaving but 353 years from the Deluge to the birth of Abraham. How could seventeen dynasties have reigned in Egypt in that time, even supposing that Egypt was settled immediately after the Flood, unless either more than ten generations existed from Noah to Abram, or that these generations extended over seven or eight hundred years? Until science shall reconcile the various chronologies with the one usually received, there is but little satisfaction in the study of Egyptian history prior to Abram. Nor is it easy to settle when the Pyramids were constructed. If they existed in the time of Abram a most rapid advance had been made in the arts, unless a much longer period elapsed from Noah to Abraham than Scripture seems to represent.

The Pyramids.

Nothing of interest occurs in Egyptian history until the fourth dynasty of kings, when the pyramids of Ghizeh, were supposed to have been built—a period more remote than Scripture ascribes to the Flood itself, according to our received chronology. These were the tombs of the Memphian kings, who believed in the immortality of the soul, and its final reunion with the body after various forms of transmigration. Hence the solicitude to preserve the body in some enduring monument, and by elaborate embalment. What more durable monument than

these great masses of granite, built to defy the ravages of time, and the spoliations of conquerors! The largest of these pyramids, towering above other pyramids, and the lesser sepulchres of the rich, was built upon a square of 756 feet, and the height of it was 489 feet 9 inches, covering an area of 571,536 feet, or more than thirteen acres. The whole mass contained 90,000,000 cubic feet of masonry, weighing 6,316,000 tons. Nearly in the centre of this pile of stone, reached by a narrow passage, were the chambers where the royal sarcophagi were deposited. At whatever period these vast monuments were actually built, they at least go back into remote antiquity, and probably before the time of Abram.

Thebes.

The first great name of the early Egyptian kings was Sesertesen, or Osirtasin I., the founder of the twelfth dynasty of kings, B.C. 2080. He was a great conqueror, and tradition confounds him with the Sesostris of the Greeks, which gathered up stories about him as the Middle Ages did of Charlemagne and his paladins. The real Sesostris was Ramenes the Great, of the nineteenth dynasty. By the kings of this dynasty (the twelfth) Ethiopia was conquered, the Labyrinth was built, and Lake Moevis dug, to control the inundations. Under them Thebes became a great city. The dynasty lasted 100 years, but became subject to the Shepherd kings. These early Egyptian monarchs wore fond of peace, and their subjects enjoyed repose and prosperity.

The shepherd kings.

The Shepherd kings, who ruled 400 years, were supposed by Manetho to be Arabs, but leaves us to infer that they were Phœnicians—as is probable—a roving body of conquerors, who easily subdued the peaceful Egyptians. They have left no monumental history. They were alien to the conquered race in language and habits, and probably settled in Lower Egypt where the land was most fertile, and where conquests would be most easily retained.

It was under their rule that Abram probably visited Egypt when driven by a famine from Canaan. And they were not expelled till the time of Joseph, by the first of the eighteenth dynasty. The descendants of the old kings, we suppose, lived in Thebes, and were tributary princes for 400 years, but gained sufficient strength, finally, to expel the Shemite invaders, even as the Gothic nations of Spain, in the Middle Ages, expelled their conquerors, the Moors.

Friendly relations of the Hebrews with the Shepherd Kings.

But it was under the Shepherd kings that the relations between Egypt and the Hebrew patriarchs took place. We infer this fact from the friendly intercourse and absence of national prejudices. The Phœnicians belonged to the same Shemitic stock from which Abraham came. They built no temples. They did not advance a material civilization. They loaded Abram and Joseph with

presents, and accepted the latter as a minister and governor. We read of no great repulsion of races, and see a great similarity in pursuits.

Expulsion of the Shepherd kings.

Meanwhile, the older dynasties under whom Thebes was built, probably B.C. 2200, gathered strength in misfortune and subjection. They reigned, during five dynasties, in a subordinate relation, tributary and oppressed. The first king of the eighteenth dynasty seems to have been a remarkable man—the deliverer of his nation. His name was Aah-mes, or Amo-sis, and he expelled the shepherds from the greater part of Egypt, B.C. 1525. In his reign we see on the monuments chariots and horses. He built temples both in Thebes and Memphis, and established a navy. This was probably the king who knew not Joseph. His successors continued the work of conquest, and extended their dominion from Ethiopia to Mesopotamia, and obtained that part of Western Asia formerly held by the Chaldeans. They built the temple of Karnak, the “Vocal Memnon,” and the avenue of Sphinxes in Thebes.

Greatness of Ramesis II. His architectural works.

The grandest period of Egyptian history begins with the nineteenth dynasty, founded by Sethee I., or Sethos, B.C. 1340. He built the famous “Hall of Columns,” in the temple of Karnak, and the finest of the tombs of the Theban kings. On the walls of this great temple are depicted his conquests, especially over

the Hittites. But the glories of the monarchy, now decidedly military, culminated in Ramesis II.—the Sesostris of the Greeks. He extended his dominion as far as Scythia and Thrace, while his naval expeditions penetrated to the Erythræan Sea. The captives which he brought from his wars were employed in digging canals, which intersected the country, for purposes of irrigation, and especially that great canal which united the Mediterranean with the Red Sea. He added to the temple of Karnak, built the Memnonium on the western side of the Nile, opposite to Thebes, and enlarged the temple of Ptah, at Memphis, which he adorned by a beautiful colossal statue, the fist of which is (now in the British Museum) thirty inches wide across the knuckles. But the Rameseum, or Memnonium, was his greatest architectural work, approached by an avenue of sphinxes and obelisks, in the centre of which was the great statue of Ramesis himself, sixty feet high, carved from a single stone of the red granite of Syene.

Decline of Thebes.

The twentieth dynasty was founded by Sethee II., B.C. 1220 (or 1232 B.C., according to Wilkinson), when Gideon ruled the Israelites and Theseus reigned at Athens and Priam at Troy. The third king of this dynasty—Ramesis III.—built palaces and tombs scarcely inferior to any of the Theban kings, but under his successors the Theban power declined. Under the twenty-first dynasty, which began B.C. 1085, Lower Egypt had a new capital, Zoan, and gradually extended its power over Upper Egypt. It had a strong Shemetic element in its population, and strengthened

itself by alliances with the Assyrians.

The twenty-second dynasty was probably Assyrian, and began about 1009 B.C. It was hostile to the Jews, and took and sacked Jerusalem.

Obscurity of Egyptian history.

From this period the history of Egypt is obscure. Ruled by Assyrians, and then by Ethiopians, the grandeur of the old Theban monarchy had passed away. On the rise of the Babylonian kingdom, over the ruins of the old Assyrian Empire, Egypt was greatly prostrated as a military power. Babylon became the great monarchy of the East, and gained possession of all the territories of the Theban kings, from the Euphrates to the Nile.

Leaving, then, the obscure and uninteresting history of Egypt, which presents nothing of especial interest until its conquest by Alexander, B.C. 332, with no great kings even, with the exception of Necho, of the twenty-sixth dynasty, B.C. 611, we will present briefly the religion, manners, customs, and attainments of the ancient Egyptians.

Religion of the Egyptians.

Their religion was idolatrous. They worshiped various divinities: Num, the soul of the universe; Amen, the generative principle; Khom, by whom the productiveness of nature was emblemized; Ptah, or the creator of the universe; Ra, the sun; Thoth, the patron of letters; Athor, the goddess of beauty; Mu,

physical light; Mat, moral light; Munt, the god of war; Osiris, the personification of good; Isis, who presided over funeral rites; Set, the personification of evil; Anup, who judged the souls of the departed.

The Deities.

These were principal deities, and were worshiped through sacred animals, as emblems of divinity. Among them were the bulls, Apis, at Memphis, and Muenis, at Heliopolis, both sacred to Osiris. The crocodile was sacred to Lebak, whose offices are unknown; the asp to Num; the cat to Pasht, whose offices were also unknown; the beetle to Ptah. The worship of these and of other animals was conducted with great ceremony, and sacrifices were made to them of other animals, fruits and vegetables.

Man was held accountable for his actions, and to be judged, according to them. He was to be brought before Osiris, and receive from him future rewards or punishments.

Laws of the Egyptians.

The penal laws of the Egyptians were severe. Murder was punished with death. Adultery was punished by the man being beaten with a thousand rods. The woman had her nose cut off. Theft was punished with less severity—with a beating by a stick. Usury was not permitted beyond double of the debt, and the debtor was not imprisoned.

Government.

The government was a monarchy, only limited by the

priesthood, into whose order he was received, and was administered by men appointed by the king. On the whole, it was mild and paternal, and exercised for the good of the people.

Habits of the people.

Polygamy was not common, though concubines were allowed. In the upper classes women were treated with great respect, and were regarded as the equals of men. They ruled their households. The rich were hospitable, and delighted to give feasts, at which were dancers and musicians. They possessed chariots and horses, and were indolent and pleasure-seeking. The poor people toiled, with scanty clothing and poor fare.

Literary culture.

Hieroglyphic writing prevailed from a remote antiquity. The papyrus was also used for hieratic writing, and numerous papyri have been discovered, which show some advance in literature. Astronomy was cultivated by the priests, and was carried to the highest point it could attain without modern instruments. Geometry also reached considerable perfection. Mechanics must have been carried to a great extent, when we remember that vast blocks of stone were transported 500 miles and elevated to enormous heights. Chemistry was made subservient to many arts, such as the working of metals and the tempering of steel. But architecture was the great art in which the Egyptians excelled, as we infer from the ruins of temples and palaces; and these wonderful fabrics were ornamented with paintings which have

preserved their color to this day. Architecture was massive, grand, and imposing. Magical arts were in high estimation, and chiefly exercised by the priests. The industrial arts reached great excellence, especially in the weaving of linen, pottery, and household furniture. The Egyptians were great musicians, using harps, flutes, cymbals, and drums. They were also great gardeners. In their dress they were simple, frugal in diet, though given to occasional excess; fond of war, but not cruel like the Assyrians; hospitable among themselves, shy of strangers, patriotic in feeling, and contemplative in character.

CHAPTER V.

THE JEWS UNTIL THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN

Potiphar and Joseph. Elevation of Joseph.

When Joseph was sold by the Midianites to Potiphar, Egypt was probably ruled by the Shepherd kings, who were called Pharaoh, like all the other kings, by the Jewish writers. Pitiphar (Pet-Pha, dedicated to the sun) was probably the second person in the kingdom. Joseph, the Hebrew slave, found favor in his sight, and was gradually promoted to the oversight of his great household. Cast into prison, from the intrigues of Potiphar's wife, whose disgraceful overtures he had virtuously and honorably rejected, he found favor with the keeper of the prison, who intrusted him with the sole care of the prisoners, although himself a prisoner,—a striking proof of his transparent virtue. In process of time two other high officers of the king, having offended him, were cast into the same prison. They had strange dreams. Joseph interpreted them, indicating the speedy return of the one to favor, and of the other to as sudden an execution. These things came to pass. After two years the king himself had a singular dream, and none of the professional magicians or priests of Egypt could interpret it. It then occurred to the chief butler that Joseph, whom he had forgotten and neglected, could

interpret the royal dream which troubled him. He told the king of his own dream in prison, and the explanation of it by the Hebrew slave. Whereupon Joseph was sent for, shaven and washed, and clothed with clean raiment to appear in the royal palace, and he interpreted the king's dream, which not only led to his promotion to be governor over Egypt, with the State chariots for his use, and all the emblems of sovereignty about his person—a viceroy whose power was limited only by that of the king—but he was also instrumental in rescuing Egypt from the evils of that terrible famine which for seven years afflicted Western Asia. He was then thirty years of age, 1715 B.C., and his elevation had been earned by the noblest qualities—fidelity to his trusts, patience, and high principle—all of which had doubtless been recounted to the king.

His rule as Viceroy.

The course which Joseph pursued toward the Egyptians was apparently hard. The hoarded grain of seven years' unexampled plenty was at first sold to the famishing people, and when they had no longer money to buy it, it was only obtained by the surrender of their cattle, and then by the alienation of their land, so that the king became possessed of all the property of the realm, personal as well as real, except that of the priests. But he surrendered the land back again to the people subsequently, on condition of the payment of one-fifth of the produce annually (which remained to the time of Moses)—a large tax, but not so great as was exacted of the peasantry of France by their feudal

and royal lords. This proceeding undoubtedly strengthened the power of the Shepherd kings, and prevented insurrections.

The famine in Egypt.

The severity of the famine compels the brothers of Joseph to seek corn in Egypt. Their arrival of course, is known to the governor, who has unlimited rule. They appear before him, and bowed themselves before him, as was predicted by Joseph's dreams. But clothed in the vesture of princes, with a gold chain around his neck, and surrounded by the pomp of power, they did not know him, while he knows them. He speaks to them, through an interpreter, harshly and proudly, accuses them of being spies, obtains all the information he wanted, and learns that his father and Benjamin are alive. He even imprisons them for three days. He releases them on the condition that they verify their statement; as a proof of which, he demands the appearance of Benjamin himself.

Benjamin and his brothers. Moses as an historian.

They return to Canaan with their sacks filled with corn, and the money which they had brought to purchase it, secretly restored, leaving Simeon as surety for the appearance of Benjamin. To this Jacob will not assent. But starvation drives them again to Egypt, the next year, and Jacob, reluctantly is compelled to allow Benjamin to go with them. The unexpected feast which Joseph made for them, sitting himself at another table—the greater portions given to Benjamin, the deception played

upon them by the secretion of Joseph's silver cup in Benjamin's sack, as if he were a thief, the distress of all the sons of Jacob, the eloquent pleadings of Judah, the restrained tears of Joseph, the discovery of himself to them, the generosity of Pharaoh, the return of Jacob's children laden not only with corn but presents, the final migration of the whole family, to the land of Goshen, in the royal chariots, and the consummation of Joseph's triumphs, and happiness of Jacob—all these facts and incidents are told by Moses in the most fascinating and affecting narrative ever penned by man. It is absolutely transcendent, showing not only the highest dramatic skill, but revealing the Providence of God—that overruling power which causes good to come from evil, which is the most impressive lesson of all history, in every age. That single episode is worth more to civilization than all the glories of ancient Egypt; nor is there anything in the history of the ancient monarchies so valuable to all generations as the record by Moses of the early relations between God and his chosen people. And that is the reason why I propose to give them, in this work, their proper place, even if it be not after the fashion with historians. The supposed familiarity with Jewish history ought not to preclude the narration of these great events, and the substitution for them of the less important and obscure annals of the Pagans.

Prosperity of the Hebrews. Their subsequent miseries.

Joseph remained the favored viceroy of Egypt until he died, having the supreme satisfaction of seeing the prosperity of his

father's house, and their rapid increase in the land of Goshen, on the eastern frontier of the Delta of the Nile,—a land favorable for herds and flocks. The capital of this district was On—afterward Heliopolis, the sacred City of the Sun, a place with which Joseph was especially connected by his marriage with the daughter of the high priest of On. Separated from the Egyptians by their position as shepherds, the children of Jacob retained their patriarchal constitution. In 215 years, they became exceedingly numerous, but were doomed, on the change of dynasty which placed Ramesis on the throne, to oppressive labors. Joseph died at the age of 110—eighty years after he had become governor of Egypt. In his latter years the change in the Egyptian dynasty took place. The oppression of his people lasted eighty years; and this was consummated by the cruel edict which doomed to death the infants of Israel; made, probably, in fear and jealousy from the rapid increase of the Israelites. The great crimes of our world, it would seem, are instigated by these passions, rather than hatred and malignity, like the massacre of St. Bartholomew and the atrocities of the French Revolution.

Moses.

But a deliverer was raised up by God in the person of Moses, the greatest man in human annals, when we consider his marvelous intellectual gifts, his great work of legislation, his heroic qualities, his moral excellence, and his executive talents. His genius is more powerfully stamped upon civilization than that of any other one man—not merely on the Jews, but even

Christian nations. He was born B.C. 1571, sixty-four years after the death of Joseph. Hidden in his birth, to escape the sanguinary decree of Pharaoh he was adopted by the daughter of the king, and taught by the priests in all the learning of the Egyptians. He was also a great warrior, and gained great victories over the Ethiopians. But seeing the afflictions of his brethren, he preferred to share their lot than enjoy all the advantages of his elevated rank in the palace of the king—an act of self-renunciation unparalleled in history. Seeing an Egyptian smite a Hebrew, he slew him in a burst of indignation, and was compelled to fly. He fled to Jethro, an Arab chieftain, among the Midianites. He was now forty years of age, in the prime of his life, and in the full maturity of his powers. The next forty years were devoted to a life of contemplation, the best preparation for his future duties. In the most secret places of the wilderness of Sinai, at Horeb, he communed with God, who appeared in the burning bush, and revealed the magnificent mission which he was destined to fulfill. He was called to deliver his brethren from bondage; but forty years of quiet contemplation, while tending the flocks of Jethro, whose daughter he married, had made him timid and modest. God renewed the covenant made to Abraham and Jacob, and Moses returned to Egypt to fulfill his mission. He joined himself with Aaron, his brother, and the two went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel, and after securing their confidence by signs and wonders, revealed their mission.

The slavery of the Israelites.

They then went to Pharaoh, a new king, and entreated of him permission to allow the people of Israel to go into the wilderness and hold a feast in obedience to the command of God. But Pharaoh said, who is the Lord that I should obey his voice. I know not the Lord—*your God*. The result was, the anger of the king and the increased burdens of the Israelites, which tended to make them indifferent to the voice of Moses, from the excess of their anguish.

The ten plagues. The deliverance of the Israelites.

Then followed the ten plagues which afflicted the Egyptians, and the obstinacy of the monarch, resolved to suffer any evil rather than permit the Israelites to go free. But the last plague was greater than the king could bear—the destruction of all the first-born in his land—and he hastily summoned Moses and Aaron in the night, under the impulse of a mighty fear, and bade them to depart with all their hosts and all their possessions. The Egyptians seconded the command, anxious to be relieved from further evils, and the Israelites, after spoiling the Egyptians, departed in the night—“a night to be much observed” for all generations, marching by the line of the ancient canal from Rameses, not far from Heliopolis, toward the southern frontier of Palestine. But Moses, instructed not to conduct his people at once to a conflict with the warlike inhabitants of Canaan, for which they were unprepared, having just issued from slavery, brought them

round by a sudden turn to the south and east, upon an arm or gulf of the Red Sea. To the eyes of the Egyptians, who repented that they had suffered them to depart, and who now pursued them with a great army, they were caught in a trap. Their miraculous deliverance, one of the great events of their history, and the ruin of the Egyptian hosts, and their three months' march and countermarch in the wilderness need not be enlarged upon.

The exodus.

The exodus took place 430 years from the call of Abraham, after a sojourn in Egypt of 215 years, the greater part of which had been passed in abject slavery and misery. There were 600,000 men, besides women and children and strangers.

Hebrew jurisprudence.

It was during their various wanderings in the wilderness of Sinai—forty years of discipline—that Moses gave to the Hebrews the rules they were to observe during all their generations, until a new dispensation should come. These form that great system of original jurisprudence that has entered, more or less, into the codes of all nations, and by which the genius of the lawgiver is especially manifested; although it is not to be forgotten he framed his laws by divine direction.

Let us examine briefly the nature and character of these laws. They have been ably expounded by Bishop Warburton, Prof. Wines and others.

The principles of the Jewish code.

The great fundamental principle of the Jewish code was to establish the doctrine of the unity of God. Idolatry had crept into the religious system of all the other nations of the world, and a degrading polytheism was everywhere prevalent. The Israelites had not probably escaped the contagion of bad example, and the suggestions of evil powers. The most necessary truth to impress upon the nation was the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. Jehovah was made the supreme head of the Jewish state, whom the Hebrews were required, first and last, to recognize, and whose laws they were required to obey. And this right to give laws to the Hebrews was deduced, not only because he was the supreme creator and preserver, but because he had also signally and especially laid the foundation of the state by signs and miracles. He had spoken to the patriarchs, he had brought them into the land of Egypt, he had delivered them when oppressed. Hence, they were to have no other gods than this God of Abraham—this supreme, personal, benevolent God. The violation of this fundamental law was to be attended with the severest penalties. Hence Moses institutes the worship of the Supreme Deity. It was indeed ritualistic, and blended with sacrifices and ceremonies; but the idea—the spiritual idea of God as the supreme object of all obedience and faith, was impressed first of all upon the minds of the Israelites, and engraven on the tables of stone—"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

Having established the idea and the worship of God, Moses

then instituted the various rites of the service, and laid down the principles of civil government, as the dictation of this Supreme Deity, under whose supreme guidance they were to be ruled.

The Ten Commandments.

But before the details of the laws were given to guide the Israelites in their civil polity, or to regulate the worship of Jehovah, Moses, it would seem, first spake the word of God, amid the thunders and lightnings of Sinai, to the assembled people, and delivered the ten fundamental commandments which were to bind them and all succeeding generations. Whether these were those which were afterward written on the two tables of stone, or not, we do not know. We know only that these great obligations were declared soon after the Israelites had encamped around Sinai, and to the whole people orally.

And, with these, God directed Moses more particularly to declare also the laws relating to man-servants, and to manslaughter, to injury to women, to stealing, to damage, to the treatment of strangers, to usury, to slander, to the observance of the Sabbath, to the reverence due to magistrates, and sundry other things, which seem to be included in the ten commandments.

Moses on Mount Sinai.

After this, if we rightly interpret the book of Exodus, Moses went up into the mountain of Sinai, and there abode forty days and forty nights, receiving the commandments of God. Then

followed the directions respecting the ark, and the tabernacle, and the mercy-seat, and the cherubim. And then were ordained the priesthood of Aaron and his vestments, and the garments for Aaron's sons, and the ceremonies which pertained to the consecration of priests, and the altar of incense, and the brazen laver.

The tables of stone.

After renewed injunctions to observe the Sabbath, Moses received of the Lord the two tables of stone, “written with the finger of God.” But as he descended the mountain with these tables, after forty days, and came near the camp, he perceived the golden calf which Aaron had made of the Egyptian ear-rings and jewelry,—made to please the murmuring people, so soon did they forget the true God who brought them out of Egypt. And Moses in anger, cast down the tables and brake them, and destroyed the calf, and caused the slaughter of three thousand of the people by the hands of the children of Levi.

The idolatry of the Jews.

But God forgave the iniquity and renewed the tables, and made a new covenant with Moses, enjoining upon him the utter destruction of the Canaanites, and the complete extirpation of idolatry. He again gathered together the people of Israel, and renewed the injunction to observe the Sabbath, and then prepared for the building of the tabernacle, as the Lord directed, and also for the making of the sacred vessels and holy garments, and

the various ritualistic form of worship. He then established the sacrificial rites, consecrated Aaron and his sons as priests, laid down the law for them in their sacred functions, and made other divers laws for the nation, in their social and political relations.

The Mosaic legislation.

The substance of these civil laws was the political equality of the people; the distribution of the public domains among the free citizens which were to remain inalienable and perpetual in the families to which they were given, thus making absolute poverty or overgrown riches impossible; the establishment of a year of jubilee, once every fifty years, when there should be a release of all servitude, and all debts, and all the social inequalities which half a century produced; a magistracy chosen by the people, and its responsibility to the people; a speedy and impartial administration of justice; the absence of a standing army and the prohibition of cavalry, thus indicating a peaceful policy, and the preservation of political equality; the establishment of agriculture as the basis of national prosperity; universal industry, inviolability of private property, and the sacredness of family relations. These were fundamental principles. Moses also renewed the Noahmic ideas of the sacredness of human life. He further instituted rules for the education of the people, that "sons may be as plants grown up in their youth, and daughters as corner stones polished after the similitude of a palace." Such were the elemental ideas of the Hebrew commonwealth, which have entered, more or less, into all Christian civilizations. I can

not enter upon a minute detail of these primary laws. Each of the tribes formed a separate state, and had a local administration of justice, but all alike recognized the theocracy as the supreme and organic law. To the tribe of Levi were assigned the duties of the priesthood, and the general oversight of education and the laws. The members of this favored tribe were thus priests, lawyers, teachers, and popular orators—a literary aristocracy devoted to the cultivation of the sciences. The chief magistrate of the united tribes was not prescribed, but Moses remained the highest magistrate until his death, when the command was given to Joshua. Both Moses and Joshua convened the states general, presided over their deliberations, commanded the army, and decided all appeals in civil questions. The office of chief magistrate was elective, and was held for life, no salary was attached to it, no revenues were appropriated to it, no tribute was raised for it. The chief ruler had no outward badges of authority; he did not wear a diadem; he was not surrounded with a court. His power was great as commander of the armies and president of the assemblies, but he did not make laws or impose taxes. He was assisted by a body of seventy elders—a council or senate, whose decisions, however, were submitted to the congregation, or general body of citizens, for confirmation. These senators were elected; the office was not hereditary; neither was a salary attached to it.

The Jewish theocracy.

The great congregation—or assembly of the people, in which

lay the supreme power, so far as any human power could be supreme in a theocracy,—was probably a delegated body chosen by the people in their tribes. They were representatives of the people, acting for the general good, without receiving instructions from their constituents. It was impossible for the elders, or for Moses, to address two million of people. They spoke to a select assembly. It was this assembly which made or ratified the laws, and which the executioner carried out into execution.

The Oracle.

The oracle of Jehovah formed an essential part of the constitution, since it was God who ruled the nation. The oracle, in the form of a pillar of cloud, directed the wanderings of the people in the wilderness. This appeared amid the thunders of Sinai. This oracle decided all final questions and difficult points of justice. It could not be interrogated by private persons, only by the High Priest himself, clad in his pontifical vestments, and with the sacred insignia of his office, by “urim and thummim.” Within the most sacred recesses of the tabernacle, in the Holy of Holies, the Deity made known his will to the most sacred personage of the nation, in order that no rash resolution of the people, or senate, or judge might be executed. And this response, given in an audible voice, was final and supreme, and not like the Grecian oracles, venal and mendacious. This oracle of the Hebrew God “was a wise provision to preserve a continual sense of the principal design of their constitution—to keep the

Hebrews from idolatry, and to the worship of the only true God as their immediate protector; and that their security and prosperity rested upon adhering to his counsels and commands.”

The Priesthood.

