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tendencies have had no stronger influence over Luke's version than over Matthew's; rather the reverse. He has corrected the text unflinchingly in matters of style, which Matthew has apparently almost entirely avoided doing. But although these stylistic corrections are so numerous, we cannot say that he has entirely obliterated the special features of the original before him. We must rather give him credit for having carried out his revision in a conservative spirit, and for having allowed his readers to obtain an impression of the character of the sayings of Jesus. . . . Almost everywhere we may notice that short and pregnant sayings of the Lord are corrected the least; longer speeches have suffered more; the encroachments reach their height in the narrative portions' (p. 80).

The investigation then proves altogether favourable as establishing the reliability of the Evangelists, *i.e.* the editors of the Gospels as we have them. The question at present is not 'what is the value of their sources?' but 'how have they treated those sources?' Have they manipulated them in such a way as to leave us several degrees further removed from historical fact? Even taking a text, as Harnack practically does, from which all possible traces of harmonizing have been relentlessly expunged, and assuming for the moment that all variations are due to the Evangelists, and not to their sources, or to the actual repetition of similar sayings on different occasions, it appears that both have treated their source with a high degree of fidelity. The majority of their assumed alterations are unimportant, being, in fact, little more than verbal; very seldom do they allow themselves to tamper with the sense. With regard to the first group of passages in particular, it is not too much to say that, roughly speaking, the text in St. Matthew and in St. Luke is identical (p. 32).

The important point is that this conclusion is valid, apart from any theory of the nature of Q, or of the form in which the material came to the final editors. The variations which have so far been attributed to them may, in fact, go further back, as Harnack admits in some cases. They may be supposed to have arisen in the course of oral tradition, in different versions of an original Aramaic collection, or in a hundred other ways. That will not affect the conclusion that as a whole *the variations themselves are unimportant*, and easily explained; we can go behind them with a high degree of probability and reach a stage perhaps very near to the original.

(*To be concluded.*)

The Triad of Stars.

By E. Walter Maunder, F.R.A.S., Superintendent of the Solar Department in the Royal Observatory, Greenwich.

Three astronomical symbols are found on a great number of the sculptures discovered in Assyria and Babylonia. They are represented in connexion with the worship of the gods; they are carved over the heads of the figures of the kings; and they occupy the crown of the little sculptured pillars which record the transfer of landed property. A visit to the Babylonian Room, and the Assyrian Galleries of the British Museum, will bring quite a number of examples under the notice of the student; and some of these are reproduced in the illustrations to the Official Guide to the Babylonian and Assyrian Antiquities. Thus plate xxii. gives a reproduction of a tablet

> 'sculptured with a scene representing the worship of the Sun-god in the Temple of Sippar, and inscribed with a record of the restoration of the temple by Nabu-pal-idinna, king of Babylonia, about B.C. 870. In the upper part of the tablet the Sun-god is seen, seated within a shrine upon a throne, the sides of which are sculptured with figures of mythical beings in relief.'

Above the head of the Sun-god, and under the roof of the shrine, are the three astronomical symbols referred to—the Triad of Stars,—and an inscription gives the commentary, as rendered by Colonel Conder:

> 'The Moon-god, the Sun-god, and Ištar, dwellers in the abyss,
> announce to the years what they are to expect.'

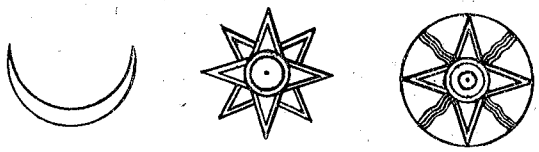
The same three symbols appear in the Guide on plate xi., which is a representation of a

> 'fine limestone landmark or boundary-stone, inscribed with a valuable text recording the restoration and confirmation of certain rights and privileges to Ritti-Marduk, the Warden of Bît-Karziyabku, a district which was apparently situated on the confines of Elam, by Nebuchadnezzar I., king of Babylon, about B.C. 1120.'

The first of these three symbols is often found by itself. Thus the Official Guide, plate xxiii. No. 1., gives a reproduction of a

> 'Cylinder seal inscribed with the name of Khashkhamer, viceroy of the city of Ishkun-Sin, and an address to Ur-Gur, king of Ur, about B.C. 2500. The scene represents Ur-Gur being led into the presence of Sin, the Moon-god.'

Above the Moon-god, who is seated on a throne,

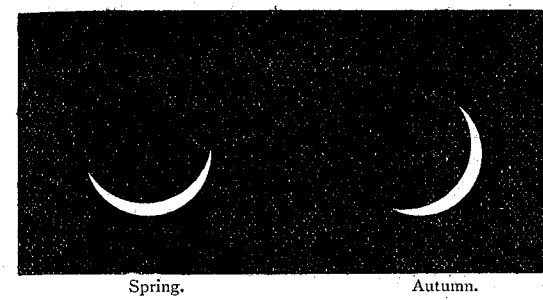


Sin. Ištar. Šamaš.

THE TRIAD OF STARS.
From a Boundary-Stone, of date about 1200 B.C., now in the Louvre.

is a crescent moon on its back, like a cup or boat. The significance of this symbol being adopted in connexion with the Moon-god, is very clear. The Moon-god was specially associated with the beginning of the month, with the reappearance of the moon in the sky, after the three or four days of its disappearance during conjunction with the sun. But it was not the young moon of any month that was thus distinguished. There is one month in the year when the crescent takes this boat-like position most fully, floating on an even keel above the western horizon; this is the crescent nearest to the spring equinox. The symbol, therefore, sets forth a special hour of a special day of a special month. It is the hour after sunset, of the first evening when the young moon is visible, in spring-time. For those nations who reckoned their months from the observed reappearance of the moon, and who, therefore, began their day at sunset, it marked