The designation and institution of high priest belonged not to the council of priests—although he was of the tribe of Levi, but to the Senate, and received the confirmation of the people through their deputies. “But the priests belonged to the tribe of Levi, which was set apart to God—the king of the commonwealth.” “They were thus, not merely a sacerdotal body, appointed to the service of the altar, but also a temporal magistracy having important civil and political functions, especially to teach the people the laws.” The high priest, as head of the hierarchy, and supreme interpreter of the laws, had his seat in the capital of the nation, while the priests of his tribe were scattered among the other tribes, and were hereditary. The Hebrew priests simply interpreted the laws; the priests of Egypt made them. Their power was chiefly judicial. They had no means of usurpation, neither from property, nor military command. They were simply the expositors of laws which they did not make, which they could not change, and which they themselves were bound to obey. The income of a Levite was about five times as great as an ordinary man, and this, of course, was derived from the tithes. But a greater part of the soil paid no tithes. The taxes to the leading class, as the Levites were, can not be called ruinous when compared with what the

Egyptian priesthood received, especially when we remember that all the expenses connected with sacrifice and worship were taken from the tithes. The treasures which flowed into the sacerdotal treasury belonged to the Lord, and of these the priests were trustees rather than possessors.

The Hebrew Constitution.

Such, in general terms, briefly presented, was the Hebrew constitution framed by Moses, by the direction of God. It was eminently republican in spirit, and the power of the people through their representatives, was great and controlling. The rights of property were most sacredly guarded, and crime was severely and rigidly punished. Every citizen was eligible to the highest offices. That the people were the source of all power is proven by their voluntary change of government, against the advice of Samuel, against the oracle, and against the council of elders. We look in vain to the ancient constitutions of Greece and Rome for the wisdom we see in the Mosaic code. Under no ancient government were men so free or the laws so just. It is not easy to say how much the Puritans derived from the Hebrew constitution in erecting their new empire, but in many aspects there is a striking resemblance between the republican organization of New England and the Jewish commonwealth.

The Mosaic code was framed in the first year after the exodus, while the Israelites were encamped near Sinai. When the Tabernacle was erected, the camp was broken up, and the wandering in the desert recommenced. This was continued for

forty years—not as a punishment, but as a discipline, to enable the Jews to become indoctrinated into the principles of their constitution, and to gain strength and organization, so as more successfully to contend with the people they were commanded to expel from Canaan. In this wilderness they had few enemies, and some friends, and these were wandering Arab tribes.

The wanderings of the Israelites.

We can not point out all the details of the wanderings under the leadership of Moses, guided by the pillar of fire and the cloud. After forty years, they reached the broad valley which runs from the eastern gulf of the Red Sea, along the foot of Mount Seir, to the valley of the Dead Sea. Diverted from a direct entrance into Canaan by hostile Edomites, they marched to the hilly country to the east of Jordan, inhabited by the Amorites. In a conflict with this nation, they gained possession of their whole territory, from Mount Hermon to the river Anton, which runs into the Dead Sea. The hills south of this river were inhabited by pastoral Moabites—descendants of Lot, and beyond them to the Great Desert were the Ammonites, also descendants of Lot. That nation formed an alliance with the Midianites, hoping to expel the invaders then encamped on the plains of Moab. Here Moses delivered his farewell instructions, appointed his successor, and passed away on Mount Pisgah, from which he could see the promised land, but which he was not permitted to conquer. That task was reserved for Joshua, but the complete conquest of the Canaanites did not take place till the reign of David.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF DAVID

The only survivors of the generation that had escaped from Egypt were Caleb and Joshua. All the rest had offended God by murmurings, rebellion, idolatries, and sundry offenses, by which they were not deemed worthy to enter the promised land. Even Moses and Aaron had sinned against the Lord.

Non-intercourse of the Jews with other nations. Death of Moses.

So after forty years' wanderings, and the children of Israel were encamped on the plains of Moab, Moses finally addressed them, forbidding all intercourse with Jews with other nations, enjoining obedience to God, requiring the utter extirpation of idolatry, and rehearsing in general, the laws which he had previously given them, and which form the substance of the Jewish code, all of which he also committed to writing, and then ascended to the top of Pisgah, over against Jericho, from which he surveyed, all the land of Judah and Naphtali, and Manasseh and Gilead unto Dan—the greater part of the land promised unto Abraham. He then died, at the age of 120, B.C. 1451 and no man

knew the place of his burial.

Joshua.

The Lord then encouraged Joshua his successor, and the conquest of the country began—by the passage over the Jordan and the fall of Jericho. The manna, with which the Israelites for forty years had been miraculously fed, now was no longer to be had, and supplies of food were obtained from the enemy's country. None of the inhabitants of Jericho were spared except Rahab the harlot, and her father's household, in reward for her secretion of the spy which Joshua had sent into the city. At the city of Ai, the three thousand men sent to take it were repulsed, in punishment for the sin of Achan, who had taken at the spoil of Jericho, a Babylonian garment and three hundred sheckels of silver and a wedge of gold. After he had expiated this crime, the city of Ai was taken, and all its inhabitants were put to death. The spoil of the city was reserved for the nation.

His victories.

The fall of these two cities alarmed the Hamite nations of Palestine west of the Jordan, and five kings of the Amorites entered into a confederation to resist the invaders. The Gibeonites made a separate peace with the Israelites. Their lives were consequently spared, but they were made slaves forever. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy that Canaan should serve Shem.

Meantime the confederate kings—more incensed with the Gibeonites than with the Israelites, since they were traitors to

the general cause, marched against Gibeon, one of the strongest cities of the land. It invoked the aid of Joshua, who came up from Gilgal, and a great battle was fought, and resulted in the total discomfiture of the five Canaanite kings. The cities of Makkedah, Libnah, Gizu, Eglon, Hebron, successively fell into the hands of Joshua, as the result of their victory.

Combination of the Canaanites against Joshua.

The following year a confederation of the Northern kings, a vast host with horses and chariots, was arrayed against the Israelites; but the forces of the Canaanites were defeated at the "Waters of Merom," a small lake, formerly the Upper Jordan. This victory was followed by the fall of Hazor, and the conquest of the whole land from Mount Halak to the Valley of Lebanon. Thirty-one kings were smitten "in the mountains, in the plains, in the wilderness, in the south country: the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites." There only remained the Philistines, whose power was formidable. The conquered country was divided among the different tribes, half of which were settled on the west of Jordan. The tabernacle was now removed to Shiloh, in the central hill country between Jordan and the Mediterranean, which had been assigned, to the tribe of Ephraim. Jacob had prophetically declared the ultimate settlements of the twelve tribes in the various sections of the conquered country. The pre-eminence was given to Judah, whose territory was the most considerable, including Jerusalem, the future capital, then in the hands of

the Jebusites. The hilly country first fell into the hands of the invaders, while the low lands were held tenaciously by the old inhabitants where their cavalry and war chariots were of most avail.

Conquest of Canaan.

The Israelites then entered, by conquest, into a fruitful land, well irrigated, whose material civilization was already established, with orchards and vineyards, and a cultivated face of nature, with strong cities and fortifications.

Death of Joshua.

Joshua, the great captain of the nation, died about the year 1426 B.C., and Shechem, the old abode of Abraham and Jacob, remained the chief city until the fall of Jerusalem. Here the bones of Joseph were deposited, with those of his ancestors.

The Judges.

The nation was ruled by Judges from the death of Joshua for about 330 years—a period of turbulence and of conquest. The theocracy was in full force, administered by the high priests and the council of elders. The people, however, were not perfectly cured of the sin of idolatry, and paid religious veneration to the gods of Phœnicia and Moab. The tribes enjoyed a virtual independence, and central authority was weak. In consequence, there were frequent dissensions and jealousies and encroachments.

Their wars.

The most powerful external enemies of this period were the kings of Mesopotamia, of Moab, and of Hazor, the Midianites, the Amalekites, the Ammonites, and the Philistines. The great heroes of the Israelites in their contests with these people were Othnie, Ehud, Barak, Gideon, Jephthna, and Samson. After the victories of Gideon over the Midianites, and of Jephthna over the Ammonites, the northern and eastern tribes enjoyed comparative repose, and when tranquillity was restored Eli seems to have exercised the office of high priest with extraordinary dignity, but his sons were a disgrace and scandal, whose profligacy led the way to the temporary subjection of the Israelites for forty years to the Philistines, who obtained possession of the sacred ark.

Samuel.

A deliverer of the country was raised up in the person of Samuel, the prophet, who obtained an ascendancy over the nation by his purity and moral wisdom. He founded the "School of the Prophets" in Kamah, and to him the people came for advice. He seems to have exercised the office of judge. Under his guidance the Israelites recovered their sacred ark, which the Philistines, grievously tormented by God, sent back in an impulse of superstitious fear. Moreover, these people were so completely overthrown by the Israelites that they troubled them no longer for many years.

The Israelites demand a King.

Samuel, when old, made his sons judges, but their rule was venal and corrupt. In disgust, the people of Israel then desired a king. Samuel warned them of the consequences of such a step, and foretold the oppression to which they would be necessarily subject; but they were bent on having a king, like other nations—a man who should lead them on to conquest and dominion. Samuel then, by divine command, granted their request, and selected Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin, as a fit captain to lead the people against the Philistines—the most powerful foe which had afflicted Israel.

Anointment of Saul.

After he had anointed the future king he assembled the whole nation together, through their deputies, at Mizpeh, who confirmed the divine appointment. Saul, who appeared reluctant to accept the high dignity, was fair and tall, and noble in appearance, patriotic, warlike, generous, affectionate—the type of an ancient hero, but vacillating, jealous, moody, and passionate. He was a man to make conquests, but not to elevate the dignity of the nation. Samuel retired into private life, and Saul reigned over the whole people.

His wars with the Philistine.

His first care was to select a chosen band of experienced warriors, and there was need, for the Philistines gathered together a great army, with 30,000 chariots and 6,000 horsemen, and encamped at Michmash. The Israelites, in view of this

overwhelming force, hid themselves from fear, in caves and amid the rocks of the mountain fastnesses. In their trouble it was found necessary to offer burnt sacrifices; but Saul, impulsive and assuming, would not wait to have the rites performed according to the divine direction, but offered the sacrifices himself. By this act he disobeyed the fundamental laws which Moses had given, violated, as it were, the constitution; and, as a penalty for this foolish and rash act, Samuel pronounced his future deposition; but God confounded, nevertheless, the armies of the Philistines, and they were routed and scattered. Saul then turned against the Amalekites, and took their king, whom he spared in an impulse of generosity, even though he utterly destroyed his people. Samuel reproved him for this leniency against the divine command, Saul attempted to justify himself by the sacrifice of all the enemies' goods and oxen, to which Samuel said, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt sacrifices and offerings as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold! to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams; for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness as iniquity and idolatry." Most memorable words! thus setting virtue and obedience over all rites and ceremonies—a final answer to all ritualism and phariseeism.

The unhappiness of Saul.

The remainder of the life of Saul was embittered by the consciousness that the kingdom would depart from his house; and by his jealousy of David, and his unmanly persecution of

him; in whom he saw his successor. He was slain, with three of his sons, at the battle of Gilboa, when the Philistines gained a great victory—B.C. 1056.

David.

David, meanwhile had been secretly anointed by Samuel as king over Israel. Nothing could exceed his grief when he heard of the death of Saul, and of Jonathan, whom he loved, and who returned his love with a love passing that of women, and who had protected him against the wrath and enmity of his father.

The enmity of Saul.

David, of the tribe of Judah, after his encounter with Goliath, was the favorite of the people, and was rewarded by a marriage with the daughter of Saul—Michal, who admired his gallantry and heroism. Saul too had dissembled his jealousy, and heaped honors on the man he was determined to destroy. By the aid of his wife, and of Jonathan, and especially protected by God, the young warrior escaped all the snares laid for his destruction, and even spared the life of Saul when he was in his power in the cave of Engedi. He continued loyal to his king, patiently waiting for his future exaltation.

The elevation of David.

On the death of Saul, he was anointed king over Judah, at Hebron; but the other tribes still adhered to the house of Saul. A civil war ensued, during which Abner, the captain-general of the late king, was treacherously murdered, and also Ishboseth, the

feeble successor of Saul. The war lasted seven and a half years, when all the tribes gave their allegiance to David, who then fixed his seat at Jerusalem, which he had wrested from the Jebusites, and his illustrious reign began, when he was thirty years of age, B.C. 1048, after several years of adversity and trial.

CHAPTER VII.

THE JEWISH MONARCHY

The reign of David.

We can not enter upon a detail of the conquests of David, the greatest warrior that his nation has produced. In successive campaigns, extending over thirty years, he reduced the various Canaanite nations that remained unconquered—the Amalekites, the Moabites, the Philistines, the Edomites, and the Syrians of Tobah. Hiram, king of Tyre, was his ally. His kingdom extended from the borders of Egypt to the Euphrates, and from the valley of Cœlo-Syria to the eastern gulf of the Red Sea. But his reign, if glorious and successful, was marked by troubles. He was continually at war; his kingdom was afflicted with a plague as the punishment for his vanity in numbering the people; his son Amnon disgraced him; Absalom, his favorite son, revolted and was slain; he himself was expelled for a time from his capital.

Character of David.

But David is memorable for his character, and his poetry, his romantic vicissitudes of life, and as the founder of a dynasty rather than for his conquests over the neighboring nations. His magnificent virtues blended with faults; his piety in spite of his sins, his allegiance to God, and his faith in his promises invest his character with singular interest. In his Psalms he

lives through all the generations of men. He reigned thirty-three years at Jerusalem, and seven at Hebron, and transmitted his throne to Solomon—his youngest child, a youth ten years of age, precocious in wisdom and culture.

The reign of Solomon. His architectural works.

The reign of Solomon is most distinguished for the magnificent Temple he erected in Jerusalem, after the designs furnished by his father, aided by the friendship of the Phœnicians. This edifice, “beautiful for situation—the joy of the whole earth,” was the wonder of those times, and though small compared with subsequent Grecian temples, was probably more profusely ornamented with gold, silver, and precious woods, than any building of ancient times. We have no means of knowing its architectural appearance, in the absence of all plans and all ruins, and much ingenuity has been expended in conjectures, which are far from satisfactory. It most probably resembled an Egyptian temple, modified by Phœnician artists. It had an outer court for worshipers and their sacrifices, and an inner court for the ark and the throne of Jehovah, into which the high priest alone entered, and only once a year. It was erected upon a solid platform of stone, having a resemblance to the temples of Paestum. The portico, as rebuilt, in the time of Herod, was 180 feet high, and the temple itself was entered by nine gates thickly coated with silver and gold. The inner sanctuary was covered on all sides by plates of gold, and was dazzling to the eye. It was connected with various courts and porticoes which gave to

it an imposing appearance. Its consecration by Solomon, amid the cloud of glories in which Jehovah took possession of it, and the immense body of musicians and singers, was probably the grandest religious service ever performed. That 30,000 men were employed by Solomon, in hewing timber on Mount Lebanon, and 70,000 more in hewing stones, would indicate a very extensive and costly edifice. The stones which composed the foundation were of extraordinary size, and rivaled the greatest works of the Egyptians. The whole temple was overlaid with gold—a proof of its extraordinary splendor, and it took seven years to build it.

The palace.

The palace of Solomon must also have been of great magnificence, on which the resources of his kingdom were employed for thirteen years. He moreover built a palace for his wife, the daughter of Pharaoh, composed of costly stones, the foundation-stones of which were fifteen feet in length, surrounded with beautiful columns. But these palaces did not include all his works, for the courts of the temple were ornamented with brazen pillars, with elaborate capitals, brazen seas standing upon bronze oxen, brazen bases ornamented with figures of various animals, brazen layers, one of which contained forty baths, altars of gold, tables, candelabras, basins, censers and other sacred vessels of pure gold,—all of which together were of enormous expense and great beauty.

The Wisdom of Solomon.

During the execution of these splendid works, which occupied thirteen years or more, Solomon gave extraordinary indications of wisdom, as well as signs of great temporal prosperity. His kingdom was the most powerful of Western Asia, and he enjoyed peace with other nations. His fame spread through the East, and the Queen of Sheba, among others, came to visit him, and witness his wealth and prosperity. She was amazed and astonished at the splendor of his life, the magnificence of his court, and the brilliancy of his conversation, and she burst out in the most unbounded panegyrics. "The half was not told me." She departed leaving a present of one hundred and twenty talents of gold, besides spices and precious stones; and he gave, in return, all she asked. We may judge of the wealth of Solomon from the fact that in one year six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold flowed into his treasury, besides the spices, and the precious stones, and ivory, and rare curiosities which were brought to him from Arabia and India. The voyages of his ships occupied three years, and it is supposed that they doubled the Cape of Good Hope. All his banqueting cups and dishes were of pure gold, and "he exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and wisdom," who made their contributions with royal munificence. In his army were 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horses, which it would seem were purchased in Egypt.

His apostasy.

Intoxicated by this splendor, and enervated by luxury, Solomon forgot his higher duties, and yielded to the fascination

of oriental courts. In his harem were 700 wives, princesses, and 300 concubines, who turned his heart to idolatry. In punishment for his apostasy, God declared that his kingdom should be divided, and that his son should reign only over the single tribe of Judah, which was spared him for the sake of his father David. In his latter days he was disturbed in his delusions by various adversaries who rose up against him—by Hadad, a prince of Edom, and Rezon, king of Damascus, and Jeroboam, one of his principal officers, who afterward became king of the ten revolted tribes. Solomon continued, however, to reign over the united tribes for forty years, when he was gathered to his fathers.

His latter days.

The apostasy of Solomon is the most mournful fall recorded in history, thereby showing that no intellectual power can rescue a man from the indulgence of his passions and the sins of pride and vainglory. How immeasurably superior to him in self-control was Marcus Aurelius, who had the whole world at his feet! It was women who had estranged him from allegiance to God—the princesses of idolatrous nations. Although no mention is made of his repentance, the heart of the world will not accept his final impenitence; and we infer from the book of Ecclesiastes, written when all his delusions were dispelled—that sad and bitter and cynical composition,—that he was at least finally persuaded that the fear of the Lord constitutes the beginning and the end of all wisdom in this probationary state. And we can not but feel that he who urged this wisdom upon the young with so much reason and

eloquence at last was made to feel its power upon his own soul.

The rebellion of Jeroboam.

The government of Solomon, nevertheless had proved arbitrary, and his public works oppressive. The monarch whom he most resembled, in his taste for magnificence, in the splendor of his reign, and in the vexations and humiliations of his latter days, was Louis XIV. of France, who sowed the seeds of future revolutions. So Solomon prepared the way for rebellion, by his grievous exactions. Under his son Rehoboam, a vain and frivolous, and obstinate young man, who ascended the throne B.C. 975, the revolt took place. He would not listen to his father's councillors, and increased rather than mitigated the burdens of the people. And this revolt was successful: ten tribes joined the standard of Jeroboam, with 800,000 fighting men. Judah remained faithful to Rehoboam, and the tribe of Benjamin subsequently joined it, and from its geographical situation, it remained nearly as powerful as the other tribes, having 500,000 fighting men. But the area of territory was only quarter as large.

Division of the Nation.

The Jewish nation is now divided. The descendants of David reign at Jerusalem; the usurper and rebel Jeroboam reigns over the ten tribes, at Shechem.

For the sake of clearness of representation we will first present the fortunes of the legitimate kings who reigned over the tribe of Judah.

The reign of Rheoboam. His successors.

Rehoboam reigned forty-one years at Jerusalem, but did evil in the sight of the Lord. In the fifth year of his reign his capital was rifled by the king of Egypt, who took away the treasures which Solomon had accumulated. He was also at war with Jeroboam all his days. He was succeeded by his son Abijam, whose reign was evil and unfortunate, during which the country was afflicted with wars which lasted for ninety years between Judah and Israel. But his reign was short, lasting only three years, and he was succeeded by Asa, his son, an upright and warlike prince, who removed the idols which his father had set up. He also formed a league with Ben-Hadad, king of Syria, and, with a large bribe, induced him to break with Baasha, king of Israel. His reign lasted forty years, and he was succeeded by his son Jehoshaphat, B.C. 954. Under this prince the long wars between Judah and Israel terminated, probably on account of the marriage of Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat, with the daughter of Ahab, king of Israel—an unfortunate alliance on moral, if not political grounds. Jehoshaphat reigned thirty-five years, prosperously and virtuously, and his ships visited Ophir for gold as in the time of Solomon, being in alliance with the Phœnicians. His son Jehoram succeeded him, and reigned eight years, but was disgraced by the idolatries which Ahab encouraged. It was about this time that Elijah and Elisha were prophets of the Lord, whose field of duties lay chiefly among the idolatrous people of the ten tribes. During the reign of Jehoram, Edom revolted from Judah,

and succeeded in maintaining its independence, according to the predictions made to Esau, that his posterity, after serving Israel, should finally break their yoke.

The Princes of Judah at Jerusalem.

His son Ahaziah succeeded him at Jerusalem B.C. 885, but formed an alliance with Jehoram, king of Israel, and after a brief and wicked reign of one year, he was slain by Jehu, the great instrument of divine vengeance on the idolaters. Of his numerous sons, the infant Joash alone was spared by Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, who usurped authority in the name of the infant king, until she was overthrown by the high priest Jehoiada. The usurpations of this queen have furnished a subject for one of the finest tragedies of Racine. Jehoiada restored the temple worship, and instituted many other reforms, having supreme power, like Dunstan over the Saxon kings, when they were ruled by priests. His death left Judah under the dominion of the patriarchal rulers (the princes of Judah), who opposed all reforms, and even slew the son of Jehoida, Zechariah the prophet, between the altar and the temple. It would seem that Joash ruled wisely and benignantly during the life of Jehoiada, by whom he was influenced—a venerable old man of 130 years of age when he died. After his death Joash gave occasion for reproach, by permitting or commanding the assassination of Zechariah, who had reproved the people for their sins, and his country was invaded by the Syrians under Hazael, and they sent the spoil of Jerusalem to Damascus. Joash reigned in all forty years, and was

assassinated by his servants.

The reign of Amiaziah.

His son Amaziah succeeded him B.C. 839, and reigned twenty-nine years. He was on the whole a good and able prince, and gained great victories over the Edomites whom he attempted to reconquer. He punished also the murderers of his father, and spared their sons, according to the merciful provision of the laws of Moses. But he worshiped the gods of the Edomites, and was filled with vainglory from his successes over them. It was then he rashly challenged the king of Israel, who replied haughtily: "The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, give thy daughter to my son to wife, and there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle." "So thou hast smitten the Edomites, and thine heart lifteth thee up to boast. Abide now at home; why shouldst thou meddle to thine hurt, that thou shouldst fall, even thou and Judah with thee." But Amaziah would not heed, and the two kings encountered each other in battle, and Judah suffered a disastrous defeat, and Joash, the king of Israel, came to Jerusalem and took all the gold and silver and all the sacred vessels of the temple and the treasures of the royal palace, and returned to Samaria. After this humiliation Amaziah reigned, probably wisely, more than fifteen years, until falling into evil courses, he was slain in a conspiracy, B.C. 810, and his son Uzziah or Azariah, a boy of sixteen, was made king by the people of Judah.

Uzziah. His prosperity.

This monarch enjoyed a long and prosperous reign of fifty-two years. He reorganized the army and refortified his capital. He conquered the Philistines, and also the Arabs, on his borders: received tribute from the Ammonites, and spread his name unto Egypt. During his reign the kingdom of Judah and Benjamin had great prosperity and power. The army numbered 307,500 men well equipped and armed, with military engines to shoot arrows and stones from the towers and walls. He also built castles in the desert, and digged wells for his troops stationed there. He developed the resources of his country, and devoted himself especially to the arts of agriculture and the cultivation of the vine, and the raising of cattle. But he could not stand prosperity, and in his presumption, attempted even to force himself in the sacred part of the temple to offer sacrifices, which was permitted to the priests alone; for which violation of the sacred laws of the realm, he was smitten with leprosy—the most loathsome of all the diseases which afflict the East. As a leper, he remained isolated the rest of his life, not even being permitted by the laws to enter the precincts of the temple to worship, or administer his kingdom. It was during his reign that the Assyrians laid Samaria under contribution.

Jotham.

He was succeeded by Jotham, his son, B.C. 758, who carried on his father's reforms and wars, and was therefore

prospered. It is worthy of notice that the kings of Judah, who were good, and abstained from idolatry, enjoyed great temporal prosperity. Jotham reigned sixteen years, receiving tribute from the Ammonites, and was succeeded by Ahaz, who walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and restored idolatrous and superstitious rites. Besieged in Jerusalem by the forces of Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, and afflicted by the Edomites and Philistines, he invoked the aid of Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, offering him the treasure of the temple and his royal palace. The Assyrian monarch responded, and took Damascus, and slew its king. Ahaz, in his distress, yet sinned still more against the Lord by sacrificing to the gods of Damascus whither he went to meet the Assyrian king. He died in the year B.C. 726, after a reign of sixteen years, and Hezekiah, his son, reigned in his stead.

Hezekiah.

This prince was one of the best and greatest of the kings of Judah. He carried his zeal against idolatry so far as to break in pieces the brazen serpent of Moses, which had become an object of superstitious homage. He proclaimed a solemn passover, which was held in Jerusalem with extraordinary ceremony, and at which 2,000 bullocks and 17,000 sheep were slaughtered. No such day of national jubilee had been seen since the reign of Solomon. He cut down the groves in which idolatrous priests performed their mysterious rites, and overthrew their altars throughout the land. The temple was purified, and the courses of

the priests were restored. Under his encouragement the people brought in joyfully their tithes to the priests and levites, and offerings for the temple.

His wars.

In all his reforms he was ably supported by Isaiah, the most remarkable of all the prophets who flourished during the latter days of the Hebrew monarchy. Under his direction he made war successfully against the Philistines, and sought to recover the independence of Judah. In the fourteenth year of his reign, Sennacherib invaded Palestine. Hezekiah purchased his favor by a present of three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold, which stripped his palace and the temple of all their treasure. But whether he neglected to pay further tribute or not, he offended the king of Assyria, who marched upon Jerusalem, but was arrested in his purpose by the miraculous destruction of his army, which caused him to retreat with shame into his own country. After this his reign was peaceful and splendid, and he accumulated treasures greater than had been seen in Jerusalem since the time of Solomon. He also built cities, and diverted the course of the river Gihon to the western side of his capital, and made pools and conduits. It was in these years of prosperity that he received the ambassadors of the king of Babylon, and showed unto them his riches, which led to his rebuke by Isaiah, and the prophecy of the future captivity of his people.

Manasseh.

He was succeeded by his son, Manasseh, B.C. 698, who reigned fifty-five years; but he did not follow out the policy of his father, or imitate his virtues. He restored idolatry, and “worshiped all the hosts of heaven,” and built altars to them, as Ahab had done in Samaria. He was also cruel and tyrannical, and shed much innocent blood; wherefore, for these and other infamous sins, the Lord, through the mouth of the prophets, declared that “he would wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish,” and would deliver the people into the hands of their enemies.

Amon.

His son, Amon, followed in the steps of his father, but after a brief reign of two years, was killed by his servants, B.C. 639, and was buried in the sepulchre of his family, in the garden of Uzza.

Josiah. His noble reign.

Then followed the noble reign of Josiah—the last independent king of Judah—whose piety and zeal in destroying idolatry, and great reforms, have made him the most memorable of all the successors of David. He repaired the temple, and utterly destroyed every vestige of idolatry, assisted by the high priest Hilkiah, who seems to have been his prime minister. He kept the great feast of the passover with more grandeur than had ever been known, either in the days of the judges, or of the kings, his ancestors; nor did any king ever equal him in his fidelity to the laws of Moses. But notwithstanding all his piety and zeal, God was not to be turned from chastising Judah for the sins

of Manasseh, and the repeated idolatries of his people; and all that Josiah could secure was a promise from the Lord that the calamities of his country should not happen in his day.

His death.

In the thirty-first year of his reign, Necho, the king of Egypt, made war against the king of Babylon, who had now established his empire on the banks of the Euphrates, over the ruins of the old Assyrian monarchy. Josiah rashly embarked in the contest, either with a view of giving his aid to the king of Babylon, or to prevent the march of Necho, which lay through the great plain of Esdrælon. Josiah, heedless of all warnings, ventured in person against the Egyptian army, though in disguise, and was slain by an arrow. His dead body was brought to Jerusalem, and was buried in one of the sepulchres of his fathers; and all Judah and Israel mourned for the loss of one of the greatest, and certainly the best of their kings.

The prophet Jeremiah pronounced his eulogy, and led the lamentations of the people for this great calamity, B.C. 608.

His successor.

The people proclaimed one of his sons, Shallum, to be king, under the name of Jehoahaz, but the Egyptian conqueror deposed him and set up his brother Jehoiakim as a tributary vassal. He reigned ingloriously for eleven years—an idolator and a tyrant.

Nebuchadnezzar wars against Judah. The fall of Jerusalem. Captivity of the Jews. Jeremiah.

In his days Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came up against him, having driven the Egyptians out of Palestine. Jehoiakim made his submission to the conqueror of Egypt, who now reigned over the whole Assyrian empire, but did not escape captivity in Babylon, with many other of the first men of the nation, including Daniel, and the spoil of Jerusalem. He was restored to the throne, on promise of paying a large tribute. He served the king of Babylon three years and then rebelled, hoping to secure the assistance of Egypt. But he leaned on a broken reed. A Chaldean army laid siege to Jerusalem, and Jehoiakim was killed in a sally, B.C. 597. His son Jehoiachin had reigned only three months when Nebuchadnezzar, a great general, came to carry on the siege in person. The city fell, the king was carried into captivity, with 10,000 of his subjects, among whom were Ezekiel and Mordecai, and only the poorer class remained behind. Over these people Nebuchadnezzar set up Zedekiah, the youngest son of Josiah, as tributary king. Yet even in this state of degradation and humiliation the Jews, wrought upon by false prophets, expected deliverance, against the solemn warnings of Jeremiah, who remained at Jerusalem. Zedekiah, encouraged by the partial successes of the Egyptians, rebelled, upon which the king of Babylon resolved upon the complete conquest and utter ruin of the country. Jerusalem fell into his hands, by assault, and was leveled with the ground, and the temple was destroyed. Zedekiah, in attempting to escape, was taken, had his eyes put out, and was carried captive to Babylon, together with the whole

nation, and the country was reduced to utter desolation. It was not, however, repopled by heathen settlers, as was Samaria. The small remnant that remained, under the guidance of Jeremiah, recovered some civil rights, and supported themselves by the cultivation of the land, and in their bitter misery learned those lessons which prepared them for a renewed prosperity after the seventy years captivity. Never afterward was idolatry practiced by the Jews. But no nation was ever more signally humiliated and prostrated. Can we hence wonder at the mournful strains of Jeremiah, or the bitter tears which the captive Jews, now slaves, shed by the rivers of Babylon when they remembered the old prosperity of Zion.

The character of the kings of Judah.

The Jewish monarchy ended by the capture of Zedekiah. The kingdom of the ten tribes had already fallen to the same foes, and even more disastrously, because the kings of Israel were uniformly wicked, without a single exception, and were hopelessly sunk into idolatry; whereas the kings of Judah were good as well as evil, and some of them were illustrious for virtues and talents. The descendants of David reigned in Jerusalem in an unbroken dynasty for more than 500 years, while the monarchs of Samaria were a succession of usurpers. The degenerate kings were frequently succeeded by the captains of their guards, who in turn gave way for other usurpers, all of whom were bad. The dynasty of David was uninterrupted to the captivity of the nation. And the kingdom of Judah was also more powerful and

prosperous than that of the ten tribes, in spite of their superior numbers.

The ten tribes.

But it is time to consider these ten tribes which revolted under Jeroboam. Their history is uninteresting, and, were it not for the beautiful episodes which relate to the prophets who were sent to reclaim the people from idolatry, would be without significance other than that which is drawn from the lives of wicked and idolatrous kings.

Jeroboam. His wicked reign.

Jeroboam commenced his reign B.C. 975, by setting up for worship two golden calves in Bethel and Dan, and thus inaugurated idolatry: for which his dynasty was short. His son Nadah was murdered in a military revolution, B.C. 953, and the usurper of his throne, Baasha, destroyed his whole house. He, too, was a wicked prince, and his son Elah was slain by Zimri, captain of his guard, who now reigned over Israel, after exterminating the whole family of Elah, but was in his turn assassinated after a reign of seven years, B.C. 929. Omri, the captain of the guard, was now raised by the voice of the people to the throne; but he had a rival in Tibni, whom he succeeded in conquering. Omri reigned twelve years, and bought the hill of Samaria, on which he built the capital of his kingdom. But he exceeded all his predecessors in iniquity, and was succeeded by his son Ahab, who reigned twenty-two years. He was the most

infamous of all the kings of Israel, both for cruelty and idolatry, and his queen, Jezebel, was also unique in crime—the Messalina and Fredigonde of her age. It was through her influence that the worship of Baal became the established religion, thus showing that the general influence of woman on man is evil whenever she is not Christian. And this is perhaps the reason that the ancients represented women as worse than men.

Elijah. Ahab.

It was during the reign of this wicked king that God raised up the greatest of the ancient prophets—Elijah, and sent him to Ahab with the stern intelligence that there should be no rain until the prophet himself should invoke it. After three years of grievous famine, during which he sought to destroy the man who prophesied so much evil, but who was miraculously fed in his flight by the ravens, Ahab allowed Elijah to do his will.

The destruction of the priests of Baal.

Thereupon he caused the king to assemble together the whole people of Israel, through their representatives, upon Mount Carmel, together with the four hundred and fifty priests of Baal, and the four hundred false prophets of the grove, whom Jezebel supported. He then invoked the people, who, it seems, vacillated in their opinions in respect to Jehovah and Baal, to choose finally, of these two deities, the God whom they *would* worship. Having discomfited the priests of Baal in the trial of sacrifices, and mocked them with the fiercest irony, thereby showing to the

people how they had been imposed upon, Elijah incited them to the slaughter of these false prophets and foreign priests, and then set up an altar to the true God. But all the people had not fallen into idolatry; there still had remained seven thousand who had not bowed unto Baal.

Wrath of Jezebel.

Rain descended almost immediately, and Ahab departed, and told Jezebel what had transpired. Hereupon, she was transported with rage and fury, and sought the life of the prophet. He again escaped, and by divine command went to the wilderness of Damascus and anointed Hazael to be king over Syria, and Jehu to be king over Israel, and Elisha to be his successor as prophet.

War with Damascus. Curse upon Ahab.

Soon after this, Benhadad, the king of Syria, came from Damascus with a vast army and thirty-two allied kings, to besiege Samaria. Defeated in a battle with Ahab, the king of Syria fled, but returned the following year with a still larger army for the conquest of Samaria. But he was again defeated, with the loss of one hundred thousand men in a single day, and sought to make peace with the king of Israel. Ahab made a treaty with him, instead of taking his life, for which the prophet of the Lord predicted evil upon him and his people. But the anger of God was still further increased by the slaughter of Naboth, through the wiles of Jezebel, and the unjust possession of the vineyard which Ahab had coveted. Elijah, after this outrage on all the

fundamental laws of the Jews, met the king for the last time, and pronounced a dreadful penalty—that his own royal blood should be licked up by dogs in the very place where Naboth was slain, and that his posterity should be cut off from reigning over Israel; also, that his wicked queen should be eaten by dogs.

Ahaziah.

In three years after, while attempting to recover Ramoth, in Gilead, from Benhadad, he lost his life, and was brought in his chariot to Samaria to be buried. And the dogs came and licked the blood from the chariot where it was washed. He was succeeded by Ahaziah, his son, B.C. 913, who renewed the worship of Baal, and died after a short and inglorious reign, B.C. 896, without leaving any son, and Jehoram, his brother, succeeded him. In reference to this king the Scripture accounts are obscure, and he is sometimes confounded with Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, who married a daughter of Ahab. This accounts for the alliance between Jehoshaphat and Ahab, and also between the two Jehorams, since they were brothers-in-law, which brought to an end the long wars of seventy years, which had wasted both Israel and Judah.

Jehoram did evil in the sight of the Lord, but was not disgraced by idolatry. In his reign the Moabites, who paid a tribute of one hundred thousand sheep and one hundred thousand lambs, revolted. Jehoram, assisted by the kings of Judah, and of Edom, marched against them, and routed them, and destroyed their cities, and filled up their wells, and felled all their good trees, and

covered their good land with stones.

Famine in Samaria.

Meanwhile, it happened that there was a grievous famine in Samaria, so that an ass's head sold for eighty pieces of silver. Benhadad, in this time of national distress, came with mighty host and besieged the city; but in the night, in his camp was heard a mighty sound of chariots and horses, and a panic ensued, and the Syrians fled, leaving every thing behind them. The spoil of their camp furnished the starving Samaritans with food.

Wars with the Syrians.

After this, Jehoram was engaged in war with the Syrians, now ruled by Hazael, one of the generals of Benhadad, who had murdered his master. In this war, Jehoram, or Joram, was wounded, and went to be healed of his wounds at Jezreel, where he was visited by his kinsman, Ahaziah, who had succeeded to the throne of Judah. While he lay sick in this place, Jehu, one of his generals, conspired against him, and drew a bow against him, and the arrow pierced him so that he died, and his body was cast into Naboth's vineyard. Thus was the sin against Naboth again avenged. Jehu prosecuted the work of vengeance assigned to him, and slew Ahaziah, the king of Judah, also, and then caused Jezebel, the queen mother, to be thrown from a window, and the dogs devoured her body. He then slew the seventy sons of Ahab, and all his great men, and his kinsfolk, and his priests, so that none remained of the house of Ahab, as Elijah had predicted.

His zeal did not stop here, but he collected together, by artifice, all the priests of Baal, and smote them, and brake their images.

Jehu.

But Jehu, now king of Israel, though he had destroyed the priests of Baal, fell into the idolatry of Jehoram, and was therefore inflicted with another invasion of the Syrians, who devastated his country, and decimated his people. He died, after a reign of twenty-eight years, B.C. 856, and was succeeded by his son, Jehoahaz.

His successors.

This king also did evil in the sight of the Lord, so that he was made subject to Hazael, king of Syria, all his days, who ground down and oppressed Israel, as the prophet had predicted. He reigned seventeen years, in sorrow and humiliation, and was succeeded by his son Johash, who followed the wicked course of his predecessors. His reign lasted sixteen years, during which Elisha died. There is nothing in the Scriptures more impressive than the stern messages which this prophet, as well as Elijah, sent to the kings of Israel, and the bold rebukes with which he reproached them. Nor is anything more beautiful than those episodes which pertain to the cure of Naaman, the Syrian, and the restoration to life of the son of the Shunamite woman, in reward for her hospitality, and the interview with Hazael before he became king. All his predictions came to pass. He seems to have lived an isolated and ascetic life, though he had great

influence with the people and the king, like other prophets of the Lord.

Their short reigns.

Jeroboam II. succeeded Johash, B.C. 825, and reigned successfully, and received all the territory which the Syrians had gained, but he did not depart from the idolatry of the golden calves. His son and successor, Zachariah, followed his evil courses, and was slain by Shallum, after a brief reign of six months, and the dynasty of Jehu came to an end, B.C. 772.

Fall of Samaria.

Shallum was murdered one month afterward by Menahem, who reigned ingloriously ten years. It was during his reign that Pul, king of Assyria, invaded his territories, but was induced to retire for a sum of one thousand talents of silver, which he exacted from his subjects. He was succeeded by Pekaiiah, a bad prince, who was assassinated at the end of two years by Pekah, one of his captains, who seized his throne. During his reign, which lasted twenty years, Tiglath-Pilaser, king of Assyria, made war against him, by invitation of Ahaz, and took his principal cities, and carried their inhabitants captive to Nineveh. He was assassinated by Hosea, who reigned in his stead. He also was a bad prince, and became subject to Shalmanezzer, king of Assyria, who came up against him. In the ninth year of his reign, having proved treacherous to Shalmanezzer, the king of Assyria besieged Samaria, and carried him captive to his

own capital. Thus ended the kingdom of the ten tribes, who were now carried into captivity beyond the Euphrates, and who settled in the eastern provinces of Assyria, and probably relapsed hopelessly into idolatry, without ever revisiting their native land. In all probability most of them were absorbed among the nations which composed the Assyrian empire, B.C. 721.

The kings of Israel.

Nineteen sovereigns thus reigned over the children of Israel in Samaria—a period of two hundred and fifty-four years; not one of them was obedient to the laws of God, and most of whom perished by assassination, or in battle. There is no record in history of more inglorious kings. There was not a great man nor a good man among them all. They were, with one or two exceptions, disgraced by the idolatry of Jeroboam, in whose steps they followed. Nor was their kingdom ever raised to any considerable height of political power. The history of the revolted and idolatrous tribes is gloomy and disgraceful, only relieved by the stern lives of Elijah and Elisha, the only men of note who remained true to the God of their fathers, and who sought to turn the people from their sins. “Whereupon the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight.”

CHAPTER VIII.

THE OLD CHALDEAN AND ASSYRIAN MONARCHIES

The plains of Babylon.

On a great plain, four hundred miles in length and one hundred miles in width, forming the valley of the Euphrates, bounded on the north by Mesopotamia, on the east by the Tigris, on the south by the Persian Gulf, and on the west by the Syrian Desert, was established, at a very early period, the Babylonian monarchy. This plain, or valley, contains about twenty-three thousand square miles, equal to the Grecian territories. It was destitute of all striking natural features—furnishing an unbroken horizon. The only interruptions to the view on this level plain were sand-hills and the embankments of the river. The river, like the Nile, is subject to inundations, though less regular than the Nile, and this, of course, deposits a rich alluvial soil. The climate in summer is intensely hot, and in winter mild and genial. Wheat here is indigenous, and the vine and other fruits abound in rich luxuriance. The land was as rich as the valley of the Nile, and was favorable to flocks and herds. The river was stocked with fish, and every means of an easy subsistence was afforded.

The Tower of Babel.

Into this goodly land a migration from Armenia—the primeval seat of man—came at a period when history begins. Nimrod and his hunters then gained an ascendancy over the old settlers, and supplanted them—Cushites, of the family of Ham, and not the descendants of Shem. The beginning of the kingdom of Nimrod was Babel, a tower, or temple, modeled after the one which was left unfinished, or was destroyed. This was erected, probably, B.C. 2334. It was square, and arose with successive stories, each one smaller than the one below, presenting an analogy to the pyramidal form. The highest stage supported the sacred ark. The temple was built of burnt brick. Thus the race of Ham led the way in the arts in Chaldea as in Egypt, and soon fell into idolatry. We know nothing, with certainty, of this ancient monarchy, which lasted, it is supposed, two hundred and fifty-eight years, from B.C. 2234 to 1976. It was not established until after the dispersion of the races. The dynasty of which Nimrod was the founder came to an end during the early years of Abraham.

The foundation of the Assyrian monarchy.

The first king of the new dynasty is supposed to be Chedorlaomer, though Josephus represents him as a general of the Chaldean king who extended the Chaldean conquests to Palestine. His encounters with the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, and others in the vale of Siddim, tributary princes, and his slaughter by Abraham's servants, are recounted in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, and put an end to Chaldean conquests

beyond the Syrian desert. From his alliance, however, with the Tidal, king of nations; Amrapher, king of Shinar; and Arioch, king of Ellasar, we infer that other races, besides the Hamite, composed the population of Chaldea, of which the subjects of Chedorlaomer were pre-eminent.

His empire was subverted by Arabs from the desert, B.C. 1518; and an Arabian dynasty is supposed to have reigned for two hundred and forty-five years.

Extension of the kingdom.

This came to an end in consequence of a grand irruption of Assyrians—of Semitic origin. “Asshur (Gen. 10, 11), the son of Shem, built Nineveh,” which was on the Tigris. The name Assyria came to be extended to the whole of Upper Mesopotamia, from the Euphrates to the Tagros mountains. This country consisted of undulating pastures, diversified by woodlands, and watered by streams running into the Tigris. Its valleys were rich, its hills were beautiful, and its climate was cooler than the Chaldean plain.

Nineveh.

It would seem from the traditions preserved by the Greeks, that Nineveh was ruled by a viceroy of the Babylonian king. This corresponds with the book of Genesis, which makes the dynasty Chaldean, while the people were Semitic, since the kingdom of Asshur was derived from that of Nimrod. “Ninus, the viceroy,” says Smith, “having revolted from the king of Babylon, overruns

Armenia, Asia Minor, and the shores of the Euxine, as far as Tanais, subdues the Medes and Persians, and makes war upon the Bactrians. Semiramis, the wife of one of the chief nobles, coming to the camp before Bactria, takes the city by a bold stroke. Her courage wins the love of Ninus, and she becomes his wife. On his death she succeeds to the throne, and undertakes the conquest of India, but is defeated." These two sovereigns built Nineveh on a grand scale, as well as added to the edifices of Babylon.

This king was the founder of the northwest palace of Nineveh, three hundred and sixty feet long and three hundred wide, standing on a raised platform overlooking the Tigris, with a grand facade to the north fronting the town, and another to the west commanding the river. It was built of hewn stone, and its central hall was one hundred and twenty feet long and ninety wide. The ceilings were of cedar brought from Lebanon. The walls were paneled with slabs of marble ornamented with bas-reliefs. The floors were paved with stone. (See Rawlinson's Herodotus.)

The palaces. Assyrian kings.

All this is tradition, but recent discoveries in cuneiform literature shed light upon it. From these, compared with the fragments of Berosus, a priest of Babylon in the third century before Christ, and the scattered notices of Scripture history, we infer that the dynasty which Belus founded reigned more than five hundred years, from 1272 to 747 before Christ. Of these kings, Sardanapalus, the most famous, added Babylonia to the Assyrian empire, and built vast architectural works.

He employed three hundred and sixty thousand men in the construction of this palace, some of whom were employed in making brick, and others in cutting timber on Mount Hermon. It covered an area of eight acres. The palaces of Nineveh were of great splendor, and the scenes portrayed on the walls, as discovered by Mr. Layard, lately disinterred from the mounds of earth, represent the king as of colossal stature, fighting battles, and clothed with symbolic attributes. He appears as a great warrior, leading captives, and storming cities, and also in the chase, piercing the lion, and pursuing the wild ass. This monarch should not be confounded with the Sardanapalus of the Greeks, the last of the preceding dynasty. His son, Shalmanezer, was also a great prince, and added to the dominion of the Assyrian empire. Distant nations paid tribute to him, the Phœnicians, the Syrians, the Jews, and the Medians beyond the Tagros mountains. He defeated Benhadad and routed Hazael. His reign ended, it is supposed, B.C. 850. Two other kings succeeded him, who extended their conquests to the west, the last of whom is identified by Smith with Pul, the reigning monarch when Jonah visited Nineveh, B.C. 770.

The next dynasty commences with Tiglath-Pileser II., who carried on wars against Babylon and Syria and Israel. This was in the time of Ahaz, B.C. 729.

Conquests of Shalmanezer.

His son, Shalmanezer, made Hosea, king of Israel, his vassal, and reduced the country of the ten tribes to a province of his

empire, and carried the people away into captivity. Hezekiah was also, for a time, his vassal. He was succeeded by Sargon, B.C. 721, according to Smith, but 715 B.C., according to others. He reigned, as Gesenius thinks, but two or three years; but fifteen according to Rawlinson, and built that splendid palace, the ruins of which, at Khorsabad, have supplied the Louvre with its choicest remains of Assyrian antiquity. He was one of the greatest of the Assyrian conquerors. He invaded Babylon and drove away its kings; he defeated the Philistines, took Ashdod and Tyre, received tribute from the Greeks at Cyprus, invaded even Egypt, whose king paid him tribute, and conquered Media.

Sennacherib. Culmination of the power of Nineveh.

His son, Sennacherib, who came to the throne, B.C. 702, is an interesting historical personage, and under him the Assyrian empire reached its culminating point. He added to the palace of Nineveh, and built one which exceeded all that had existed before him. No monarch surpassed this one in the magnificence of his buildings. He erected no less than thirty temples, shining with silver and gold. One of the halls of his palace was two hundred and twenty feet long, and one hundred and one wide. He made use of Syrian, Greek, and Phœnician artists. It is from the ruins of this palace at *Koyunjik* that Mr. Layard made those valuable discoveries which have enriched the British Museum. He subdued Babylonia, Upper Mesopotamia, Syria, Phœnicia, Philistia, Idumaen, and a part of Egypt, which, with Media, a part of Armenia, and the old Assyrian territory, formed

his vast empire—by far greater than the Egyptian monarchy at any period. He chastised also the Jews for encouraging a revolt among the Philistines, and carried away captive two hundred thousand people, and only abstained from laying siege to Jerusalem by a present from Hezekiah of three hundred talents of silver and thirty of gold. The destruction of his host, as recorded by Scripture, is thought by some to have occurred in a subsequent invasion of Judea, when it was in alliance with Egypt. That “he returned to Nineveh and dwelt there” is asserted by Scripture, but only to be assassinated by his sons, B.C. 680.

His son Esar-Haddon succeeded him, a warlike monarch, who fought the Egyptians, and colonized Samaria with Babylonian settlers. He also built the palace of Nimrod, and cultivated art.

Assyrian civilisation.

The civilization of the Assyrians shows a laborious and patient people. Its chief glory was in architecture. Sculpture was imitated from nature, but had neither the grace nor the ideality of the Greeks. War was the grand business of kings, and hunting their pleasure. The people were ground down by the double tyranny of kings and priests. There is little of interest in the Assyrian annals, and what little we know of their life and manners is chiefly drawn by inductions from the monuments excavated by Botta and Layard. The learned treatise of Rawlinson sheds a light on the annals of the monarchy, which, before the discoveries of Layard, were exceedingly obscure, and this treatise has been most judiciously abridged, by Smith, whom I have followed. It

would be interesting to consider the mythology of the Assyrians, but it is too complicated for a work like this.

Decline of the monarchy.

Under his successors, the empire rapidly declined. Though it nominally included the whole of Western Asia, from the Mediterranean to the desert of Iran, and from the Caspian Sea and the mountains of Armenia to the Persian Gulf, it was wanting in unity. It embraced various kingdoms, and cities, and tribes, which simply paid tribute, limited by the power of the king to enforce it. The Assyrian armies, which committed so great devastations, did not occupy the country they chastised, as the Romans and Greeks did. Their conquests were like those of Tamerlane. As the monarchs became effeminated, new powers sprung up, especially Media, which ultimately completed the ruin of Assyria, under Cyaxares. The last of the monarchs was probably the Sardanapalus of the Greeks.

Destruction of Nineveh. Its remains.

The decline of this great monarchy was so rapid and complete, that even Nineveh, the capital city, was blotted out of existence. No traces of it remained in the time of Herodotus, and it is only from recent excavations that its site is known. Still, it must have been a great city. The eastern wall of it, as it now appears from the excavations, is fifteen thousand nine hundred feet (about three miles); but the city probably included vast suburbs, with fortified towers, so as to have been equal to four hundred and

eighty stadias in circumference, or sixty miles—the three days' journey of Jonah. It is supposed, with the suburbs, to have contained five hundred thousand people. The palaces of the great were large and magnificent; but the dwellings of the people were mean, built of brick dried in the sun. The palaces consisted of a large number of chambers around a central hall, open to the sky, since no pillars are found necessary to support a roof. No traces of windows are found in the walls, which were lined with slabs of coarse marble, with cuneiform inscriptions. The façade of the palaces we know little about, except that the entrances to them were lined by groups of colossal bulls. These are sculptured with considerable spirit, but *art*, in the sense that the Greeks understood it, did not exist. In the ordinary appliances of life the Assyrians were probably on a par with the Egyptians; but they were debased by savage passions and degrading superstitions. They have left nothing for subsequent ages to use. Nothing which has contributed to civilization remains of their existence. They have furnished no *models* of literature, art, or government.

Growth of Babylon.

While Nineveh was rising to greatness, Babylon was under an eclipse, and thus lasted six hundred and fifty years. It was in the year 1273 that this eclipse began. But a great change took place in the era of Narbonassar, B.C. 747, when Babylon threatened to secure its independence, and which subsequently compelled Esar-Haddon, the Assyrian monarch, to assume, in his own person, the government of Babylon, B.C. 680.

The Chaldean monarchy.

In 625 B.C. the old Chaldeans recovered their political importance, probably by an alliance with the Medes, and Nabopolassar obtained undisputed possession of Babylon, and founded a short but brilliant dynasty. He obtained a share of the captives of Nineveh, and increased the population of his capital. His son, Nebuchadnezzar, was sent as general against the Egyptians, and defeated their king, Neko, reconquered all the lands bordering on Egypt, and received the submission of Jehoiakim, of Jerusalem. The death of Nabopolassar recalled his son to Babylon, and his great reign began B.C. 604.

Nebuchadnezzar. Magnificence of Babylon.

It was he who enlarged the capital to so great an extent that he may almost be said to have built it. It was in the form of a square, on both banks of the Euphrates, forty-eight miles in circuit, according to Herodotus, with an area of two hundred square miles—large enough to support a considerable population by agriculture alone. The walls of this city, if we accept the testimony of Herodotus, were three hundred and fifty feet high, and eighty-seven feet thick, and were strengthened by two hundred and fifty towers, and pierced with one hundred gates of brass. The river was lined by quays, and the two parts of the city were united by a stone bridge, at each end of which was a fortified palace. The greatest work of the royal architect was the new palace, with the adjoining hanging garden—a series

of terraces to resemble hills, to please his Median queen. This palace, with the garden, was eight miles in circumference, and splendidly decorated with statues of men and animals. Here the mighty monarch, after his great military expeditions, solaced himself, and dreamed of omnipotence, until a sudden stroke of madness—that form which causes a man to mistake himself for a brute animal—sent him from his luxurious halls into the gardens he had planted. His madness lasted seven years, and he died, after a reign of forty-three years, B.C. 561, and Evil-Merodach, his son, reigned in his stead.

Fall of the Monarchy.

He was put to death two years after, for lawlessness and intemperance, and was succeeded by his brother-in-law and murderer, Neriglissar. So rapid was the decline of the monarchy, that after a few brief reigns Babylon was entered by the army of Cyrus, and the last king, Bil-shar-utzur, or Bilshassar, associated with his father Nabonadius, was slain, B.C. 538. Thus ended the Chaldean monarchy, seventeen hundred and ninety-six years after the building of Babel by Nimrod, according to the chronology it is most convenient to assume.

CHAPTER IX.

THE EMPIRE OF THE MEDES AND PERSIANS

The country of the Medes and Persians. The martial character of the people. Early kings of Media.

The third of the great Oriental monarchies brought in contact with the Jews was that of the Medes and Persians, which arose on the dissolution of the Assyrian and Babylonian empires. The nations we have hitherto alluded to were either Hamite or Shemite. But our attention is now directed to a different race, the descendants of Japhet. Madai, the third son of Japhet, was the progenitor of the Medes, whose territory extended from the Caspian Sea on the north, to the mountains of Persia on the south, and from the highlands of Armenia and the chain of Tagros on the west, to the great desert of Iran on the east. It comprised a great variety of climate, and was intersected by mountains whose valleys were fruitful in corn and fruits. "The finest part of the country is an elevated region inclosed by the offshoots of the Armenian mountains, and surrounding the basin of the great lake Urumizu, four thousand two hundred feet above the sea, and the valleys of the ancient Mardus and the Araxes, the northern boundary of the land. In this mountain region stands Tabris, the delightful summer seat of the modern Persian shahs.

The slopes of the Tagros furnish excellent pasture; and here were reared the famous horses which the ancients called Nisæan. The eastern districts are flat and pestilential, where they sink down to the shores of the Caspian Sea; rugged and sterile where they adjoin the desert of Iran.” The people who inhabited this country were hardy and bold, and were remarkable for their horsemanship. They were the greatest warriors of the ancient world, until the time of the Greeks. They were called Aryans by Herodotus. They had spread over the highlands of Western Asia in the primeval ages, and formed various tribes. The first notice of this Aryan (or Arian) race, appears in the inscriptions on the black obelisk of Nimrod, B.C. 880, from which it would appear that this was about the period of the immigration into Media, and they were then exposed to the aggressions of the Assyrians. “The first king who menaced their independence was the monarch whose victories are recorded on the black obelisk in the British Museum.” He made a raid into, rather than a conquest of, the Median country. Sargon, the third monarch of the Lower Empire, effected something like a conquest, and peopled the cities which he founded with Jewish captives from Samaria, B.C. 710. Media thus became the most eastern province of his empire, but the conquest of it was doubtless incomplete. The Median princes paid tribute to the kings of Nineveh, or withheld it, according to their circumstances.

Deioces.

According to Ctesias, the Median monarchy commenced B.C.

875; but Herodotus, with greater probable accuracy, places the beginning of it B.C. 708. The revolt of Media from Assyria was followed by the election of Deioces, who reigned fifty-three years. The history of this king is drawn through Grecian sources, and can not much be depended upon. According to the legends, the seven tribes of the Medes, scattered over separate villages, suffered all the evils of anarchy, till the reputation of Deioces made him the arbiter of their disputes. He then retired into private life; anarchy returned, a king was called for, and Deioces was elected. He organized a despotic power, which had its central seat in Ecbatana, which he made his capital, built upon a hill, on the summit of which was the royal palace, where the king reigned in seclusion, transacting all business through spies, informers, petitions, and decrees. Such is the account which Rawlinson gives, and which Smith follows.

Cyaxares.

The great Median kingdom really began with Cyaxares, about the year B.C. 633, when the Assyrian empire was waning. He emerges from the obscurity like Attila and Gengis Khan, and other eastern conquerors, at the head of irresistible hordes, sweeps all away before him, and builds up an enormous power. This period was distinguished by a great movement among the Turanian races (Cimmerians), living north of the Danube, which, according to Herodotus, made a great irruption into Asia Minor, where some of the tribes effected a permanent settlement; while the Scythians, from Central Asia, overran Media, crossed the

Zagros mountains, entered Mesopotamia, passed through Syria to Egypt, and held the dominion of Western Asia, till expelled by Cyaxares. He only established his new kingdom after a severe conflict between the Scythian and Aryan races, which had hitherto shared the possession of the tablelands of Media.

The irruption of the Turanian races.

From age to age the Turanian races have pressed forward to occupy the South, and it was one of these great movements which Cyaxares opposed, and opposed successfully—the first recorded in history. These nomads of Tartary, or Scythian tribes, which overran Western Asia in the seventh century before Christ, under the new names of Huns, Avari, Bulgarians, Magyars, Turks, Mongols, devastated Europe and Asia for fifteen successive centuries. They have been the scourge of the race, and they commenced their incursions before Grecian history begins.

Conquests of Cyaxares.

Learning from these Scythian invaders many arts, not before practiced in war, such as archery and cavalry movements, Cyaxares was prepared to extend his empire to the west over Armenia and Asia Minor, as far as the river Halys. He made war in Lydia with the father of Cræsus. But before these conquests were made, he probably captured Nineveh and destroyed it, B.C. 625. He was here assisted by the whole force of the Babylonians, under Nabopolassar, an old general of the Assyrians, but who had rebelled. In reward he obtained for his son, Nebuchadnezzar,

the hand of the daughter of Cyaxares. The last of the Assyrian monarchs, whom the Greeks have called Sardanapalus, burned himself in his palace rather than fall into the hands of the Median conqueror.

War with Lydia.

The fall of Nineveh led to the independence of Babylon, and its wonderful growth, and also to the conquests of the Medes as far as Lydia to the west. The war with Lydia lasted six years, and was carried on with various success, until peace was restored by the mediation of a Babylonian prince. The reason that peace was made was an eclipse of the sun, which happened in the midst of a great battle, which struck both armies with superstitious fears. On the conclusion of peace, the son of the Median king, Astyages, married the daughter of the Lydian monarch, Alyattes, and an alliance was formed between Media and Lydia.

The Lydian monarchy.

At this time Lydia comprised nearly all of Asia Minor, west of the Halys. The early history of this country is involved in obscurity. The dynasty on the throne, when invaded by the Medes, was founded by Gyges, B.C. 724, who began those aggressions on the Grecian colonies which were consummated by Cræsus. Under the reign of Ardys, his successor, Asia Minor was devastated by the Cimmerians, a people who came from the regions north of the Black Sea, between the Danube and the Sea of Azov, being driven away by an inundation of Scythians,

like that which afterward desolated Media. These Cimmerians, having burned the great temple of Diana, at Ephesus, and destroyed the capital city of Sardis, were expelled from Lydia by Alyattes, the monarch against whom Cyaxares had made war.

Astyages.

Cyaxares reigned forty years, and was succeeded by Astyages, B.C. 593, whose history is a total blank, till near the close of his long reign of thirty-five years, when the Persians under Cyrus arose to power. He seems to have resigned himself to the ordinary condition of Oriental kings—to effeminacy and luxury—brought about by the prosperity which he inherited. He was contemporary with Crœsus, the famous king of Lydia, whose life has been invested with so much romantic interest by Herodotus—the first of the Asiatic kings who commenced hostile aggression on the Greeks. After making himself master of all the Greek States of Asia Minor, he combated a power which was destined to overturn the older monarchies of the East—that of the Persians—a race closely connected with the Medes in race, language, and religion.

The early history of the Persians.

The Persians first appear in history as a hardy, warlike people, simple in manners and scornful of luxury. They were uncultivated in art and science, but possessed great wit, and a poetical imagination. They lived in the mountainous region on the southwest of Iran, where the great plain descends to

the Persian Gulf. The sea-coast is hot and arid, as well as the eastern region where the mountains pass into the table-land of Iran. Between these tracts, resembling the Arabian desert, lie the high lands at the extremity of the Zagros chain. These rugged regions, rich in fruitful valleys, are favorable to the cultivation of corn, of the grape, and fruits, and afford excellent pasturage for flocks. In the northern part is the beautiful plain of Shiraz, which forms the favorite residence of the modern shahs. In the valley of Bend-amir was the old capital of Persepolis, whose ruins attest the magnificent palaces of Darius and Xerxes. Persia proper was a small country, three hundred miles from north to south, and two hundred and eighty from east to west, inhabited by an Aryan race, who brought with them, from the country beyond the Indus, a distinctive religion, language, and political institutions. Their language was closely connected with the Aryan dialects of India, and the tongues of modern Europe. Hence the Persians were noble types of the great Indo-European family, whose civilization has spread throughout the world. Their religion was the least corrupted of the ancient races, and was marked by a keen desire to arrive at truth, and entered, in the time of the Gnostics, into the speculations of the Christian fathers, of whom Origen was the type. Their teachers were the Magi, a wise and learned caste, some of whom came to Jerusalem in the time of Herod, guided by the star in the East, to institute inquiries as to the birth of Christ. They attempted to solve the mysteries of creation, but their elemental principle of religion was worship of

all the elements, especially of fire. But the Persians also believed in the two principles of good and evil, which were called the principle of dualism, and which they brought from India. It is thought by Rawlinson that the Persians differed in their religion from the primeval people of India, whose Vedas, or sacred books, were based on monotheism, in its spiritual and personal form, and that, for the heresy of “dualism,” they were compelled to migrate to the West. The Medes, with whom they subsequently became associated, were inclined to the old elemental worship of nature, which they learned from the Turanian or Scythic population.

Zoroaster. His religion.

The great man among the Persians was Zoroaster—or Zerdusht, born, probably, B.C. 589. He is immortal, not from his personal history, the details of which we are ignorant, but from his ideas, which became the basis of the faith of the Persians. He stamped his mind on the nation, as Mohammed subsequently did upon Arabia. His central principle was “dualism”—the two powers of good and evil—the former of which was destined ultimately to conquer. But with this dualistic creed of the old Persian, he also blended a reformed Magian worship of the elements, which had gained a footing among the Chaldean priests, and which originally came from the Scythic invaders. Magism could not have come from the Semitic races, whose original religion was theism, like that of Melchisedek and Abraham; nor from the Japhetic races, or Indo-European, whose

worship was polytheism—that of personal gods under distinct names, like Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva. The first to yield to this Magism were the Medes, who adopted the religion of older settlers,—the Scythic tribes, their subjects,—and which faith superseded the old Aryan religion.

Character of the Persians.

The Persians, the flower of the Aryan races, were peculiarly military in all their habits and aspirations. Their nobles, mounted on a famous breed of horses, composed the finest cavalry in the world. Nor was their infantry inferior, armed with lances, shields, and bows. Their military spirit was kept alive by their mountain life and simple habits and strict discipline.

Rise of Cyrus.

Astyages, we have seen, was the last of the Median kings. He married his daughter, according to Herodotus, to Cambyses, a Persian noble, preferring him to a higher alliance among the Median princes, in order that a dream might not be fulfilled that her offspring should conquer Asia. On the return of the dream he sought to destroy the child she was about to bear, but it was preserved by a herdsman; and when the child was ten years of age he was chosen by his playfellows on the mountains to be their king. As such he caused the son of a noble Median to be scourged for disobedience, who carried his complaint to Astyages. The Median monarch finds out his pedigree from the herdsman, and his officer, Harpagns, to whom he had intrusted the commission

for his destruction. He invites, in suppressed anger, this noble to a feast, at which he serves up the flesh of his own son. Harpagus, in revenge, conspires with some discontented nobles, and invites Cyrus, this boy-king, now the bravest of the youths of his age and country, to a revolt. Cyrus leads his troops against Astyages, and gains a victory, and also the person of the sovereign, and his great reign began, B.C. 558.

His wars.

The dethronement of Astyages caused a war between Lydia and Persia. Croesus hastens to attack the usurper and defend his father-in-law. He forms a league with Babylonia and Egypt. Thus the three most powerful monarchs of the world are arrayed against Cyrus, who is prepared to meet the confederation. Croesus is defeated, and retreats to his capital, Sardis; and the next spring, while summoning his allies, is attacked unexpectedly by Cyrus, and is again defeated. He now retires to Sardis, which is strongly fortified, and the city is besieged, by the Persians, and falls after a brief siege. Croesus himself is spared, and in his adversity gives wise counsel to his conqueror.

His great empire.

Cyrus leaves a Lydian in command of the captured city, and departs for home. A revolt ensues, which leads to a collision between Persia and the Greek colonies, and the subjection of the Grecian cities by Harpagus, the general of Cyrus. Then followed the conquest of Asia Minor, which required several

years, and was conducted by the generals of Cyrus. He was required in Media, to consolidate his power. He then extended his conquests to the East, and subdued the whole plateau of Iran, to the mountains which divided it from the Indus. Thus fifteen years of splendid military successes passed before he laid siege to Babylon, B.C. 538.

He makes Babylon his capital.

On the fall of that great city Cyrus took up his residence in it, as the imperial capital of his vast dominion. Here he issued his decree for the return of the Jews to their ancient territory, and for the rebuilding of their temple, after seventy years' captivity. This decree was dictated by the sound military policy of maintaining the frontier territory of Palestine against his enemies in Asia Minor, which he knew the Jews would do their best to preserve, and this policy he carried out with noble generosity, and returned to the Jews the captured vessels of silver and gold which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away; and for more than two centuries Persia had no warmer friends and allies than the obedient and loyal subjects of Judea.

Greatness of the reign of Cyrus.

Cyrus fell in battle while fighting a tribe of Scythians at the east of the Caspian Sea, B.C. 529, He was the greatest general that the Oriental world ever produced, and well may rank with Alexander himself. His reign of twenty-nine years was one constant succession of wars, in which he was uniformly

successful, and in which success was only equaled by his magnanimity. His empire extended from the Indus to the Hellespont and the Syrian coast, far greater than that of either Assyria or Babylonia.

Degeneracy of the Persian conquerors.

The result of the Persian conquest on the conquerors themselves was to produce habits of excessive luxury, a wide and vast departure from their original mode of life, which enfeebled the empire, and prepared the way for a rapid decline.

Cambyses.

Cambyses, however, the son and successor of Cyrus, carried out his policy and conquests. He was, unlike his father, a tyrant and a sensualist, but possessed considerable military genius. He conquered Phœnicia, and thus became master of the sea as well as of the land. He then quarreled with Amasis, the king of Egypt, and subdued his kingdom.

His follies.

Like an eastern despot, he had, while in Egypt, in an hour of madness and caprice, killed his brother, Smerdis. It happened there was a Magian who bore a striking resemblance to the murdered prince. With the help of his brother, whom the king had left governor of his household, this Magian usurped the throne of Persia, while Cambyses was absent, the death of the true Smerdis having been carefully concealed.

Usurpation of the Magians.

The news of the usurpation reached Cambyses while returning from an expedition to Syria. An accidental wound from the point of his sword proved mortal, B.C. 522. But Cambyses, about to die, called his nobles around him, and revealed the murder of his brother, and exhorted them to prevent the kingdom falling into the hands of the Medes. He left no children.

Darius.

The usurper proved a tyrant. A conspiracy of Persians followed, headed by the descendants of Cyrus; and Darius, the chief of these—the son of Hystaspes, became king of Persia, after Smerdis had reigned seven months. But this reign, brief as it was, had restored the old Magian priests to power, who had, by their magical arts, great popularity with the people, not only Medes, but Persians.

His conquests.

Darius restored the temples and the worship which the Magian priests had overthrown, and established the religion of Zoroaster. The early years of his reign were disturbed by rebellions in Babylonia and Media, but these were suppressed, and Darius prosecuted the conquests which Cyrus had begun. He invaded both India and Scythia, while his general, Megabazus, subdued Thrace and the Greek cities of the Hellespont.

His greatness.

The king of Macedonia acknowledged the supremacy of the great monarch of Asia, and gave the customary present of earth and water. Darius returned at length to Susa to enjoy the fruit of his victories, and the pleasures which his great empire afforded. For twenty years his glories were unparalleled in the East, and his life was tranquil.

The revolt of the Ionian cities.

But in the year B.C. 500, a great revolt of the Ionian cities took place. It was suppressed, at first, but the Atticans, at Marathon, defeated the Persian warriors, B.C. 490, and the great victory changed the whole course of Asiatic conquest. Darius made vast preparations for a new invasion of Greece, but died before they were completed, after a reign of thirty-six years, B.C. 485, leaving a name greater than that of any Oriental sovereign, except Cyrus.

Xerxes.

Unfortunately for him and his dynasty, he challenged the spirit of western liberty, then at its height among the cities of Greece. His successor, Xerxes, inherited his power, but not his genius, and rashly provoked Europe by new invasions, while he lived ingloriously in his seraglio. He was murdered in his palace, the fate of the great tyrants of eastern monarchies, for in no other way than by the assassin's dagger could a change of administration take place—a poor remedy, perhaps, but not worse than the disease itself. This tyrant was the Ahasuerus of

the Scriptures.

Fate of the Persian empire.

We need not follow the fortunes of the imbecile princes who succeeded Xerxes, for the Persian monarchy was now degenerate and weakened, and easily fell under the dominion of Alexander, who finally overthrew the power of Persia, B.C. 330.

Its characteristics.

And this was well. The Persian monarchy was an absolute despotism, like that of Turkey, and the monarch not only controlled the actions of his subjects, but was the owner even of their soil. He delegated his power to satraps, who ruled during his pleasure, but whose rule was disgraced by every form of extortion—sometimes punished, however, when it became outrageous and notorious. The satraps, like pashas, were virtually independent princes, and exercised all the rights of sovereigns so long as they secured the confidence of the supreme monarch, and regularly remitted to him the tribute which was imposed. The satrapies were generally given to members of the royal family, or to great nobles connected with it by marriage. The monarch governed by no council, and the laws centered in the principle that the will of the king was supreme. The only check which he feared was assassination, and he generally spent his life in the retirement of his seraglio, at Susa, Babylon, or Ecbatana.

The Persian empire was the last of the great monarchies of the Oriental world, and these flourished for a period of two

thousand years. When nations became wicked or extended over a large territory, the patriarchal rule of the primitive ages no longer proved an efficient government. Men must be ruled, however, in some way, and the irresponsible despotism of the East, over all the different races, Semitic, Hamite, and Japhetic, was the government which Providence provided, in a state of general rudeness, or pastoral simplicity, or oligarchal usurpations. The last great monarchy was the best; it was that which was exercised by the descendants of Japhet, according to the prediction that he should dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan should be his servant.

Before we follow the progress of the descendants of Japhet in Greece, among whom a new civilization arose, designed to improve the condition of society by the free agency displayed in art, science, literature, and government—the rise, in short, of free institutions—we will glance at the nations in Asia Minor which were brought in contact with the powers we have so briefly considered.

CHAPTER X.

ASIA MINOR AND PHŒNICIA

Original inhabitants of Asia Minor.

Concerning the original inhabitants of Asia Minor our information is very scanty. The works of Strabo shed an indefinite light, and the author of the Iliad seems to have been but imperfectly acquainted with either the geography or the people of that extensive country. According to Herodotus, the river Halys was the most important geographical limit; nor does he mention the great chain of Taurus, which begins from the southern coast of Lycia, and strikes northeastward as far as Armenia—the most important boundary line in the time of the Romans. Northward of Mount Taurus, on the upper portion of the river Halys, was situated the spacious plain of Asia Minor. The northeast and south of this plain was mountainous, and was bounded by the Euxine, the Ægean, and the Pamphylian seas. The northwestern part included the mountainous region of Ida, Temnus, and Olympus. The peninsula was fruitful in grains, wine, fruit, cattle, and oil.

Its various nations.

Along the western shores of this great peninsula were Pelasgians, Mysians, Bythinians, Phrygians, Lydians, and other nations, before the Greeks established their colonies. Further

eastward were Lycians, Pisidians, Phrygians, Cappadocians, Paphlagonians, and others. The Phrygians, Mysians, and Teucrians were on the northwest. These various nations were not formed into large kingdoms or confederacies, nor even into large cities, but were inconsiderable tribes, that presented no formidable resistance to external enemies. The most powerful people were the Lydians, whose capital was Sardis, who were ruled by Gyges, 700 B.C. This monarchy extinguished the independence of the Greek cities on the coast, without impeding their development in wealth and civilization. All the nations west of the river Halys were kindred in language and habits. East of the Halys dwelt Semitic races, Assyrians, Syrians, Cappadocians, and Cilicians. Along the coast of the Euxine dwelt Bythinians, Marandynians, and Paphlagonians—branches of the Thracian race. Along the southern coast of the Propontis were the Doliones and Pelasgians. In the region of Mount Ida were the Teucrians and Mysians. All these races had a certain affinity with the Thracians, and all modified the institutions of the Greeks who settled on the coast for purposes of traffic or colonization. The music of the Greeks was borrowed from the Phrygians and Lydians. The flute is known to have been invented, or used by the Phrygians, and from them to have passed to Greek composers.

The Phrygians

The ancient Phrygians were celebrated chiefly for their flocks and agricultural produce, while the Lydians, dwelling in cities, possessed much gold and silver. But there are

few great historical facts connected with either nation. There is an interesting legend connected with the Phrygian town of Gordium. The primitive king, Gordius, was originally a poor husbandman, upon the yoke of whose team, as he tilled the field, an eagle perched. He consulted the augurs to explain the curious portent, and was told that the kingdom was destined for his family. His son was Midas, offspring of a maiden of prophetic family. Soon after, dissensions breaking out among the Phrygians, they were directed by an oracle to choose a king, whom they should first see approaching in a wagon. Gordius and his son Midas were the first they saw approaching the town, and the crown was conferred upon them. The wagon was consecrated, and became celebrated for a knot which no one could untie. Whosoever should untie that knot was promised the kingdom of Asia. It remained untied until Alexander the Great cut it with his sword.

The Lydians. Gyges.

The Lydians became celebrated for their music, of which the chief instruments were the flute and the harp. Their capital, Sardis, was situated on a precipitous rock, and was deemed impregnable. Among their kings was Crœsus, whose great wealth was derived from the gold found in the sands of the river Pactolus, which flowed toward the Hermus from Mount Tmolus, and also from the industry of his subjects. They were the first on record to coin gold and silver. The antiquity of the Lydian monarchy is very great, and was traced to Heracles. The

Heracleid dynasty lasted five hundred and five years, and ended with Myrsus, or Kandaules. His wife was of exceeding beauty, and the vanity of her husband led him to expose her person to Gyges, commander of his guard. The affronted wife, in revenge, caused her husband to be assassinated, and married Gyges. A strong party opposed his ascent to the throne, and a civil war ensued, which was terminated by a consultation of the oracle, which decided in favor of Gyges, the first historical king of Lydia, about the year 715 B.C.

His prosperous reign.

With this king commenced the aggressions from Sardis on the Asiatic Greeks, which ended in their subjection. How far the Lydian kingdom of Sardis extended during the reign of Gyges is not known, but probably over the whole Troad, to Abydus, on the Hellespont. Gyges reigned thirty-eight years, and was succeeded by his son Ardys, during whose reign was an extensive invasion of the Cimmerians, and a collision between the inhabitants of Lydia and those of Upper Asia, under the Median kings, who first acquired importance about the year 656 B.C. under a king called, by the Greeks, Phraortes, son of Deioces, who built the city of Ecbatana.

Alliance of Lydia with Persia.

Phraortes greatly extended the empire of the Medes, and conquered the Persians, but was defeated and slain by the Assyrians of Nineveh. His son, Cyaxares (636-595 B.C.)

continued the Median conquests to the river Halys, which was the boundary between the Lydian and Median kingdoms. A war between these two powers was terminated by the marriage of the daughter of the Lydian king with the son of the Median monarch, Cyaxares, who shortly after laid siege to Nineveh, but was obliged to desist by a sudden inroad of Scythians.

Scythian inroads. Their characteristics.

This inroad of the Scythians in Media took place about the same time that the Cimmerians invaded Lydia, a nomad race which probably inhabited the Tauric Chersonessus (Crimea), and had once before desolated Asia Minor before the time of Homer. The Cimmerians may have been urged forward into Asia Minor by an invasion of the Scythians themselves, a nomadic people who neither planted nor reaped, but lived on food derived from animals—prototypes of the Huns, and also progenitors—a formidable race of barbarians, in the northern section of Central Asia, east of the Caspian Sea. The Cimmerians fled before this more warlike race, abandoned their country on the northern coast of the Euxine, and invaded Asia Minor. They occupied Sardis, and threatened Ephesus, and finally were overwhelmed in the mountainous regions of Cilicia. Some, however, effected a settlement in the territory where the Greek city of Sinope was afterward built.

Scythian conquests.

Ardys was succeeded by his son Tadyattes, who reigned

twelve years; and his son and successor, Alyattes, expelled the Cimmerians from Asia Minor. But the Scythians, who invaded Media, defeated the king, Cyaxares, and became masters of the country, and spread as far as Palestine, and enjoyed their dominion twenty-eight years, until they were finally driven away by Cyaxares. These nomadic tribes from Tartary were the precursors of Huns, Avars, Bulgarians, Magyars, Turks, Mongols, and Tartars, who, at different periods, invaded the civilized portions of Asia and Europe, and established a dominion more or less durable.

Croesus.

Cyaxares, after the expulsion of the Scythians, took Nineveh, and reduced the Assyrian empire, while Alyattes, the king of Lydia, after the Cimmerians were subdued, made war on the Greet city of Miletus, and reduced the Milesians to great distress, and also took Smyrna. He reigned fifty-seven years with great prosperity, and transmitted his kingdom to Croesus, his son by an Ionian wife. His tomb was one of the architectural wonders of that day, and only surpassed by the edifices of Egypt and Babylon.

His prosperity.

Croesus made war on the Asiatic Greeks, and as the twelve Ionian cities did not co-operate with any effect, they were subdued. He extended his conquests over Asia Minor, until he had conquered the Phrygians, Mysians, and other nations, and

created a great empire, of which Sardia was the capital. The treasures lie amassed exceeded any thing before known to the Greeks, though inferior to the treasures accumulated at Susa and other Persian capitals when Alexander conquered the East.

But the Lydian monarchy under Cræsus was soon absorbed in the Persian empire, together with the cities of the Ionian Greeks, as has been narrated.

The Phœnicians.

But there was another power intimately connected with the kingdom of Judea,—the Phœnician, which furnished Solomon artists and timber for his famous temple. We close this chapter with a brief notice of the greatest merchants of the ancient world, the Phœnicians.

Their Semitic origin.

They belonged, as well as the Assyrians, to the Semitic or Syro-Arabian family, comprising, besides, the Syrians, Jews, Arabians, and in part the Abyssinians. They were at a very early period a trading and mercantile nation, and the variegated robes and golden ornaments fabricated at Sidon were prized by the Homeric heroes. They habitually traversed the Ægean Sea, and formed settlements on its islands.

The country.

The Phœnician towns occupied a narrow slip of the coast of Syria and Palestine, about one hundred and twenty miles in length, and generally about twenty in breadth—between

Mount Libanus and the sea, Aradus was the northernmost, and Tyre the southernmost city. Between these were situated Sidon, Berytus, Tripolis, and Byblus. Within this confined territory was concentrated a greater degree of commercial wealth and enterprise, also of manufacturing skill, than could be found in the other parts of the world at the time. Each town was an independent community, having its own surrounding territory, and political constitution and hereditary prince. Tyre was a sort of presiding city, having a controlling political power over the other cities. Mount Libanus, or Lebanon, touched the sea along the Phœnician coast, and furnished abundant supplies for ship-building.

Phœnician cities.

The great Phœnician deity was Melkarth, whom the Greeks called Hercules, to whom a splendid temple was erected at Tyre, coeval, perhaps, with the foundation of the city two thousand three hundred years before the time of Herodotus. In the year 700 B.C., the Phœnicians seemed to have reached their culminating power, and they had colonies in Africa, Sicily, Sardinia, and Spain. Carthage, Utica, and Gades were all flourishing cities before the first Olympiad. The commerce of the Phœnicians extended through the Red Sea and the coast of Arabia in the time of Solomon. They furnished the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Persians with the varied productions of other countries at a very remote period.

Phœnician colonies.

The most ancient colonies were Utica and Carthage, built in what is now called the gulf of Tunis; and Cades, now Cadiz, was prosperous one thousand years before the Christian era. The enterprising mariners of Tyre coasted beyond the pillars of Hercules without ever losing sight of land. The extreme productiveness of the southern region of Spain in the precious metals tempted the merchants to that distant country. But Carthage was by far the most important centre for Tyrian trade, and became the mistress of a large number of dependent cities.

When Psammetichus relaxed the jealous exclusion of ships from the mouth of the Nile, the incitements to traffic were greatly increased, and the Phœnicians, as well as Ionian merchants, visited Egypt. But the Phœnicians were jealous of rivals in profitable commerce, and concealed their tracks, and magnified the dangers of the sea. About the year 600 B.C., they had circumnavigated Africa, starting from the Red Sea, and going round the Cape of Good Hope to Gades, and from thence returning by the Nile.

Voyage of the Phœnicians.

It would seem that Nechos, king of Egypt, anxious to procure a water communication between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, began digging a canal from one to the other. In the prosecution of this project he dispatched Phœnicians on an experimental voyage round Libya, which was accomplished, in

three years. The mariners landed in the autumn, and remained long enough to plant corn and raise a crop for their supplies. They reached Egypt through the Straits of Gibraltar, and recounted a tale, which, says Herodotus, “others may believe it if they choose, but I can not believe, that in sailing round Libya, they had the sun on their right and—to the north.” In going round Africa they had no occasion to lose sight of land, and their vessels were amply stored. The voyage, however, was regarded as desperate and unprofitable, and was not repeated.

Besides the trade which the Phœnicians carried on along the coasts, they had an extensive commerce in the interior of Asia. But we do not read of any great characters who arrested the attention of their own age or succeeding ages, Phœnician history is barren in political changes and great historical characters, as is that of Carthage till the Roman wars.

Decline of Phœnician power.

Between the years 700 and 530 B.C., there was a great decline of Phœnician power, which was succeeded by the rise of the Greek maritime cities. Nebuchadnezzar reduced the Phœnician cities to the same dependence that the Ionian cities were reduced by Croesus and Cyrus. The opening of the Nile to the Grecian commerce contributed to the decline of Phœnicia. But to this country the Greeks owed the alphabet and the first standard of weights and measures.

Carthage.

Carthage, founded 819 B.C., by Dido, had a flourishing commerce in the sixth century before Christ, and also commenced, at this time, their encroachments in Sicily, which led to wars for two hundred and fifty years with the Greek settlements. It contained, it is said, at one time, seven hundred thousand people. But a further notice of their great city is reserved until allusion is made to the Punic wars which the Romans waged with this powerful State.

CHAPTER XI.

JEWISH HISTORY FROM THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY TO THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.— THE HIGH PRIESTS AND THE ASMONEAN AND IDUMEAN KINGS

Absorption of the ten tribes.

We have seen how the ten tribes were carried captive to Assyria, on the fall of Samaria, by Shalmanezar, B.C., 721. From that time history loses sight of the ten tribes, as a distinct people. They were probably absorbed with the nations among whom they settled, although imagination has loved to follow them into inaccessible regions where they await their final restoration. But there are no reliable facts which justify this conclusion. They may have been the ancestors of the Christian converts afterward found among the Nestorians. They may have retained in the East, to a certain extent, some of their old institutions. But nothing is known with certainty. All is vain conjecture respecting their ultimate fortunes.

The Jews at Babylon.

The Jews of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin never entirely

departed from their ancient faith, and their monarchs reigned in regular succession till the captivity of the family of David. They were not carried to Babylon for one hundred and twenty-three years after the dispersion of the ten tribes, B.C. 598.

Daniel.

During the captivity, the Jews still remained a separate people, governed by their own law and religion. It is supposed that they were rather colonists than captives, and were allowed to dwell together in considerable bodies—that they were not sold as slaves, and by degrees became possessed of considerable wealth. What region, from time immemorial, has not witnessed their thrift and their love of money? Well may a Jew say, as well as a Greek, “*Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris.*” Taking the advice of Jeremiah they built houses, planted gardens, and submitted to their fate, even if they bewailed it “by the rivers of Babylon,” in such sad contrast to their old mountain homes. They had the free enjoyment of their religion, and were subjected to no general and grievous religious persecutions. And some of their noble youth, like Daniel, were treated with great distinction during the captivity. Daniel had been transported to Babylon before Jerusalem fell, as a hostage, among others, of the fidelity of their king. These young men, from the highest Jewish families, were educated in all the knowledge of the Babylonians, as Joseph had been in Egyptian wisdom. They were the equals of the Chaldean priests in knowledge of astronomy, divination, and the interpretation of dreams. And though these young hostages

were maintained at the public expense, and perhaps in the royal palaces, they remembered their distressed countrymen, and lived on the simplest fare. It was as an interpreter of dreams that Daniel maintained his influence in the Babylonian court. Twice was he summoned by Nebuchadnezzar, and once by Belshazzar to interpret the handwriting on the wall. And under the Persian monarch, when Babylon fell, Daniel became a vizier, or satrap, with great dignity and power.

His beautiful character.

When the seventy years' captivity, which Jeremiah had predicted, came to an end, the empire of the Medes and Persians was in the hands of Cyrus, under whose sway he enjoyed the same favor and rank that he did under Darius, or any of the Babylonian princes. The miraculous deliverance of this great man from the lion's den, into which he had been thrown from the intrigues of his enemies and the unalterable law of the Medes, resulted in a renewed exaltation. Josephus ascribes to Daniel one of the noblest and most interesting characters in Jewish history, a great skill in architecture, and it is to him that the splendid mausoleum at Ecbatana is attributed. But Daniel, with all his honors, was not corrupted, and it was probably through his influence, as a grand vizier, that the exiled Jews obtained from Cyrus the decree which restored them to their beloved land.

Return of the Jews.

The number of the returned Jews, under Zerubbabel, a

descendant of the kings of Judah, were forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty men—a great and joyful caravan—but small in number compared with the Israelites who departed from Egypt with Moses. On their arrival in their native land, they were joined by great numbers of the common people who had remained. They bore with them the sacred vessels of the temple, which Cyrus generously restored. They arrived in the spring of the year B.C. 536, and immediately made preparations for the restoration of the temple; not under those circumstances which enabled Solomon to concentrate the wealth of Western Asia, but under great discouragements and the pressure of poverty. The temple was built on the old foundation, but was not completed till the sixth year of Darius Hystaspes, B.C. 515, and then without the ancient splendor.

Dedication of the Temple.

It was dedicated with great joy and magnificence, but the sacrifice of one hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and twelve goats, formed a sad contrast to the hecatombs which Solomon had offered.

Nothing else of importance marked the history of the dependent, impoverished, and humiliated Jews, who had returned to the country of their ancestors during the reign of Darius Hystaspes.

Mordecai and Ahasuerus. The story of Esther.

It was under his successor, Xerxes, he who commanded the

Hellespont to be scourged—that mad, luxurious, effeminated monarch, who is called in Scripture Ahasuerus,—that Mordecai figured in the court of Persia, and Esther was exalted to the throne itself. It was in the seventh year of his reign that this inglorious king returned, discomfited, from the invasion of Greece. Abandoning himself to the pleasures of his harem, he marries the Jewess maiden, who is the instrument, under Providence, of averting the greatest calamity with which the Jews were ever threatened. Haman, a descendant of the Amalekitish kings, is the favorite minister and grand vizier of the Persian monarch. Offended with Mordecai, his rival in imperial favor, the cousin of the queen, he intrigues for the wholesale slaughter of the Jews wherever they were to be found, promising the king ten thousand talents of silver from the confiscation of Jewish property, and which the king needed, impoverished by his unsuccessful expedition into Greece. He thus obtains a decree from Ahasuerus for the general massacre of the Jewish nation, in all the provinces of the empire, of which Judea was one. The Jews are in the utmost consternation, and look to Mordecai. His hope is based on Esther, the queen, who might soften, by her fascinations, the heart of the king. She assumes the responsibility of saving her nation at the peril of her own life—a deed of not extraordinary self-devotion, but requiring extraordinary tact. What anxiety must have pressed the soul of that Jewish woman in the task she undertook! What a responsibility on her unaided shoulders? But she dissembles her grief, her fear, her anxiety,

and appears before the king radiant in beauty and loveliness. The golden sceptre is extended to her by her weak and cruel husband, though arrayed in the pomp and power of an Oriental monarch, before whom all bent the knee, and to whom, even in his folly, he appears as demigod. She does not venture to tell the king her wishes. The stake is too great. She merely invites him to a grand banquet, with his minister Haman. Both king and minister are ensnared by the cautious queen, and the result is the disgrace of Haman, the elevation of Mordecai, and the deliverance of the Jews from the fatal sentence—not a perfect deliverance, for the decree could not be changed, but the Jews were warned and allowed to defend themselves, and they slew seventy-five thousand of their enemies. The act of vengeance was followed by the execution of the ten sons of Haman, and Mordecai became the real governor of Persia. We see in this story the caprice which governed the actions, in general, of Oriental kings, and their own slavery to their favorite wives. The charms of a woman effect, for evil or good, what conscience, and reason, and policy, and wisdom united can not do. Esther is justly a favorite with the Christian and Jewish world; but Vashti, the proud queen who, with true woman's dignity, refuses to grace with her presence the saturnalia of an intoxicated monarch, is also entitled to our esteem, although she paid the penalty of disobedience; and the foolish edict which the king promulgated, that all women should implicitly obey their husbands, seems to indicate that unconditional obedience was not the custom of the

Persian women.

Return to Palestine of Jews under Ezra.

The reign of Artaxerxes, the successor of Xerxes, was favorable to the Jews, for Judea was a province of the Persian empire. In the seventh year of his reign, B.C. 458, a new migration of Jews from Babylonia took place, headed by Ezra, a man of high rank at the Persian court. He was empowered to make a collection among the Jews of Babylonia for the adornment of the temple, and he came to Jerusalem laden with treasures. He was, however, affected by the sight of a custom which had grown up, of intermarriage of the Jews with adjacent tribes. He succeeded in causing the foreign wives to be repudiated, and the old laws to be enforced which separated the Jews from all other nations. And it is probably this stern law, which prevents the Jews from marriage with foreigners, that has preserved their nationality, in all their wanderings and misfortunes, more than any other one cause.

Nehemiah. Rebuilding of Jerusalem. Revival of ancient laws.

A renewed commission granted to Nehemiah, B.C. 445, resulted in a fresh immigration of Jews to Palestine, in spite of all the opposition which the Samaritan and other nations made. Nehemiah was cup-bearer to the Persian king, and devoted to the Persian interests. At that time Persia had suffered a fatal blow at the battle of Cindus, and among the humiliating articles

of peace with the Athenian admiral was the stipulation that the Persians should not advance within three days' journey of the sea. Jerusalem being at this distance, was an important post to hold, and the Persian court saw the wisdom of intrusting its defense to faithful allies. In spite of all obstacles, Nehemiah succeeded, in fifty-two days, in restoring the old walls and fortifications; the whole population, of every rank and order having devoted themselves to the work. Moreover, contributions for the temple continued to flow into the treasury of a once opulent, but now impoverished and decimated people. After providing for the security of the capital and the adornment of the temple, the leaders of the nation turned their attention to the compilation of the sacred books and the restoration of religion. Many important literary works had been lost during their captivity, including the work of Solomon on national history, and the ancient book of Jasher. But the books on the law, the historical books, the prophetic writings, the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Songs of Solomon, were collected and copied. The law, revised and corrected, was publicly read by Ezra; the Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated with considerable splendor; and a renewed covenant was made by the people to keep the law, to observe the Sabbath, to avoid idolatry, and abstain from intermarriage with strangers. The Jewish constitution was restored, and Nehemiah, a Persian satrap in reality, lived in a state of considerable magnificence, entertaining the chief leaders of the nation, and reforming all disorders. Jerusalem gradually

regained political importance, while the country of the ten tribes, though filled with people, continued to be the seat of idolaters.

Obscurity of Jewish history after Nehemiah.

On the death of Nehemiah, B.C. 415, the history of the Jews becomes obscure, and we catch only scattered glimpses of the state of the country, till the accession of Antiochus Epiphanes, B.C. 175, when the Syrian monarch had erected a new kingdom on the ruins of the Persian empire. For more than two centuries, when the Greeks and Romans flourished, Jewish history is a blank, with here and there some scattered notices and traditions which Josephus has recorded. The Jews, living in vassalage to the successors of Alexander during this interval, had become animated by a martial spirit, and the Maccabaic wars elevated them into sufficient importance to become allies of Rome—the new conquering power, destined to subdue the world. During this period the Jewish character assumed the hard, stubborn, exclusive cast which it has ever since maintained—an intense hostility to polytheism and all Gentile influences. The Jewish Scriptures took their present shape, and the Apocryphal books came to light. The sects of the Jews arose, like Pharisees and Sadducees, and religious and political parties exhibited an unwonted fierceness and intolerance. While the Greeks and Romans were absorbed in wars, the Jews perfected their peculiar economy, and grew again into political importance. The country, by means of irrigation and cultivation, became populous and fertile, and poetry and the arts regained their sway. The people

took but little interest in the political convulsions of neighboring nations, and devoted themselves quietly to the development of their own resources. The captivity had cured them of war, of idolatry, and warlike expeditions.

Obscurity and growth of the Jews.

During this two hundred years of obscurity, but real growth, unnoticed and unknown by other nations, a new capital had arisen in Egypt; Alexandria became a great mart of commerce, and the seat of revived Grecian learning. The sway of the Ptolemaic kings, Grecian in origin, was favorable to letters, and to arts. The Jews settled in their magnificent city, translated their Scriptures into Greek, and cultivated the Greek philosophy.

The ascendancy of the high priests.

Meanwhile the internal government of the Jews fell into the hands of the high priests—the Persian governors exercising only a general superintendence. At length the country, once again favored, was subjected to the invasion of Alexander. After the fall of Tyre, the conqueror advanced to Gaza, and totally destroyed it. He then approached Jerusalem, in fealty to Persia. The high priest made no resistance, but went forth in his pontifical robes, followed by the people in white garments, to meet the mighty warrior. Alexander, probably encouraged by the prophesies of Daniel, as explained by the high priest, did no harm to the city or nation, but offered gifts, and, as tradition asserts, even worshiped the God of the Jews. On the conquest of Persia, Judea came into

the possession of Laomedon, one of the generals of Alexander, B.C. 321. On his defeat by Ptolemy, another general, to whom Egypt had fallen as his share, one hundred thousand Jews were carried captive to Alexandria, where they settled and learned the Greek language. The country continued to be convulsed by the wars between the generals of Alexander, and fell into the hands, alternately, of the Syrian and Egyptian kings—successors of the generals of the great conqueror.

Persecution of the Jews by Antiochus.

On the establishment of the Syro-Grecian kingdom by Seleucus, Antioch, the capital, became a great city, and the rival of Alexandria. Syria, no longer a satrapy of Persia, became a powerful monarchy, and Judea became a prey to the armies of this ambitious State in its warfare with Egypt, and was alternately the vassal of each—Syria and Egypt. Under the government of the first three Ptolemies—those enlightened and magnificent princes, Soter, Philadelphus, and Evergetes, the Jews were protected, both at home and in Alexandria, and their country enjoyed peace and prosperity, until the ambition of Antiochus the Great again plunged the nation in difficulties. He had seized Judea, which was then a province of the Egyptian kings, but was defeated by Ptolemy Philopator. This monarch made sumptuous presents to the temple, and even ventured to enter the sanctuary, but was prevented by the high priest. Although filled with fear in view of the tumult which this act provoked, he henceforth hated and persecuted the Jews. Under his successor, Judea was again

invaded by Antiochus, and again was Jerusalem wrested from his grasp by Scopas, the Egyptian general. Defeated, however, near the source of the Jordan, the country fell into the hands of Antiochus, who was regarded as a deliverer. And it continued to be subject to the kings of Syria, until, with Jerusalem, it suffered calamities scarcely inferior to those inflicted by the Babylonians.

The reign of the high priests. Their turbulent reigns.
Popular tumults. Misery of the Jews.

It is difficult to trace, with any satisfaction, the internal government of the Jews during the two hundred years when the chief power was in the hands of the high priests—this period marked by the wars between Syria and Egypt, or rather between the successors of the generals of Alexander. The government of the high priests at Jerusalem was not exempt from those disgraceful outrages which occasionally have marked all the governments of the world—whether in the hands of kings, or in an oligarchy of nobles and priests. Nehemiah had expelled from Jerusalem, Manasseh, the son of Jehoiada, who succeeded Eliashib in the high priesthood, on account of his unlawful marriage with a stranger. Manasseh, invited to Samaria by the father of the woman he had married, became high priest of the temple on Mount Gerizim, and thus perpetuated the schism between the two nations. Before the conquests of Alexander, while the country was under the dominion of Persia, a high priest by the name of John murdered his brother Jesus within the precincts of the sanctuary, which crime was punished by

the Persian governor, by a heavy fine imposed upon the whole nation. Jaddua was the high priest in the time of Alexander, and by his dignity and tact won over the conqueror of Asia. Onias succeeded Jaddua, and ruled for twenty-one years, and he was succeeded by Simon the Just, a pontiff on whose administration Jewish tradition dwells with delight. Simon was succeeded by his uncles, Eleazar and Manasseh, and they by Onias II., son of Simon, through whose misconduct, or indolence, in omitting the customary tribute to the Egyptian king, came near involving the country in fresh calamities—averted, however, by his nephew Joseph, who pacified the Egyptian court, and obtained the former generalship of the revenues of Judea, Samaria, and Phœnicia, which he enjoyed to the time of Antiochus the Great. Onias II. was succeeded by his son Simon, under whose pontificate the Egyptian monarch was prevented from entering the temple, and he by Onias III., under whose rule a feud took place with the sons of Joseph, disgraced by murders, which called for the interposition of the Syrian king, who then possessed Judea. Joshua, or Jason, by bribery, obtained the pontificate, but he allowed the temple worship to fall into disuse, and was even alienated from the Jewish faith by his intimacy with the Syrian court. He was outbidden in his high office by Onias, his brother, who was disgraced by savage passions, and who robbed the temple of its golden vessels. The people, indignant, rose in a tumult, and slew his brother, Lysimachus. Meanwhile, Jason, the dispossessed high priest, recovered his

authority, and shut up Onias, or Menelaus, as he called himself, in a castle. This was interpreted by Antiochus as an insurrection, and he visited on Jerusalem a terrible penalty—slaughtering forty thousand of the people, and seizing as many more for slaves. He then abolished the temple services, seized all the sacred vessels, collected spoil to the amount of eighteen hundred talents, defiled the altar by the sacrifice of a sow, and suppressed every sign of Jewish independence. He meditated the complete extirpation of the Jewish religion, dismantled the capitol, harassed the country people, and inflicted unprecedented barbarities. The temple itself was dedicated to Jupiter Olympius, and the reluctant and miserable Jews were forced to join in all the rites of pagan worship, including the bacchanalia, which mocked the virtue of the older Romans.

The Maccabees. Mattathias. His successes.

From this degradation and slavery the Jews were rescued by a line of heroes whom God raised up—the Asmoneans, or Maccabees. The head of this heroic family was Mattathias, a man of priestly origin, living in the town of Modin, commanding a view of the sea—an old man of wealth and influence who refused to depart from the faith of his fathers, while most of the nation had relapsed into the paganism of the Greeks. He slew with his own hand an apostate Jew, who offered sacrifice to a pagan deity, and then killed the royal commissioner, Apelles, whom Antiochus had sent to enforce his edicts. The heroic old man, who resembled William Tell, in his mission and character,

summoned his countrymen, who adhered to the old faith, and intrenched himself in the mountains, and headed a vigorous revolt against the Syrian power, even fighting on the Sabbath day. The ranks of the insurrectionists were gradually filled with those who were still zealous for the law, or inspired with patriotic desires for independence. Mattathias was prospered, making successful raids from his mountain fastnesses, destroying heathen altars, and punishing apostate Jews. Two sects joined his standard with peculiar ardor—the Zadikim, who observed the written law of Moses, from whom the Sadducees of later times sprang, and the more zealous and austere Chasidim, who added to the law the traditions of the elders, from whom the Pharisees came.

Old men are ill suited to conduct military expeditions when great fatigue and privation are required, and the aged Mattathias sank under the weight which he had so nobly supported, and bequeathed his power to Judas, the most valiant of his sons.

His son Judas. His heroic deeds.

This remarkable man, scarcely inferior to Joshua and David in military genius and heroic qualities, added prudence and discretion to personal bravery. When his followers had gained experience and courage by various gallant adventures, he led them openly against his enemies. The governor of Samaria, Apollonius, was the first whom he encountered, and whom he routed and slew. Seron, the deputy governor of Cœlesyria, sought to redeem the disgrace of the Syrian arms; but he also was

defeated at the pass of Bethoron. At the urgent solicitation of Philip, governor of Jerusalem, Antiochus then sent a strong force of forty thousand foot and seven thousand horse to subdue the insurgents, under the command of Ptolemy Macron. Judas, to resist these forces, had six thousand men; but he relied on the God of Israel, as his fathers had done in the early ages of Jewish history, and in a sudden attack he totally routed a large detachment of the main army, under Gorgias, and spoiled their camp. He then defeated another force beyond the Jordan, and the general fled in the disguise of a slave, to Antioch. Thus closed a triumphant campaign.

Syria invades Palestine.

The next year, Lysias, the lieutenant-general of Antiochus, invaded Judea with a large force of sixty-five thousand men. Judas met it with ten thousand, and gained a brilliant victory, which proved decisive, and which led to the re-establishment of the Jewish power at Jerusalem. Judas fortified the city and the temple, and assumed the offensive, and recovered, one after another, the cities which had fallen under the dominion of Syria. In the mean time, Antiochus, the bitterest enemy which the Jews ever had, died miserably in Persia—the most powerful of all the Syrian kings.

Another unsuccessful invasion.

On the accession of Antiochus Eupater, Lysias again attempted the subjugation of Judea, This time he advanced

with one hundred thousand foot, twenty thousand horse, and thirty-two elephants. But this large force wasted away in an unsuccessful attack on Jerusalem, harassed by the soldiers of the Maccabees. A treaty of peace was concluded, by which full liberty of worship was granted to the Jews, with permission to be ruled by their own laws.

Continued hostilities between Syria and Palestine.

Demetrius, the lawful heir of Antiochus the Great, had been detained at Rome as a hostage, in consequence of which Antiochus Eupater had usurped his throne. Escaping from Rome, he overpowered his enemies and recovered his kingdom. But he was even more hostile to the Jews than his predecessor, and succeeded in imposing a high priest on the nation friendly to his interests. His cruelties and crimes once more aroused the Jews to resistance, and Judas gained another decisive victory, and Nicanor, the Syrian general, was slain.

The Jews force an alliance with the Romans.

Judas then adopted a policy which was pregnant with important consequences. He formed a league with the Romans, then bent on the conquest of the East. The Roman senate readily entered into a coalition with the weaker State, in accordance with its uniform custom of protecting those whom they ultimately absorbed in their vast empire: but scarcely was the treaty ratified when the gallant Judas died, leaving the defense of his country to his brothers, B.C. 161.

Jonathan Maccabeus master of Judea. His rule. John Hyrcanus as high priest.

Jonathan, on whom the leadership fell, found the forces under his control disheartened by the tyranny of the high priest, Alcimus, whom the nation had accepted. Leagued with Bacchides, the Syrian general, the high priest had every thing his own way, until Jonathan, emerging from his retreat, delivered his countrymen once again, and another peace was made. Several years then passed in tranquillity, Jonathan being master of Judea. A revolution in Syria added to his power, and his brother Simon was made captain-general of all the country from Tyre to Egypt. Jonathan, unfortunately, was taken in siege, and the leadership of the nation devolved upon Simon, the last of this heroic family. He ruled with great wisdom, consolidated his power, strengthened his alliance with Rome, repaired Jerusalem, and restored the peace of the country. He was, on a present of one thousand pounds of gold to the Romans, decreed to be prince of Judea, and taken under the protection of his powerful ally. But the peace with Syria, from the new complications to which that kingdom was subjected from rival aspirants to the throne, was broken in the old age of Simon, and he was treacherously murdered, with his oldest son, Judas, at a banquet in Jerusalem. The youngest son, John Hyrcanus, inherited the vigor of his family, and was declared high priest, and sought to revenge the murder of his father and brother. Still, a Syrian army overran the country, and John Hyrcanus, shut up in Jerusalem, was reduced

to great extremities. A peace was finally made between him and the Syrian monarch, Antiochus, by which Judea submitted to vassalage to the king of Syria. An unfortunate expedition of Antiochus into Parthia enabled Hyrcanus once again to throw off the Syrian yoke, and Judea regained its independence, which it maintained until compelled to acknowledge the Roman power. Hyrcanus was prospered in his reign, and destroyed the rival temple on Mount Gerizim, while the temple of Jerusalem resumed its ancient dignity and splendor.

The Jews in Alexandria.

At this period the Jews, who had settled in Alexandria, devoted themselves to literature and philosophy in that liberal and elegant city, and were allowed liberty of worship. But they became entangled in the mazes of Grecian speculation, and lost much of their ancient spirit. By compliance with the opinions and customs of the Greeks, they reached great honors and distinction, and even high posts in the army.

The rule of John Hyrcanus.

Hyrcanus, supreme in Judea, now reduced Samaria and Idumea, and was only troubled by the conflicting parties of Pharisees and Sadducees, whose quarrels agitated the State. He joined the party of the Sadducees, who asserted free will, and denied the more orthodox doctrines of the Pharisees, a kind of epicureans, opposed to severities and the authority of traditions. It is one proof of the advance of the Hebrew mind over the

simplicity of former ages, that the State could be agitated by theological and philosophical questions, like the States of Greece in their highest development.

Succeeded by his son.

Hyrchanus reigned twenty-nine years, and was succeeded by his son, Aristobulus, B.C. 106. His brief and inglorious reign was disgraced by his starving to death his mother in a dungeon, and imprisoning his three brothers, and assassinating a fourth, Antigonus, who was a victorious general. This prince died in an agony of remorse and horror on the spot where his brother was assassinated.

Alexander Jannaeus succeeded to the throne of the Asmonean princes, who possessed the whole region of Palestine, except the port of Ptolemais, and the city of Gaza. In an attempt to recover the former he was signally defeated, and came near losing his throne. He was more successful in his attack on Gaza, which finally surrendered, after Alexander had incurred immense losses.

Turbulent reign of Alexander.

While this priest-king was celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles, a meeting, incited by the Pharisaic party, broke out, which resulted in the slaughter of ten thousand people. While invading the country to the east of the Jordan, the rebellion was renewed, and the nation, for six years, suffered all the evils of civil war. Routed in a battle with the Syrian monarch,

whose aid the insurgents had invoked, he was obliged to flee to the mountains; but recovering his authority, at the head of sixty thousand men,—which shows the power of Judea at this period,—he marched upon Jerusalem, and inflicted a terrible vengeance, eight hundred men being publicly crucified, and eight thousand more forced to abandon the city. Under his iron sway, the country recovered its political importance, for his kingdom comprised the greater part of Palestine. He died, after a turbulent reign of twenty-seven years, B.C. 77, invoking his queen to throw herself into the arms of the Pharisaic party, which advice she followed, as it was the most powerful and popular.

Queen Alexandra.

The high priesthood devolved on his eldest son, Hyrcanus II., while the reins of government were held by his queen, Alexandra. She reigned vigorously and prosperously for nine years, punishing the murderers of the eight hundred Pharisees who had been executed.

Hyrcanus was not equal to his task amid the bitterness of party strife. His brother Aristobulus, belonging to the party of the Sadducees, and who had taken Damascus, was popular with the people, and compelled his elder brother to abdicate in his favor, and an end came to Pharisaic rule.

The Idumean family.

But now another family appears upon the stage, which ultimately wrested the crown from the Asmodean princes.

Antipater, a noble Idumean, was the chief minister of the feeble Hyrcanus. He incited, from motives of ambition, the deposed prince to reassert his rights, and influenced by his counsels, he fled to Aretas, the king of Arabia, whose capital, Petra, had become a great commercial emporium. Aretas, Antipater, and Hyrcanus, marched with an army of fifty thousand men against Aristobulus, who was defeated, and fled to Jerusalem.

All parties invoke the aid of Pompey.

At this time Pompey was pursuing his career of conquests in the East, and both parties invoked his interference, and both offered enormous bribes. This powerful Roman was then at Damascus, receiving the homage and tribute of Oriental kings. The Egyptian monarch sent as a present a crown worth four thousand pieces of gold. Aristobulus, in command of the riches of the temple, sent a golden vine worth five hundred talents. Pompey, intent on the conquest of Arabia, made no decision; but, having succeeded in his object, assumed a tone of haughtiness irreconcilable with the independence of Judea. Aristobulus, patriotic yet vacillating,—“too high-minded to yield, too weak to resist,”—fled to Jerusalem and prepared for resistance.

Jerusalem falls into the hands of Pompey.

Pompey approached the capital, weakened by those everlasting divisions to which the latter Jews were subjected by the zeal of their religious disputes. The city fell, after a brave defense of three months, and might not have fallen had the

Jews been willing to abate from the rigid observance of the Sabbath, during which the Romans prepared for assault. Pompey demolished the fortifications of the city, and exacted tribute, but spared the treasures of the temple which he profaned by his heathen presence. He nominated Hyrcanus to the priesthood, but withheld the royal diadem, and limited the dominions of Hyrcanus to Judea. He took Aristobulus to Rome to grace his triumph.

Reorganization of the government.

But he contrived to escape, and, with his son Alexander, again renewed the civil strife; but taken prisoner, he was again sent as a captive to the “eternal city.” Gabinius, the Roman general—for Hyrcanus had invoked the aid of the Romans—now deprived the high priest of the royal authority, and reorganized the whole government of Judea; establishing five independent Sanhedrims in the principal cities, after the form of the great Sanhedrim, which had existed since the captivity. This form lasted until Julius Cæsar reinvested Hyrcanus with the supreme dignity.

Jerusalem governed by Roman generals.

Jerusalem was now exposed to the rapacity of the Roman generals who really governed the country. Crassus plundered all that Pompey spared. He took from the temple ten thousand talents—about ten million dollars when gold and silver had vastly greater value than in our times. These vast sums had been accumulated from the contributions of Jews scattered over the

world—some of whom were immensely wealthy.

Herod governor of Galilee.

Aristobulus and his son Alexander were assassinated during the great civil war between the partisans of Cæsar and Pompey. After the fall of the latter. Cæsar confirmed Hyrcanus in the high priesthood, and allowed him to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. But Antipater, presuming on the incapacity of Hyrcanus, renewed his ambitious intrigues, and contrived to make his son, Phasael, governor of Jerusalem, and Herod, a second son, governor of Galilee.

Receives the crown of Judea. And reigns tyrannically.
His miserable life.

Herod developed great talents, and waited for his time. After the battle of Philippi Herod made acceptable offerings to the conquering party, and received the crown of Judea, which had been recently ravaged by the Parthians, through the intrigues of Antigonas, the surviving son of Aristobulus. By his marriage with Mariamne, of the royal line of the Asmoneans, he cemented the power he had won by the sword and the favor of Rome. He was the last of the independent sovereigns of Palestine. He reigned tyrannically, and was guilty of great crimes, having caused the death of the aged Hyrcanus, and the imprisonment and execution of his wife on a foul suspicion. He paid the same court to Augustus that he did to Antony, and was confirmed in the possession of his kingdom. The last of the line of the Asmonæans

had perished on the scaffold, beautiful, innocent, and proud, the object of a boundless passion to a tyrant who sacrificed her to a still greater one—suspicion. Alternating between his love and resentment, Herod sank into a violent fit of remorse, for he had more or less concern in the murder of the father, the grandfather, the brother, and the uncle of his beautiful and imperious wife. At all times, even amid the glories of his palace, he was haunted with the image of the wife he had destroyed, and loved with passionate ardor. He burst forth in tears, he tried every diversion, banquets and revels, solitude and labor—still the murdered Mariamne is ever present to his excited imagination. He settles down in a fixed and indelible gloom, and his stern nature sought cruelty and bloodshed. His public administration was, on the whole, favorable to the peace and happiness of the country, although he introduced the games and the theatres in which the Romans sought their greatest pleasures. For these innovations he was exposed to incessant dangers; but he surmounted them all by his vigilance and energy. He rebuilt Samaria, and erected palaces. But his greatest work was the building of Cæsarea—a city of palaces and theatres. His policy of reducing Judea to a mere province of Rome was not pleasing to his subjects, and he was suspected of a design of heathenizing the nation. Neither his munificence nor severities could suppress the murmurs of an indignant people. The undisguised hostility of the nation prompted him to an act of policy by which he hoped to conciliate it forever. The pride and glory of the Jews was their temple.

This Herod determined to rebuild with extraordinary splendor, so as to approach its magnificence in the time of Solomon. He removed the old structure, dilapidated by the sieges, and violence, and wear of five hundred years; and the new edifice gradually arose, glittering with gold, and imposing with marble pinnacles.

The hatred in which he was held. His death.

But in spite of all his magnificent public works, whether to gratify the pride of his people, or his own vanity—in spite of his efforts to develop the resources of the country over which he ruled by the favor of Rome—in spite of his talents and energies—one of the most able of the monarchs who had sat on the throne of Judea, he was obnoxious to his subjects for his cruelties, and his sympathy with paganism, and he was visited in his latter days by a terrible disorder which racked his body with pain, and inflamed his soul with suspicions, while his court was distracted with cabals from his own family, which poisoned his life, and led him to perpetrate unnatural cruelties. He had already executed two favorite sons, by Mariamne whom he loved, all from court intrigues and jealousy, and he then executed his son and heir, by Doris, his first wife, whom he had divorced to marry Mariamne, and under circumstances so cruel that Augustus remarked that he had rather be one of his swine than one of his sons. Among other atrocities, he had ordered the massacre of the Innocents to prevent any one to be born “as king of the Jews.” His last act was to give the fatal mandate for the execution of his son Antipater,

whom he hoped to make his heir, and then almost immediately expired in agonies, detested by the nation, and leaving a name as infamous as that of Ahab, B.C. 4.

His kingdom is divided among his sons. The claims of the rival princes.

Herod had married ten wives, and left a numerous family. By his will, he designated the sons of Malthace, his sixth wife, and a Samaritan, as his successors. These were Archelaus, Antipas, and Olympias. The first inherited Idumea, Samaria, and Judea; to the second were assigned Galilee and Peræa. Archelaus at once assumed the government at Jerusalem; and after he had given his father a magnificent funeral, and the people a funeral banquet, he entered the temple, seated himself on a golden throne, and made, as is usual with monarchs, a conciliatory speech, promising reform and alleviations from taxes and oppression. But even this did not prevent one of those disgraceful seditions which have ever marked the people of Jerusalem, in which three thousand were slain, caused by religious animosities. After quelling the tumult by the military, he set out for Rome, to secure his confirmation to the throne. He encountered opposition from various intrigues by his own family, and the caprice of the emperor. His younger brother, Antipas, also went to Rome to support his claim to the throne by virtue of a former will. While the cause of the royal litigants was being settled in the supreme tribunal of the civilized world, new disturbances broke out in Judea, caused by the rapacities of Sabinus, the Roman procurator of Syria. The

whole country was in a state of anarchy, and adventurers flocked from all quarters to assert their claims in a nation that ardently looked forward to national independence, or the rise of some conqueror who should restore the predicted glory of the land now rent with civil feuds, and stained with fratricidal blood. Varus, the prefect of Syria, attempted to restore order, and crucified some two thousand ringleaders of the tumults. Five hundred Jews went to Rome to petition for the restoration of their ancient constitution, and the abolition of kingly rule.

The Romans confirm the will of Herod.

At length the imperial edict confirmed the will of Herod, and Archelaus was appointed to the sovereignty of Jerusalem, Idumea, and Samaria, under the title of ethnarch; Herod Antipas obtained Galilee and Peræa; Philip, the son of Herod and Cleopatra of Jerusalem, was made tetrarch of Ituræa. Archelaus governed his dominions with such injustice and cruelty, that he was deposed by the emperor, and Judea became a Roman province. The sceptre departed finally from the family of David, of the Asmonæans, and of Herod, and the kingdom sank into a district dependent on the prefecture of Syria, though administered by a Roman governor.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ROMAN GOVERNORS

Birth of Christ.

The history of the Jews after the death of Herod is marked by the greatest event in human annals. In four years after he expired in agonies of pain and remorse, Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, whose teachings have changed the whole condition of the world, and will continue to change all institutions and governments until the seed of the woman shall have completely triumphed over all the wiles of the serpent. We can not, however, enter upon the life or mission of the Saviour, or the feeble beginnings of the early and persecuted Church which he founded, and which is destined to go on from conquering to conquer. We return to the more direct history of the Jewish nation until their capital fell into the hands of Titus, and their political existence was annihilated.

The rule of Roman governors.

They were now to be ruled by Roman governors—or by mere vassal kings whom the Romans tolerated and protected. The first of these rulers was P. Sulpicius Quirinus—a man of consular rank, who, as proconsul of Syria, was responsible for the government of Judea, which was intrusted to Coponius. He was succeeded by M. Ambivius, and he again by Annus

Rufus. A rapid succession of governors took place till Tiberius appointed Valerius Gratus, who was kept in power eleven years, on the principle that a rapid succession of rulers increased the oppression of the people, since every new governor sought to be enriched. Tiberius was a tyrant, but a wise emperor, and the affairs of the Roman world were never better administered than during his reign. These provincial governors, like the Herodian kings, appointed and removed the high priests, and left the internal management of the city of Jerusalem to them. They generally resided themselves at Cæsarea, to avoid the disputes of the Jewish sects, and the tumults of the people.

Pontius Pilate.

Pontius Pilate succeeded Gratus A.D. 27,—under whose memorable rule Jesus Christ was crucified and slain—a man cruel, stern, and reckless of human life, but regardful of the peace and tranquillity of the province. He sought to transfer the innocent criminal to the tribunal of Herod, to whose jurisdiction he belonged as a Galilean, but yielded to the importunities of the people, and left him at the mercy of the Jewish priesthood.

The vigilant jealousy of popular commotion, and the reckless disregard of human life, led to the recall of Pilate; but during the forty years which had elapsed since the death of Herod, his sons had quietly reigned over their respective provinces. Antipas at Sepphoris, the capital of Galilee, and Philip beyond the Jordan. The latter prince was humane and just, and died without issue, and his territory was annexed to Syria.

Herod Antipas.

Herod Antipas was a different man. He seduced and married his niece Herodias, wife of Herod Philip, daughter of Aristobolus, and granddaughter of Mariamne, whom Herod the Great had sacrificed in jealousy—the last scion of the Asmonæan princes. It was for her that John the Baptist was put to death. But this marriage proved unfortunate, since it involved him in difficulties with Aretas, king of Arabia, father of his first and repudiated wife. He ended his days in exile at Lyons, having provoked the jealousy or enmity of Caligula, the Roman emperor, through the intrigues of Herod Agrippa, the brother of Herodias, and consequently, a grandson of Herod the Great and Mariamne. The Herodian family, of Idumean origin, never was free from disgraceful quarrels and jealousies and rivalries.

Herod Agrippa.

The dominions of Herod Antipas were transferred to Herod Agrippa, who had already obtained from Caligula the tetrarchate of Ituræa, on the death of Philip, with the title of king. The fortunes of this prince, in whose veins flowed the blood of the Asmonæans and the Herodians, surpassed in romance and vicissitude any recorded of Eastern princes; alternately a fugitive and a favorite, a vagabond and a courtier, a pauper and a spendthrift—according to the varied hatred and favor of the imperial family at Rome. He had the good luck to be a friend of Caligula before the death of Tiberius. When he ascended the

throne of the Roman world, he took his friend from prison and disgrace, and gave him a royal title and part of the dominions of his ancestors.

His brilliant reign.

Agrippa did all he could to avert the mad designs of Caligula of securing religious worship as a deity from the Jews, and he was moderate in his government and policy. On the death of the Roman tyrant, he received from his successor Claudius the investiture of all the dominions which belonged to Herod the Great. He reigned in great splendor, respecting the national religion, observing the Mosaic law with great exactness, and aiming at the favor of the people. He inherited the taste of his great progenitor for palace building, and theatrical representations. He greatly improved Jerusalem, and strengthened its fortifications, and yet he was only a vassal king. He reigned by the favor of Rome, on whom he was dependent, and whom he feared, like other kings and princes of the earth, for the emperor was alone supreme.

Persecutes the Christians.

Agrippa sullied his fair fame by being a persecutor of the Christians, and died in the forty-fourth year of his age, having reigned seven years over part of his dominions, and three over the whole of Palestine. He died in extreme agony from internal pains, being “eaten of worms.” He left one son, Agrippa, and three daughters, Drusilla, Berenice, and Mariamne, the two first

of whom married princes.

Judea a Roman province.

On his death Judea relapsed into a Roman province, his son, Agrippa, being only seventeen years of age, and too young to manage such a turbulent, unreasonable, and stiff-necked people as the Jews, rent by perpetual feuds and party animosities, and which seem to have characterized them ever since the captivity, when they renounced idolatry forever.

Jewish parties.

What were these parties? For their opinions and struggles and quarrels form no inconsiderable part of the internal history of the Jews, both under the Asmonæan and Idumean dynasties.

The Pharisees. Their doctrines and character.

The most powerful and numerous were the Pharisees, and most popular with the nation. The origin of this famous sect is involved in obscurity, but probably arose not long after the captivity. They were the orthodox party. They clung to the Law of Moses in its most minute observances, and to all the traditions of their religion. They were earnest, fierce, intolerant, and proud. They believed in angels, and in immortality. They were bold and heroic in war, and intractable and domineering in peace. They were great zealots, devoted to proselytism. They were austere in life, and despised all who were not. They were learned and decorous, and pragmatical. Their dogmatism knew no respite or palliation. They were predestinarians, and believed in the

servitude of the will. They were seen in public with ostentatious piety. They made long prayers, fasted with rigor, scrupulously observed the Sabbath, and paid tithes to the cheapest herbs. They assumed superiority in social circles, and always took the uppermost seats in the synagogue. They displayed on their foreheads and the hem of their garments, slips of parchment inscribed with sentences from the law. They were regarded as models of virtue and excellence, but were hypocrites in the observance of the weightier matters of justice and equity. They were, of course, the most bitter adversaries of the faith which Christ revealed, and were ever in the ranks of persecution. They resembled the most austere of the Dominican monks in the Middle Ages. They were the favorite teachers and guides of the people, whom they incited in their various seditions. They were theologians who stood at the summit of legal Judaism. "They fenced round their law hedges whereby its precepts were guarded against any possible infringement." And they contrived, by an artful and technical interpretation, to find statutes which favored their ends. They wrought out asceticism into a system, and observed the most painful ceremonials—the ancestors of rigid monks; and they united a specious casuistry, not unlike the Jesuits, to excuse the violation of the *spirit* of the law. They were a hierarchical caste, whose ambition was to govern, and to govern by legal technicalities. They were utterly deficient in the virtues of humility and toleration, and as such, peculiarly offensive to the Great Teacher when he propounded the higher code of love and

forgiveness. Outwardly, however, they were the most respectable as well as honorable men of the nation—dignified, decorous, and studious of appearances.

The Sadducees.

The next great party was that of the Sadducees, who aimed to restore the original Mosaic religion in its purity, and expunge every thing which had been added by tradition. But they were deficient in a profound sense of religion, denied the doctrine of immortality, and hence all punishment in a future life. They made up for their denial of the future by a rigid punishment of all crimes. They inculcated a belief of Divine Providence by whom all crime was supposed to be avenged in this world. The party was not so popular as that of their rivals, but embraced men of high rank. In common with the Pharisees, they maintained the strictness of the Jewish code, and professed great uprightness of morals. They had, however, no true, deep religious life, and were cold and heartless in their dispositions. They were mostly men of ease and wealth, and satisfied with earthly enjoyments, and inclined to the epicureanism which marked many of the Greek philosophers. Nor did they escape the hypocrisy which disgraced the Pharisees, and their bitter opposition to the truths of Christianity.

The Essenes.

In addition to these two great parties which controlled the people, were the Essenes. But they lived apart from men, in the

deserts round the Dead Sea, and dreaded cities as nurseries of vice. They allowed no women to come within their settlements. They were recruited by strangers and proselytes, who thought all pleasure to be a sin. They established a community of goods, and prosecuted the desire of riches. They were clothed in white garments which they never changed, and regulated their lives by the severest forms. They abstained from animal food, and lived on roots and bread. They worked and ate in silence, and observed the Sabbath with great precision. They were great students, and were rigid in morals, and believed in immortality. They abhorred oaths, and slavery, and idolatry. They embraced the philosophy of the Orientals, and supposed that matter was evil, and that mind was divine. They were mystics who reveled in the pleasures of abstract contemplation. Their theosophy was sublime, but Brahminical. Practically they were industrious, ascetic, and devout—the precursors of those monks who fled from the abodes of man, and filled the solitudes of Upper Egypt and Arabia and Palestine, the loftiest and most misguided of the Christian sects in the second and third centuries, But the Essenes had no direct influence over the people of Judea like the Pharisees and Sadducees, except in encouraging obedience and charity.

State of the country. Miserable condition of the Jews.

Popular Commotions. Wars and rumors of wars.

All these sects were in a flourishing state on the death of Agrippa. Judea was henceforth to be ruled directly by

Roman governors. Cuspius Fadus, Tiberius Alexander, Ventidius Cumanus, Felix Portius, Festus Albinus, and Gessius Florus successively administered the affairs of a discontented province. Their brief administrations were marked by famines and tumults. King Agrippa, meanwhile, with mere nominal power, resided in Jerusalem, in the palace of the Asmonæan princes, which stood on Mount Zion, toward the temple. Robbers infested the country, and murders and robbery were of constant occurrence. High priests were set up, and dethroned. The people were oppressed by taxation and irritated by pillage. Prodigies, wild and awful, filled the land with dread of approaching calamities. Fanatics alarmed the people. The Christians predicted the ruin of the State. Never was a population of three millions of people more discontented and oppressed. Outrage, and injustice, and tumults, and insurrections, marked the doomed people. The governors were insulted, and massacred the people in retaliation. Florus, at one time, destroyed three thousand six hundred people, A.D. 66. Open war was apparent to the more discerning, Agrippa in vain counseled moderation and reconciliation, showing the people how vain resistance would be to the overwhelming power of Rome, which had subdued the world; and that the refusal of tribute, and the demolition of Roman fortifications, were overt acts of war. But he talked to people doomed. Every day new causes of discord arose. Some of the higher orders were disposed to be prudent, but the people generally were filled with bigotry and fanaticism. Some of the boldest of the war party one

day seized the fortress of Masada, near the Dead Sea, built by Jonathan the Maccabean, and fortified by Herod. The Roman garrison was put to the sword, and the banner of revolt was unfolded. In the city of Jerusalem, the blinded people refused to receive, as was customary, the gifts and sacrifices of foreign potentates offered in the temple to the God of the Jews. This was an insult and a declaration of war, which the chief priests and Pharisees attempted in vain to prevent. The insurgents, urged by zealots and assassins, even set fire to the palace of the high priest and of Agrippa and Berenice, and also to the public archives, where the bonds of creditors were deposited, which destroyed the power of the rich. They then carried the important citadel of Antonia, and stormed the palace. A fanatic, by the name of Manahem, son of Judas of Galilee, openly proclaimed the doctrine that it was impious to own any king but God, and treason to pay tribute to Cæsar. He became the leader of the war party because he was the most unscrupulous and zealous, as is always the case in times of excitement and passion. He entered the city, in the pomp of a conqueror, and became the captain of the forces, which took the palace and killed the defenders. The high priest, Ananias, striving to secure order, was stoned. Then followed dissensions between the insurgents themselves, during which Manahem was killed. Eleazar, another chieftain, pressed the siege of the towers, defended by Roman soldiers, which were taken, and the defenders massacred. Meanwhile, twenty thousand Jews were slain by the Greeks in Cæsarea, which drove

the nation to madness, and led to a general insurrection in Syria, and a bloody strife between the Greco-Syrians and Jews, There were commotions in all quarters—wars and rumors of wars, so that men fled to the mountains, Wherever the Jews had settled were commotions and massacres, especially at Alexandria, when fifty thousand bodies were heaped up for burial.

Incipient rebellion.

Nero was now on the imperial throne, and stringent measures were adopted to suppress the revolt of the Jews, now goaded to desperation by the remembrance of their oppressions, and the conviction that every man's hand was against them. Certius, the prefect of Syria, advanced with ten thousand Roman troops and thirteen hundred allies, and desperate war seemed now inevitable. Agrippa, knowing how fatal it would be to the Jewish nation, attempted to avert it. He argued to infatuated men. Certius undertook to storm Jerusalem, the head-quarters of the insurrection, but failed, and was obliged to retreat, with loss of a great part of his army—a defeat such as the Romans had not received since Varus was overpowered in the forests of Germany.

Open rebellion of Judea.

Judea was now in open rebellion against the whole power of Rome—a mad and desperate revolt, which could not end but in the political ruin of the nation. Great preparations were made for the approaching contest, in which the Jews were to fight single-handed and unassisted by allies. The fortified posts were

in the hands of the insurgents, but they had no organized and disciplined forces, and were divided among themselves. Agrippa, the representative of the Herodian kings, openly espoused the cause of Rome. The only hope of the Jews was in their stern fanaticism, their stubborn patience, and their daring valor. They were to be justified for their insurrection by all those principles which animate oppressed people striving to be free, and they had glorious precedents in the victories of the Maccabees; but it was their misfortune to contend against the armies of the masters of the world. They were not strong enough for revolt.

Sensation at Rome. Roman preparations for war.

The news of the insurrection, and the defeat of a Roman prefect, made a profound sensation at Rome. Although Nero affected to treat the affair with levity, he selected, however, the ablest general of the empire, Vespasian, and sent him to Syria. The storm broke out in Galilee, whose mountain fastnesses were intrusted by the Jews to Joseph, the son of Matthias—lineally descended from an illustrious priestly family, with the blood of the Asmonæan running in his veins—a man of culture and learning—a Pharisee who had at first opposed the insurrection, but drawn into it after the defeat of Certius. He is better known to us as the historian Josephus. His measures of defence were prudent and vigorous, and he endeavored to unite the various parties in the contest which he knew was desperate. He raised an army of one hundred thousand men, and introduced the Roman discipline, but was impeded in his measures by party dissensions

and by treachery. In the city of Jerusalem, Ananias, the high priest, took the lead, but had to contend with fanatics and secret enemies.

Expedition against Ascalon. Fall of Jotaphata.

The first memorable event of the war was the unsuccessful expedition against Ascalon, sixty-five miles from Jerusalem, in which Roman discipline prevailed against numbers. This was soon followed by the advance of Vespasian to Ptolemais, while Titus, his lieutenant and son, sailed from Alexandria to join him. Vespasian had an army of sixty thousand veterans. Josephus could not openly contend against this force, but strengthened his fortified cities. Vespasian advanced cautiously in battle array, and halted on the frontiers of Galilee. The Jews, under Josephus, fled in despair. Gabaia was the first city which fell, and its inhabitants were put to the sword—a stern vengeance which the Romans often exercised, to awe their insurgent enemies. Josephus retired to Tiberius, hopeless and discouraged, and exhorted the people of Jerusalem either to re-enforce him with a powerful army, or make submission to the Romans. They did neither. He then threw himself into Jotaphata, where the strongest of the Galilean warriors had intrenched themselves. Vespasian advanced against the city with his whole army, and drew a line of circumvallation around it, and then commenced the attack. The city stood on the top of a lofty hill, and was difficult of access, and well supplied with provisions. As the works of the Romans arose around the city, its walls were raised thirty-five feet by the

defenders, while they issued out in sallies and fought with the courage of despair. The city could not be taken by assault, and the siege was converted into a blockade. The besieged, supplied with provisions, issued out from behind their fortifications, and destroyed the works of the Romans. The fearful battering-rams of the besiegers were destroyed by the arts and inventions of the besieged. The catapults and scorpions swept the walls, and the huge stones began to tell upon the turrets and the towers. The whole city was surrounded by triple lines of heavy armed soldiers, ready for assault. The Jews resorted to all kinds of expedients, even to the pouring of boiling oil on the heads of their assailants. The Roman general was exasperated at the obstinate resistance, and proceeded by more cautious measures. He raised the embankments, and fortified them with towers, in which he placed slingers and archers, whose missiles told with terrible effect on those who defended the walls. Forty-seven days did the gallant defenders resist all the resources of Vespasian, But they were at length exhausted, and their ranks were thinned, Once again a furious assault was made by the whole army, and Titus scaled the walls. The city fell with the loss of forty thousand men on both sides, and Josephus surrendered to the will of God, but was himself spared by the victors by adroit flatteries, in which he predicted the elevation of Vespasian to the throne of Nero.

Fall of Joppa.

It would be interesting to detail the progress of the war, but our limits forbid. The reader is referred to Josephus. City after city

gradually fell into the hands of Vespasian, who now established himself in Cæsarea. Joppa shared the fate of Jotaphata; the city was razed, but the citadel was fortified by the Romans.

Fall of Gamala.

The intelligence of these disasters filled Jerusalem with consternation and mourning, for scarcely a family had not to deplore the loss of some of its members. Tiberius and Tarichea, on the banks of the beautiful lake of Galilee, were the next which fell, followed by atrocious massacres, after the fashion of war in those days. Galilee stood appalled, and all its cities but three surrendered. Of these Gamala, the capital, was the strongest, and more inaccessible than Jotaphata. It was built upon a precipice, and was crowded with fugitives, and well provisioned. But it was finally taken, as well as Gischala and Itabyriun, and all Galilee was in the hands of the Romans.

Factions at Jerusalem.

Jerusalem, meanwhile, was the scene of factions and dissensions. It might have re-enforced the strongholds of Galilee, but gave itself up to party animosities, which weakened its strength. Had the Jews been united, they might have offered a more successful resistance. But their fate was sealed. I can not describe the various intrigues and factions which paralyzed the national arm, and forewarned the inhabitants of their doom.

Meanwhile, Nero was assassinated, and Vespasian was elevated to the imperial throne. He sent his son Titus to complete

the subjugation which had hitherto resisted his conquering legions.

Infatuation of the city. Its fortifications. The temple.

Jerusalem, in those days of danger and anxiety, was still rent by factions, and neglected her last chance of organizing her forces to resist the common enemy. Never was a city more insensible of its doom. Three distinct parties were at war with each other, shedding each others' blood, reckless of all consequences, callous, fierce, desperate. At length the army of Titus advanced to the siege of the sacred city, still strong and well provisioned. Four legions, with mercenary troops and allies, burning to avenge the past, encamped beneath the walls, destroying the orchards and olive-grounds and gardens which everywhere gladdened the beautiful environs. The city was fortified with three walls where not surrounded by impassable ravines, not one within the other, but inclosing distinct quarters; and these were of great strength, the stones of which were in some parts thirty-five feet long, and so thick that even the heaviest battering-rams could make no impression. One hundred and sixty-four towers surmounted these heavy walls, one of which was one hundred and forty feet high, and forty-three feet square; another, of white marble, seventy-six feet in height, was built of stones thirty-five feet long, and seventeen and a half wide, and eight and a half high, joined together with the most perfect masonry. Within these walls and towers was the royal palace, surrounded by walls and towers of equal strength. The fortress of Antonia, seventy feet high, stood

on a rock of ninety feet elevation, with precipitous sides. High above all these towers and hills, and fortresses, stood the temple, on an esplanade covering a square of a furlong on each side. The walls which surrounded this fortress-temple were built of vast stones, and were of great height; and within these walls, on each side, was a spacious double portico fifty-two and a half feet broad, with a ceiling of cedar exquisitely carved, supported by marble columns forty-three and three-quarters feet high, hewn out of single stones. There were one hundred and sixty-two of these beautiful columns. Within this quadrangle was an inner wall, seventy feet in height, inclosing the inner court, around which, in the interior, was another still more splendid portico, entered by brazen gates adorned with gold. These doors, or gates, were fifty-two and a half feet high and twenty-six and a quarter wide. Each gateway had two lofty pillars, twenty-one feet in circumference. The gate called Beautiful was eighty-seven and a half feet high, made of Corinthian brass, and plated with gold. The quadrangle, entered by nine of these gates, inclosed still another, within which was the temple itself, with its glittering façade. This third and inner quadrangle was entered by a gateway tower one hundred and thirty-two and a half feet high and forty-three and a half wide. "At a distance the temple looked like a mountain of snow fretted with golden pinnacles." With what emotions Titus must have surveyed this glorious edifice, as the sun rising above Mount Moriah gilded its gates and pinnacles—soon to be so utterly demolished that not one stone should be left

upon another.

The siege.

Around the devoted city Titus erected towers which overlooked the walls, from which he discharged his destructive missiles, while the battering-rams played against the walls, where they were weakest. The first wall was soon abandoned, and five days after the second was penetrated, after a furious combat, and Titus took possession of the lower city, where most of the people lived.

The precipitous heights of Zion, the tower of Antonia and the temple still remained, and although the cause was hopeless, the Jews would hear of no terms of surrender. Titus used every means. So did Josephus, who harangued the people at a safe distance. The most obstinate fury was added to presumptuous, vain confidence, perhaps allied with utter distrust of the promises of enemies whom they had offended past forgiveness.

Famine in the city.

At length famine pressed. No grain was to be bought. The wealthy secreted their food. All kind feelings were lost in the general misery. Wives snatched the last morsel from their family and weary husbands, and children from their parents. The houses were full of dying and the dead, a heavy silence oppressed every one, yet no complaints were made. They suffered in sullen gloom, and despair. From the 14th of April to the 19th of July, A.D. 70, from one hundred thousand to five hundred thousand, according

to different estimates, were buried or thrown from the walls. A measure of wheat sold for a talent, and the dunghills were raked for subsistence.

The assault of Jerusalem. The fall.

When all was ready, the assault on the places which remained commenced. On the 5th of July the fortress of Antonia was taken, and the siege of the temple was pressed. Titus made one more attempt to persuade its defenders to surrender, wishing to save the sacred edifice, but they were deaf and obstinate. They continued to fight, inch by inch, exhausted by famine, and reduced to despair. They gnawed their leathern belts, and ate their very children. On the 8th of August the wall inclosing the portico, or cloisters, was scaled. On the 10th the temple itself, a powerful fortress, fell, with all its treasures, into the hands of the victors. The soldiers gazed with admiration on the plates of gold, and the curious workmanship of the sacred vessels. All that could be destroyed by fire was burned, and all who guarded the precincts were killed.

The siege and sack of the city.

Still the palace and the upper city held out. Titus promised to spare the lives of the defenders if they would instantly surrender. But they still demanded terms. Titus, in a fury, swore that the whole surviving population should be exterminated. It was not till the 7th of September that this last bulwark was captured, so obstinately did the starving Jews defend themselves.

A miscellaneous slaughter commenced, till the Romans were weary of their work of vengeance. During the whole siege one million one hundred thousand were killed, and ninety-seven thousand made prisoners, since a large part of the population of Judea had taken refuge within the walls. During the whole war one million three hundred and fifty-six thousand were killed.

Thus fell Jerusalem, after a siege of five months, the most desperate defense of a capital in the history of war. It fell never to rise again as a Jewish metropolis. Never had a city greater misfortunes. Never was heroism accompanied with greater fanaticism. Never was a prophecy more signally fulfilled.

Consequences of the fall of Jerusalem.

The fall of Jerusalem was succeeded by bloody combats before the whole country was finally subdued. With the final conquest the Jews were dispersed among the nations, and their nationality was at an end. Their political existence was annihilated. The capital was destroyed, the temple demolished, and the royal house extinguished, and the high priesthood buried amid the ruins of the sacred places.

With the occupation of Palestine by strangers, and the final dispersion of the Jews over all nations, who, without a country, and without friends, maintained their institutions, their religion, their name, their peculiarities, and their associations, we leave the subject—so full of mournful interest, and of impressive lessons. The student of history should see in their prosperity and misfortunes the overruling Providence vindicating his promises,

and the awful majesty of eternal laws.

BOOK II.

THE GRECIAN STATES

CHAPTER XIII.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF ANCIENT GREECE AND ITS EARLY INHABITANTS

Degeneracy of the oriental states.

We have seen that the Oriental-world, so favored by nature, so rich in fields, in flocks, and fruits, failed to realize the higher destiny of man. In spite of all the advantages of nature, he was degraded by debasing superstitions, and by the degeneracy which wealth and ease produced. He was enslaved by vices and by despots. The Assyrian and Babylonian kingdom, that “head of gold,” as seen in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, became inferior to the “breast and arms of silver,” as represented by the Persian Empire, and this, in turn, became subject to the Grecian States, “the belly and the thighs of brass.” It is the nobler Hellenic race, with its original genius, its enterprise, its stern and rugged nature, strengthened by toil, and enterprise, and war, that we are now to

contemplate. It is Greece—the land of song, of art, of philosophy—the land of heroes and freemen, to which we now turn our eyes—the most interesting, and the most famous of the countries of antiquity.

Boundaries of Greece.

Let us first survey that country in all its stern ruggedness and picturesque beauty. It was small compared with Assyria or Persia. Its original name was Hellas, designated by a little district of Thessaly, which lay on the southeast verge of Europe, and extended in length from the thirty-sixth to the fortieth degree of latitude. It contained, with its islands, only twenty-one thousand two hundred and ninety square miles—less than Portugal or Ireland, but its coasts exceeded the whole Pyrenean peninsula. Hellas is itself a peninsula, bounded on the north by the Cambunian and Ceraunian mountains, which separated it from Macedonia; on the east by the Ægean Sea, (Archipelago), which separated it from Asia Minor; on the south by the Cretan Sea, and on the west by the Ionian Sea.

The mountains of Greece. Between Ossa and Olympus is the famous vale of Tempe.

The northern part of this country of the Hellenes is traversed by a range of mountains, commencing at Acra Ceraunia, on the Adriatic, and tending southeast above Dodona, in Epirus, till they join the Cambunian mountains, near Mount Olympus, which run along the coast of the Ægean till they terminate in

the southeastern part of Thessaly, under the names of Ossa, Pelion, and Tisæus. The great range of Pindus enters Greece at the sources of the Peneus, where it crosses the Cambunian mountains, and extends at first south, and then east to the sea, nearly inclosing Thessaly, and dividing it from the rest of Greece. After throwing out the various spurs of Othrys, Œta, and Corax, it loses itself in those famous haunts of the Muses—the heights of Parnassus and Helicon, in Phocis and Bœotia. In the southern part of Greece are the mountains which intersect the Peloponnesus in almost every part, the principal of which are Scollis, Aroanii, and Taygetus. We can not enumerate the names of all these mountains; it is enough to say that no part of Europe, except Switzerland, is so covered with mountains as Greece, some of which attain the altitude of perpetual snow. Only a small part of the country is level.

The rivers.

The rivers, again, are numerous, but more famous for associations than for navigable importance. The Peneus which empties itself into the Ægean, a little below Tempe; the Achelous, which flows into the Ionian Sea; the Alpheus, flowing into the Ionian Sea; and the Eurotas, which enters the Laconican Gulf, are among the most considerable. The lakes are numerous, but not large. The coasts are lined by bays and promontories, favorable to navigation in its infancy, and for fishing. The adjacent seas are full of islands, memorable in Grecian history, some of which are of considerable size.

Natural advantages for political independence.

Thus intersected in all parts with mountains, and deeply indented by the sea, Greece was both mountainous and maritime. The mountains, the rivers, the valleys, the sea, the islands contributed to make the people enterprising and poetical, and as each State was divided from every other State by mountains, or valleys, or gulfs, political liberty was engendered. The difficulties of cultivating a barren soil on the highlands inured the inhabitants to industry and economy, as in Scotland and New England, while the configuration of the country strengthened the powers of defense, and shut the people up from those invasions which have so often subjugated a plain and level country. These natural divisions also kept the States from political union, and fostered a principle of repulsion, and led to an indefinite multiplication of self-governing towns, and to great individuality of character.

Natural productions.

Situated in the same parallels of latitude as Asia Minor, and the south of Italy and Spain, Greece produced wheat, barley, flax, wine, oil, in the earliest times. The cultivation of the vine and the olive was peculiarly careful. Barley cakes were more eaten than wheaten. All vegetables and fish were abundant and cheap. But little fresh meat was eaten. Corn also was imported in considerable quantities by the maritime States in exchange for figs, olives, and oil. The climate, clear and beautiful to modern Europeans, was less genial than that of Asia Minor, but more

bracing and variable. It also varied in various sections.

These various sections, or provinces, or states, into which Greece was divided, claim a short notice.

Epirus.

The largest and most northerly State was Epirus, containing four thousand two hundred and sixty square miles, bounded on the north by Macedonia, on the east by Thessaly, on the south by Acarnania, and on the west by the Ionian Sea. Though mountainous, it was fertile, and produced excellent cattle and horses. Of the interesting places of Epirus, memorable in history, ranks first Dodona, celebrated for its oracle, the most ancient in Greece, and only inferior to that of Delphi. It was founded by the Pelasgi before the Trojan war and was dedicated to Jupiter. The temple was surrounded by a grove of oak, but the oracles were latterly delivered by the murmuring of fountains. On the west of Epirus is the island of Corcyra (Corfu), famous for the shipwreck of Ulysses, and for the gardens of Aleinous, and for having given rise to the Peloponnesian war. Epirus is also distinguished as the country over which Pyrrhus ruled. The Acheron, supposed to communicate with the infernal regions, was one of its rivers.

Thessaly.

West of Epirus was Thessaly, and next to it in size, containing four thousand two hundred and sixty square miles. It was a plain inclosed by mountains; next to Bœotia, the most fertile of all the States of Greece, abounding in oil, wine, and corn, and yet

one of the weakest and most insignificant politically. The people were rich, but perfidious. The river Peneus flowed through the entire extent of the country, and near its mouth was the vale of Tempe, the most beautiful valley in Greece, guarded by four strong fortresses.

The famous places.

At some distance from the mouth of the Peneus was Larissa, the city of Achilles, and the general capital of the Pelasgi. At the southern extremity of the lake Cælas, the largest in Thessaly, was Pheræ, one of the most ancient cities in Greece, and near it was the fountain of Hyperia. In the southern part of Thessaly was Pharsalia, the battle-ground between Cæsar and Pompey, and near it was Pyrrha, formerly called Hellas, where was the tomb of Hellen, son of Deucalion, whose descendants, Æolus, Dorus and Ion, are said to have given name to the three nations, Æolians, Dorians, and Ionians. Still further south, between the inaccessible cliffs of Mount Cæta and the marshes which skirt the Maliaeus Bay, were the defiles of Thermopylæ, where Leonidas and three hundred heroes died defending the pass, against the army of Xerxes, and which in one place was only twenty-five feet wide, so that, in so narrow a defile, the Spartans were able to withstand for three days the whole power of Persia. In this famous pass the Amphictyonic council met annually to deliberate on the common affairs of all the States.

Acarmania.

South of Epirus, on the Ionian Sea, and west of Ætolia, was Acarnania, occupied by a barbarous people before the Pelasgi settled in it. It had no historic fame, except as furnishing on its waters a place for the decisive battle which Augustus gained over Antony, at Actium, and for the islands on the coast, one of which, Ithaca, a rugged and mountainous island, was the residence of Ulysses.

Ætolia.

Ætolia, to the east of Acarnania, and south of Thessaly, and separated from Achaia by the Corinthian Gulf, contained nine hundred and thirty square miles. Its principal city was Thermon, considered impregnable, at which were held splendid games and festivals. The Ætolians were little known in the palmy days of Athens and Sparta, except as a hardy race, but covetous and faithless.

Doris.

Doris was a small tract to the east of Ætolia, inhabited by one of the most ancient of the Greek tribes—the Dorians, called so from Dorus, son of Deucalion, and originally inhabited that part of Thessaly in which were the mountains of Olympus and Ossa. From this section they were driven by the Cadmeans. Doris was the abode of the Heraclidæ when exiled from the Peloponnesus, and which was given to Hyllas, the son of Hercules, in gratitude by Ægiminius, the king, who was reinstated by the hero in his dispossessed dominion.

Locri Ozolæ.

Locri Ozolæ was another small State, south of Doris, from which it is separated by the range of the Parnassus situated on the Corinthian Gulf, the most important city of which was Salona, surrounded on all sides by hills. Naupactus was also a considerable place, known in the Middle Ages as Lepanto, where was fought one of the decisive naval battles of the world, in which the Turks were defeated by the Venetians. It contained three hundred and fifty square miles.

Phocis.

Phocis was directly to the east, bounded on the north by Doris and the Locri Epicnemidii, and south by the Corinthian Gulf. This State embraced six hundred and ten square miles. The Phocians are known in history from the sacred or Phocian war, which broke out in 357 B.C., in consequence of refusing to pay a fine imposed by the Amphictyonic council. The Thebans and Locrians carried on this war successfully, joined by Philip of Macedon, who thus paved the way for the sovereignty of Greece. One among the most noted places was Crissa, famed for the Pythian games, and Delphi, renowned for its oracle sacred to Apollo. The priestess, Pythia, sat on a sacred tripod over the mouth of a cave, and pronounced her oracles in verse or prose. Those who consulted her made rich presents, from which Delphi became vastly enriched. Above Delphi towers Parnassus, the highest mountain in central Greece, near whose summit was the

supposed residence of Deucalion.

Bœotia.

Bœotia was the richest State in Greece, so far as fertility of soil can make a State rich. It was bounded on the north by the territory of the Locri, on the west by Phocis, on the south by Attica, and on the east by the Eubœan Sea. It contained about one thousand square miles. Its inhabitants were famed for their stolidity, and yet it furnished Hesiod, Pindar, Corinna, and Plutarch to the immortal catalogue of names. Its men, if stupid, were brave, and its women were handsome. It was originally inhabited by barbarous tribes, all connected with the Leleges. In its southwestern part was the famous Helicon, famed as the seat of Apollo and the Muses, and on the southern border was Mount Cithæron, to the north of which was Platea, where the Persians were defeated by the confederate Greeks under Pausanias. Bœotia contained the largest lake in Greece—Copaïas, famed for eels. On the borders of this lake was Coronea, where the Thebans were defeated by the Spartans. To the north of Coronea was Chæronea, where was fought the great battle with Philip, which subverted the liberties of Greece. To the north of the river Æsopus, a sluggish stream, was Thebes, the capital of Bœotia, founded by Cadmus, whose great generals, Epaminondas and Pelopidas, made it, for a time, one of the great powers of Greece.

Attica.

The most famous province of Greece was Attica, bounded on the north by the mountains Cithæron and Parnes, on the west by the bay of Saronicus, on the east by the Myrtoum Sea. It contained but seven hundred square miles. It derived its name from Atthis, a daughter of Cranaus; but its earliest name was Cecropia, from its king, Cecrops. It was divided, in the time of Cecrops, into four tribes. On its western extremity, on the shores of the Saronic Gulf, stood Eleusis, the scene of the Eleusinian mysteries, the most famous of all the religious ceremonials of Greece, sacred to Ceres, and celebrated every four years, and lasting for nine days. Opposite to Eleusis was Salamis, the birthplace of Ajax, Teucer, and Solon. There the Persian fleet of Xerxes was defeated by the Athenians. The capital, Athens, founded by Cecrops, 1556 B.C., received its name from the goddess Neith, an Egyptian deity, known by the Greeks as Athena, or Minerva. Its population, in the time of Pericles, was one hundred and twenty thousand. The southernmost point of Attica was Sunium, sacred to Minerva; Marathon, the scene of the most brilliant victory which the Athenians ever fought, was in the eastern part of Attica. To the southeast of Athens was Mount Hymettus, celebrated for its flowers and honey. Between Hymettus and Marathon was Mount Pentelicus, famed for its marbles.

Megaris.

Megaris, another small State, was at the west of Attica, between the Corinthian and the Saronic gulfs. Its chief city,

Megara, was a considerable place, defended by two citadels on the hills above it. It was celebrated as the seat of the Megaric school of philosophy, founded by Euclid.

The Peloponnesus and its states.

The largest of the Grecian States was the famous peninsula known as the Peloponnesus, entirely surrounded by water, except the isthmus of Corinth, four geographical miles wide. On the west was the Ionian Sea; on the east the Saronic Gulf and the Myrtoum Sea; on the north the Corinthian Gulf. It contained six thousand seven hundred and forty-five square miles. It was divided into several States. It was said to be left by Hercules on his death to the Heraclidæ, which they, with the assistance of the Dorians, ultimately succeeded in regaining, about eighty years after the Trojan war.

Of the six States into which the Peloponnesus was divided, Achaia was the northernmost, and was celebrated for the Achæan league, composed of its principal cities, as well as Corinth, Sicyon, Phlius, Arcadia, Argolis, Laconia, Megaris, and other cities and States.

Elis.

Southwest of Achaia was Elis, on the Ionian Sea, in which stood Olympia, where the Olympic games were celebrated every four years, instituted by Hercules.

Arcadia.

Arcadia occupied the centre of the Peloponnesus, surrounded

on all sides by lofty mountains—a rich and pastoral country, producing fine horses and asses. It was the favorite residence of Pan, the god of shepherds, and its people were famed for their love of liberty and music.

Argolis.

Argolis was the eastern portion of the Peloponnesus, watered by the Saronic Gulf, whose original inhabitants were Pelasgi. It boasted of the cities of Argos and Mycenæ, the former of which was the oldest city of Greece. Agamemnon reigned at Mycenæ, the most powerful of the kings of Greece during the Trojan war.

Laconia.

Laconia, at the southeastern extremity of the peninsula, was the largest and most important of the States of the Peloponnesus. It was rugged and mountainous, but its people were brave and noble. Its largest city, Sparta, for several generations controlled the fortune of Greece, the most warlike of the Grecian cities.

Messenia.

Messenia was the southwestern part of the peninsula—mountainous, but well watered, and abounding in pasture. It was early coveted by the Lacedæmonians, inhabitants of Laconia, and was subjugated in a series of famous wars, called the Messenian.

Such were the principal States of Greece. But in connection with these were the islands in the seas which surrounded it, and these are nearly as famous as the States on the main land.

Crete.

The most important of these was Crete, at the southern extremity of the Ægean Sea. It was the fabled birthplace of Jupiter. To the south of Thrace were Thasos, remarkable for fertility, and for mines of gold and silver; Samothrace, celebrated for the mysteries of Cybele; Imbros, sacred to Ceres and Mercury. Lemnos, in latitude forty, equidistant from Mount Athos and the Hellespont, rendered infamous by the massacre of all the male inhabitants of the island by the women. The island of Eubœa stretched along the coast of Attica, Locris, and Bœotia, and was exceedingly fertile, and from this island the Athenians drew large supplies of corn—the largest island in the Archipelago, next to Crete. Its principal city was Chalcis, one of the strongest in Greece.

The Cyclades.

To the southeast of Eubœa are the Cyclades—a group of islands of which Delos, Andros, Tenos, Myeonos, Naxos, Paros, Olearos, Siphnos, Melos, and Syros, were the most important. All these islands are famous for temples and the birthplace of celebrated men.

The Sporades.

The islands called the Sporades lie to the south and east of the Cyclades, among which are Amorgo, Ios, Sicinos, Thera, and Anaphe—some of which are barren, and others favorable to the vine.

Lesbos, and other islands.

Besides these islands, which belong to the continent of Europe, are those which belong to Asia—Tenedos, small but fertile; Lesbos, celebrated for wine, the fourth in size of all the islands of the Ægean; Chios, also famed for wine; Samos, famous for the worship of Juno, and the birthplace of Pythagoras; Patmos, used as a place of banishment; Cos, the birthplace of Apelles and Hippocrates, exceedingly fertile; and south of all, Rhodes, the largest island of the Ægean, after Crete and Eubœa. It was famous for the brazen and colossal statue of the sun, seventy cubits high. Its people were great navigators, and their maritime laws were ultimately adopted by all the Greeks and Romans. It was also famous for its schools of art.

Such were the States and islands of Greece, mountainous, in many parts sterile, but filled with a hardy, bold, and adventurous race, whose exploits and arts were the glory of the ancient world.

Origin of the Grecian nations. The Pelasgians.

The various tribes and nations all belonged to that branch of the Indo-European race to which ethnographers have given the name of Pelasgian. They were a people of savage manners, but sufficiently civilised to till the earth, and build walled cities. Their religion was polytheistic—a personification of the elemental powers and the heavenly bodies. The Pelasgians occupied insulated points, but were generally diffused throughout Greece; and they were probably a wandering people

before they settled in Greece. The Greek traditions about their migration rests on no certain ground. Besides this race, concerning which we have no authentic history, were the Leleges and Carians. But all of them were barbarous, and have left no written records. Argos and Sicyon are said to be Pelasgian cities, founded as far back as one thousand eight hundred and fifty-six years before Christ. It is also thought that Oriental elements entered into the early population of Greece. Cecrops imported into Attica Egyptian arts. Cadmus, the Phœnician, colonized Bœotia, and introduced weights and measures. Danaus, driven out of Egypt, gave his name to the warlike Danai, and instructed the Pelasgian women of Argos in the mystic rites of Demetus. Pelope is supposed to have passed from Asia into Greece, with great treasures, and his descendants occupied the throne of Argos.

The Hellenes. The Æolians. The Achæans.

At a period before written history commences, the early inhabitants of Greece, whatever may have been their origin, which is involved in obscurity, were driven from their settlements by a warlike race, akin, however, to the Pelasgians. These conquerors were the Hellenes, who were believed to have issued from the district of Thessaly, north of Mount Othrys. They gave their name ultimately to the whole country. Divided into small settlements, they yet were bound together by language and customs, and cherished the idea of national unity. There were four chief divisions of this nation, the Dorians, Æolians,

Achæans, and Ionians, traditionally supposed to be descended from the three sons of Hellen, the son of Deucalion, Dorus, Æolus, and Xuthus, the last the father of Achæus, and Jon. So the Greek poets represented the origin of the Hellenes—a people fond of adventure, and endowed by nature with vast capacities, subsequently developed by education.

The Dorians and Ionians.

Of these four divisions of the Hellenic race, the Æolians spread over northern Greece, and also occupied the western coast of the Peloponnesus and the Ionian islands. It continued, to the latest times, to occupy the greater part of Greece. The Achæans were the most celebrated in epic poetry, their name being used by Homer to denote all the Hellenic tribes which fought at Troy. They were the dominant people of the Peloponnesus, occupying the south and east, and the Arcadians the centre. The Dorians and Ionians were of later celebrity; the former occupying a small patch of territory on the slopes of Mount Cæta, north of Delphi; the latter living on a narrow slip of the country along the northern coast of the Peloponnesus, and extending eastward into Attica.

Settlements of the Æolians.

The principal settlements of the Æolians lay around the Pagasæan Gulf, and were blended with the Minyans, a race of Pelasgian adventurers known in the Argonautic expedition, under Æolian leaders. In the north of Bœotia arose the city of Orchomenus, whose treasures were compared by Homer to those

of the Egyptian Thebes. Another seat of the Æolians was Ephyra, afterward known as Corinth, where the “wily Sisyphus” ruled. He was the father of Phocus, who gave his name to Phocis. The descendants of Æolus led also a colony to Elis, and another to Pylus. In general, the Æolians sought maritime settlements in northern Greece, and the western side of the Peloponnesus.

Of the Achæans.

The Achæans were the dominant race, in very early times, of the south of Thessaly, and the eastern side of the Peloponnesus, whose chief seats were Phthia, where Achilles reigned, and Argolis. Thirlwall seems to think they were a Pelasgian, rather than an Hellenic people. The ancient traditions represent the sons of Achæus as migrating to Argos, where they married the daughters of Danaus the king, but did not mount the throne.

Of the Dorians.

The early fortunes of the Dorians are involved in great obscurity, nor is there much that is satisfactory in the early history of any of the Hellenic tribes. Our information is chiefly traditional, derived from the poets. Dorus, the son of Deucalion, occupied the country over against Peloponnesus, on the opposite side of the Corinthian Gulf, comprising Ætolia, Phocis, and the Ozolian Locrians. Nor can the conquests of the Dorians on the Peloponnesus be reconciled upon any other ground than that they occupied a considerable tract of country.

Of the Ionians.

The early history of the Ionians is still more obscure. Ion, the son of Xuthus, is supposed to have led his followers from Thessaly to Attica, and to have conquered the Pelasgians, or effected peaceable settlements with them. Then follows a series of legends which have more poetical than historical interest, but which will be briefly noticed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE LEGENDS OF ANCIENT GREECE

The heroic ages of Greece.

The Greeks possessed no authentic written history of that period which included the first appearance of the Hellenes in Thessaly to the first Olympiad, B.C. 776. This is called the heroic age, and is known to us only by legends and traditions, called myths. They pertain both to gods and men, and are connected with what we call mythology, which possesses no historical importance, although it is full of interest for its poetic life. And as mythology is interwoven with the literature and the art of the ancients, furnishing inexhaustible subjects for poets, painters, and sculptors, it can not be omitted wholly in the history of that classic people, whose songs and arts have been the admiration of the world.

The legends.

We have space, however, only for those legends which are of universal interest, and will first allude to those which pertain to gods, such as appear most prominent in the poems of Hesiod and Homer.

Zeus.

Zeus, or Jupiter, is the most important personage in the mythology of Greece. Although, chronologically, he comes after Kronos and Uranos, he was called the “father of gods and men,” whose power it was impossible to resist, and which power was universal. He was supposed to be the superintending providence, whose seat was on Mount Olympus, enthroned in majesty and might, to whom the lesser deities were obedient. With his two brothers, Poseidon, or Neptune, and Hades, or Pluto, he reigned over the heavens, the earth, the sea, and hell. Mythology represents him as born in Crete; and when he had gained sufficient mental and bodily force, he summoned the gods to Mount Olympus, and resolved to wrest the supreme power from his father, Kronos, and the Titans. Ten years were spent in the mighty combat, in which all nature was convulsed, before victory was obtained, and the Titans hurled into Tartarus. With Zeus now began a different order of beings. He is represented as having many wives and a numerous offspring. From his own head came Athene, fully armed, the goddess of wisdom, the patron deity of Athens. By Themis he begat the Horæ; by Eurynome, the three Graces; by Mnemosyne, the Muses; by Leto (Latona), Apollo, and Artemis (Diana); by Demeter (Ceres), Persephone; by Here (Juno), Hebe, Ares (Mars), and Eileithyia; by Maia, Hermes (Mercury).

The other deities.

Under the presidency of Zeus were the twelve great gods and goddesses of Olympus—Poseidon (Neptune), who presided over

the sea; Apollo, who was the patron of art; Ares, the god of war; Hephaestos (Vulcan), who forged the thunderbolts; Hermes, who was the messenger of omnipotence and the protector of merchants; Here, the queen of heaven, and general protector of the female sex; Athene (Minerva), the goddess of wisdom and letters; Artemis (Diana), the protectress of hunters and shepherds; Aphrodite (Venus), the goddess of beauty and love; Hertia (Vesta), the goddess of the hearth and altar, whose fire never went out; Demeter (Ceres), mother earth, the goddess of agriculture.

Scarcely inferior to these Olympian deities were Hades (Pluto), who presided over the infernal regions; Helios, the sun; Hecate, the goddess of expiation; Dionysus (Bacchus), the god of the vine; Leto (Latona), the goddess of the concealed powers; Eos (Aurora), goddess of the morn; Nemesis, god of vengeance; Æolus, the god of winds; Harmonia; the Graces, the Muses, the Nymphs, the Nereids, marine nymphs—these were all invested with great power and dignity.

Besides these were deities who performed special services to the greater gods, like the Horæ; and monsters, offspring of gods, like the gorgons, chimera, the dragon of the Hesperides, the Lernæan hydra, the Nemean lion, Scylla and Charybdis, the centaurs, the sphinx, and others.

Who represent the powers of Nature.

It will be seen that these gods and goddesses represent the powers of nature, and the great attributes of wisdom, purity,

courage, fidelity, truth, which belong to man's higher nature, and which are associated with the divine. It was these powers and attributes which were worshiped—superhuman and adorable. Homer and Hesiod are the great authorities of the theogonies of the pagan world, and we can not tell how much of this was of their invention, and how much was implanted in the common mind of the Greeks, at an age earlier than 700 B.C. The Orphic theogony belongs to a later date, but acquired even greater popular veneration than the Hesiodic.

The worship of these deities.

The worship of these divinities was attended by rites more or less elevated, but sometimes by impurities and follies, like those of Bacchus and Venus. Sometimes this worship was veiled in mysteries, like those of Eleusis. To all these deities temples were erected, and offerings made, sometimes of fruits and flowers, and then of animals. Of all these deities there were legends—sometimes absurd, and these were interwoven with literature and religious solemnities. The details of these fill many a large dictionary, and are to be read in dictionaries, or in poems. Those which pertain to Ceres, to Apollo, to Juno, to Venus, to Minerva, to Mercury, are full of poetic beauty and fascination. They arose in an age of fertile imagination and ardent feeling, and became the faith of the people.

Legends which pertain to heroes.

Besides the legends pertaining to gods and goddesses, are

those which relate the heroic actions of men. Grote describes the different races of men as they appear in the Hesiodic theogony—the offspring of gods. First, the golden race: first created, good and happy, like the gods themselves, and honored after death by being made the unseen guardians of men—“terrestrial demons.” Second, the silver race, inferior in body and mind, was next created, and being disobedient, are buried in the earth. Third, the brazen race, hard, pugnacious, terrible, strong, which was continually at war, and ultimately destroyed itself, and descended into Hades, unhonored and without privilege. Fourth, the race of heroes, or demigods, such as fought at Thebes and Troy, virtuous but warlike, which also perished in battle, but were removed to a happier state. And finally, the iron race, doomed to perpetual guilt, care, toil, suffering—unjust, dishonest, ungrateful, thoughtless—such is the present race of men, with a small admixture of good, which will also end in due time. Such are the races which Hesiod describes in his poem of the “Works and Days,”—penetrated with a profound sense of the wickedness and degeneracy of human life, yet of the ultimate rewards of virtue and truth. His demons are not gods, nor men, but intermediate agents, essentially good—angels, whose province was to guard and to benefit the world. But the notions of demons gradually changed, until they were regarded as both good and bad, as viewed by Plato, and finally they were regarded as the causes of evil, as in the time of the Christian writers. Hesiod, who lived, it is supposed, four hundred years before Herodotus, is a

great ethical poet, and embodied the views of his age respecting the great mysteries of nature and life.

The legends which Hesiod, Homer, and other poets made so attractive by their genius, have a perpetual interest, since they are invested with all the fascinations of song and romance. We will not enter upon those which relate to gods, but confine ourselves to those which relate to men—the early heroes of the classic land and age; nor can we allude to all—only a few—those which are most memorable and impressive.

The Danaides.

Among the most ancient was the legend relating to the Danaides, which invest the early history of Argos with peculiar interest. Inachus, who reigned 1986 B.C., according to ancient chronology, is also the name of the river flowing beneath the walls of the ancient city, situated in the eastern part of the Peloponnesus. In the reign of Krotopos, one of his descendants, Danaus came with his fifty daughters from Egypt to Argos in a vessel of fifty oars, in order to escape the solicitations of the fifty sons of Ægyptos, his brother, who wished to make them their wives. Ægyptos and the sons followed in pursuit, and Danaus was compelled to assent to their desires, but furnished each of his daughters with a dagger, on the wedding night, who thus slew their husbands, except one, whose husband, Lynceus, ultimately became king of Argos. From Danaus was derived the name of Danai, applied to the people of the Argeian territory, and to the Homeric Greeks generally. We hence infer that Argos—one

of the oldest cities of Greece, was settled in part by Egyptians, probably in the era of the shepherd kings, who introduced not only the arts, but the religious rites of that ancient country. Among the regal descendants of Lynceus was Danae, whose son Perseus performed marvelous deeds, by the special favor of Athene, among which he brought from Libya the terrific head of the Gorgon Medusa, which had the marvelous property of turning every one to stone who looked at her. Stung with remorse for the accidental murder of his grandfather, the king, he retired from Argos, and founded the city of Mycenæ, the ruins of whose massive walls are still to be seen—Cyclopean works, which seem to show that the old Pelasgians derived their architectural ideas from the Egyptian Danauns. The Perseids of Mycenæ thus boasted of an illustrious descent, which continued down to the last sovereign of Sparta.

Hercules.

The grand-daughter of Perseus was Alcmena, whom mythology represents as the mother of Hercules by Jupiter. The labors of Hercules are among the most interesting legends of pagan antiquity, since they are types of the endless toils of a noble soul, doomed to labor for others, and obey the commands of worthless persecutors. But the hero is finally rewarded by admission to the family of the gods, and his descendants are ultimately restored to the inheritance from which they were deprived by the wrath and jealousy of Juno. A younger branch of the Perseid family reigned in Lacedæmon—Eurystheus, to

whom Hercules was subject; but he, with all his sons, lost their lives in battle, so that the Perseid family was represented only by the sons of Hercules—the Heracleids, or Heraclidæ. They endeavored to regain their possessions, and invaded the Peloponnesus, from which they had been expelled. Hyllos, the oldest son, proposed to the army of Ionians, Achæans, and Arcadians, which met them in defense, that the combat should be decided between himself and any champion of the invading army, and that, if he were victorious, the Heracleids should be restored to their sovereignty, but if defeated, should forego their claim for three generations. Hyllos was vanquished, and the Heracleids retired and resided with the Dorians. When the stipulated period had ended, they, assisted by the Dorians, gained possession of the Peloponnesus. Hence the great Dorian settlement of Argos, Sparta, and Messenia, effected by the return of the Heracleids.

Deucalion.

Another important legend is that which relates to Deucalion and the deluge, as it is supposed to shed light on the different races that colonized Greece. The wickedness of the world induced Zeus to punish it by a deluge; a terrible rain laid the whole of Greece under water, except a few mountain tops. Deucalion was saved in an ark, or chest, which he had been forewarned to construct. After floating nine days, he landed on the summit of Mount Parnassus. Issuing from his ark, he found no inhabitants, they having been destroyed by the deluge.

Instructed, however, by Zeus, he and his wife, Pyrrha, threw stones over their heads, and those which he threw became men, and those thrown by his wife became women. Thus does mythology account for the new settlement of the country—a tradition doubtless derived from the remote ages through the children of Japhet, from whom the Greeks descended, and who, after many wanderings and migrations, settled in Greece.

Hellen and Pyrrha.

Deucalion and Pyrrha had two sons, Hellen and Amphictyon. The eldest, Hellen, by a nymph was the father of Dorus, Æolus, and Xuthus, and he gave his name to the nation—Hellenas. In dividing the country among his sons, Æolus received Thessaly; Xuthus, Peloponnesus; and Dorus, the country lying opposite, on the northern side of the Corinthian Gulf, as has been already mentioned in the preceding chapter. Substitute Deucalion for Noah, Greece for Armenia, and Dorus, Æolus, and Xuthus for Shem, Ham, and Japhet, and we see a reproduction of the Mosaic account of the second settlement of mankind.

As it is natural for men to trace their origin to illustrious progenitors, so the Greeks, in their various settlements, cherished the legends which represented themselves as sprung from gods and heroes—those great benefactors, whose exploits occupy the heroic ages. As Hercules was the Argive hero of the Peloponnesus, so Æolus was the father of heroes sacred in the history of the Æolians, who inhabited the largest part of Greece. Æolus reigned in Thessaly, the original seat of the Hellenes.

Pelias and Neleus.

Among his sons was Salmoneus, whose daughter, Tyro, became enamored of the river Eneipus, and frequenting its banks, the god Poseidon fell in love with her. The fruits of this alliance were the twin brothers, Pelias and Neleus, who quarreled respecting the possession of Iolchos, situated at the foot of Mount Pelion, celebrated afterward as the residence of Jason. Pelias prevailed, and Neleus returned into Peloponnesus and founded the kingdom of Pylos. His beautiful daughter, Pero, was sought in marriage by princes from all the neighboring countries, but he refused to entertain the pretensions of any of them, declaring that she should only wed the man who brought him the famous oxen of Iphiklos, in Thessaly. Melampus, the nephew of Neleus, obtained the oxen for his brother Bias, who thus obtained the hand of Pero. Of the twelve sons of Neleus, Nestor was the most celebrated. It was he who assembled the various chieftains for the siege of Troy, and was pre-eminent over all for wisdom.

Admetus.

Another descendant of Æolus was the subject of a beautiful legend. Admetus, who married a daughter of Pelias, and whose horses were tended by Apollo, for a time incarnated as a slave in punishment for the murder of the Cyclopes. Apollo, in gratitude, obtained from the Fates the privilege that the life of Admetus should be prolonged if any one could be found to die voluntarily for him. His wife, Alkestes, made the sacrifice, but was released

from the grasp of death (Thanatos) by Hercules, the ancient friend of Admetus.

Jason and the Argonauts.

But a still more beautiful legend is associated with Jason, a great grandson of Æolus. Pelias, still reigning at Iolchos, was informed by the oracle to beware of the man who should appear before him with only one sandal. He was celebrating a festival in honor of Poseidon when Jason appeared, having lost one of his sandals in crossing a river. As a means of averting the danger, he imposed upon Jason the task, deemed desperate, of bringing back to Iolchos the "Golden Fleece." The result was the memorable Argonautic expedition of the ship Argo, to the distant land of Colchis, on the eastern coast of the Black Sea. Jason invited the noblest youth of Greece to join him in this voyage of danger and glory. Fifty illustrious persons joined him, including Hercules and Theseus, Castor and Pollux, Mopsus, and Orpheus. They proceeded along the coast of Thrace, up the Hellespont, past the southern coast of the Propontis, through the Bosphorus, onward past Bithynia and Pontus, and arrived at the river Phasis, south of the Caucasian mountains, where dwelt Æetes, whom they sought. But he refused to surrender the golden fleece except on conditions which were almost impossible. Medea, however, his daughter, fell in love with Jason, and by her means, assisted by Hecate, he succeeded in yoking the ferocious bulls and plowing the field, and sowing it with dragons' teeth. Still Æetes refused the reward, and meditated the murder of the Argonauts; but

Medea lulled to sleep the dragon which guarded the fleece, and fled with her lover and his companions on board the Argo. The adventurers returned to Iolchos in safety, after innumerable perils, and by courses irreconcilable with all geographical truths. But Jason could avenge himself on Pelias only through the stratagem of his wife, and by her magical arts she induced the daughters of Pelias to cut up their father, and to cast his limbs into a cauldron, believing that by this method he would be restored to the vigor of youth, and Jason was thus revenged, and obtained possession of the kingdom, which he surrendered to a son of Pelias, and retired with his wife to Corinth. Here he lived ten years in prosperity, but repudiated Medea in order to marry Glance, the daughter of the king of Corinth; Medea avenged the insult by the poisoned robe she sent to Glance as a marriage present, while Jason perished, while asleep, from a fragment of his ship Argo, which fell upon him. Such is the legend of the Argonauts, which is typical of the naval adventures of the maritime Greeks, and their restless enterprises.

Sisyphus.

The legend of Sisyphus is connected with the early history of Corinth. Sisyphus was the son of Æolus, and founded this wealthy city. He was distinguished for cunning and deceit. He detected Antolycus, the son of Hermes, by marking his sheep under the foot, so that the arch-thief was obliged to acknowledge the superior craft of the Æolid, and restore the plunder. He discovered the amour of Zeus with the nymph Ægina, and told

her mother where she was carried, which so incensed the “father of gods and men,” that he doomed Sisyphus, in Hades, to the perpetual punishment of rolling up a hill a heavy stone, which, as soon as it reached the summit, rolled back again in spite of all his efforts. This legend illustrates the never ending toils and disappointments of men.

Bellerophon.

Sisyphus was the grandfather of Bellerophon, whose beauty made him the object of a violent passion on the part of Antea, the wife of a king of Argos. He rejected her advances, and became as violently hated. She made false accusations, and persuaded her husband to kill him. Not wishing to commit the murder directly, he sent him to his son-in-law, the king of Sykia, in Asia Minor, with a folded tablet full of destructive symbols, which required him to perform perilous undertakings, which he successfully performed. He was then recognized as the son of a god, and married the daughter of the king. This legend reminds us of Joseph in Egypt.

Æolus.

We are compelled to omit other interesting legends of the Æolids, the sons and daughters of Æolus, among which are those which record the feats of Atalanta, and turn to those which relate to the Pelopids, who gave to the Peloponnesus its early poetic interest. Of this remarkable race were Tantalus, Pelops, Atreus, Thyestes, Agamemnon, Menelaus, Helen, and Hermione, all of

whom figured in the ancient legendary genealogies.

Tantalus.

Tantalus resided, at a remote antiquity, near Mount Sipylus, in Lydia, and was a man of immense wealth, and pre-eminently favored both by gods and men. Intoxicated by prosperity, he stole nectar and ambrosia from the table of the gods, and revealed their secrets, for which he was punished in the under world by perpetual hunger and thirst, yet placed with fruit and water near him, which eluded his grasp when he attempted to touch them. He had two children, Pelops and Niobe. The latter was blessed with seven sons and seven daughters, which so inflamed her with pride that she claimed equality with the goddesses Latona and Diana, who favored her by their friendship. This presumption so incensed the goddesses, that they killed all her children, and Niobe wept herself to death, and was turned into a stone, a striking image of excessive grief.

Pelops.

Pelops was a Lydian king, but was expelled from Asia by Ilus, king of Troy, for his impieties. He came to Greece, and beat Hippodamenia, whose father was king of Pisa, near Olympia, in Elis, in a chariot race, when death was the penalty of failure. He succeeded by the favor of Poseidon, and married the princess, and became king of Pisa. He gave his name to the whole peninsula, which he was enabled to do from the great wealth he brought from Lydia, thus connecting the early settlements of the

Peloponnesus with Asia Minor. He had numerous children, who became the sovereigns of different cities and states in Argos, Elis, Laconia, and Arcadia. One of them, Atreus, was king of Mycenæ, who inherited the sceptre of Zeus, and whose wealth was proverbial. The sceptre was made by Hephæstus (Vulcan) and given to Zeus; he gave it to Hermes; Hermes presented it to Pelops; and Pelops gave it to Atreus, the ruler of men. Atreus and his brother, Thyestes, bequeathed it to Agamemnon, who ruled at Mycenæ, while his brother, Menelaus, reigned at Sparta. It was the wife of Menelaus, Helen, who was carried away by Paris, which occasioned the Trojan war. Agamemnon was killed on his return from Troy, through the treachery of his wife Clytemnestra, who was seduced by Ægisthus, the son of Thyestes. His only son, Orestes, afterward avenged the murder, and recovered Mycenæ. Hermione, the only daughter of Menelaus and Helen, was given in marriage to the son of Achilles, Neoptolemas, who reigned in Thessaly. Mycenæ maintained its independence to the Persian invasion, and is rendered immortal by the Iliad and Odyssey. On the subsequent ascendancy of Sparta, the bones of Orestes were brought from Tegea, where they had reposed for generations, in a coffin seven cubits long.

The other States of the Peloponnesus, have also their genealogical legends, which trace their ancestors to gods and goddesses, which I omit, and turn to those which belong to Attica.

The Deucalian deluge.

The great Deucalian deluge, according to legend, happened during the reign of Ogyges, 1796 years B.C., and 1020 before the first Olympiad. After a long interval, Cecrops, half man and half serpent, became king of the country. By some he is represented as a Pelasgian, by others, as an Egyptian. He introduced the first elements of civilized life—marriage, the twelve political divisions of Attica, and a new form of worship, abolishing the bloody sacrifices to Zeus. He gave to the country the name of Cecropia. During his reign there ensued a dispute between Athenæ and Poseidon, respecting the possession of the Acropolis. Poseidon struck the rocks with his trident, and produced a well of salt water; Athenæ planted an olive tree. The twelve Olympian gods decided the dispute, and awarded to Athenæ the coveted possession, and she ever afterward remained the protecting deity of Athens.

Theseus.

Among his descendants was Theseus, the great legendary hero of Attica, who was one of the Argonauts, and also one of those who hunted the Calidomian boar. He freed Attica from robbers and wild beasts, conquered the celebrated Minotaur of Crete, and escaped from the labyrinth by the aid of Ariadne, whom he carried off and abandoned. In the Iliad he is represented as fighting against the centaurs, and in the Hesiodic poems he is an amorous knight-errant, misguided by the beautiful Ægle. Among his other feats, inferior only to those of Hercules, he vanquished the Amazons—a nation of courageous and hardy

women, who came from the country about Caucasus, and whose principal seats were near the modern Trezibond. They invaded Thrace, Asia Minor, Greece, Syria, Egypt, and the islands of the Ægean. The foundation of several towns in Asia Minor is ascribed to them. In the time of Theseus, this semi-mythical and semi-historical race of female warriors invaded Attica, and even penetrated to Athens, but were conquered by the hero king. Allusion is made to their defeat throughout the literature of Athens. Although Theseus was a purely legendary personage, the Athenians were accustomed to regard him as a great political reformer and legislator, who consolidated the Athenian commonwealth, distributing the people into three classes.

Theban legends. Cadmus. Œdipus.

The legends pertaining to Thebes occupy a prominent place in Grecian mythology. Cadmus, the son of Agenor, king of Phœnicia, leaves his country in search of his sister Europa, with whom Zeus, in the form of a bull, had fallen in love, and carried on his back to Crete. He first goes to Thrace, and thence to Delphi, to learn tidings of Europa, but the god directs him not to prosecute his search; he is to follow the guidance of a cow, and to found a city where the animal should lie down. The cow stops at the site of Thebes. He marries Harmonia, the daughter of Ares and Aphrodite, after having killed the dragons which guarded the fountain Allia, and sowed their teeth. From these armed men sprang up, who killed each other, except five. From these arose the five great families of Thebes, called Sparti. One

of the Sparti marries a daughter of Cadmus, whose issue was Pentheus, who became king. It was in his reign that Dionysus appears as a god in Bœotia, the giver of the vine, and obtains divine honors in Thebes. Among the descendants of Cadmus was Laius. He is forewarned by an oracle that any son he should beget would destroy him, and hence he caused the infant Œdipus to be exposed on Mount Cithanon. Here the herdsmen of Polybus, king of Corinth, find him, and convey him to their lord who brings him up as his own child. Distressed by the taunts of companions as to his unknown parentage, he goes to Delphi, to inquire the name of his real father. He is told not to return to his own country, for it was his destiny to kill his father and become the husband of his mother. Knowing no country but Corinth, he pursues his way to Bœotia, and meets Laius in a chariot drawn by mules. A quarrel ensues from the insolence of attendants, and Œdipus kills Laius. The brother of Laius, Creon, succeeds to the throne of Thebes. The country around is vexed with a terrible monster, with the face of a woman, the wings of a bird, and the tail of a lion, called the Sphinx, who has learned from the Muses a riddle, which she proposed to the Thebans, and on every failure to resolve it one of them was devoured. But no person can solve the riddle. The king offers his crown and his sister Jocasta, wife of Laius, in marriage to any one who would explain the riddle. Œdipus solves it, and is made king of Thebes, and marries Jocasta. A fatal curse rests upon him. Jocasta, informed by the gods of her relationship, hangs herself in agony. Œdipus endures

great miseries, as well as his children, whom he curses, and who quarrel about their inheritance, which quarrel leads to the siege of Thebes by Adrastus, king of Argos, who seeks to restore Polynices—one of the sons of Œdipus, to the throne of which he was dispossessed. The Argetan chieftains readily enter into the enterprise, assisted by numerous auxiliaries from Arcadia and Messenia. The Cadmeans, assisted by the Phocians, march out to resist the invaders, who are repulsed, in consequence of the magnanimity of a generous youth, who offers himself a victim to Ares. Eteocles then proposed to his brother, Polynices, the rival claimants, to decide the quarrel by single combat. It resulted in the death of both, and then in the renewal of the general contest, and the destruction of the Argeian chiefs, and Adrastus's return to Argos in shame and woe.

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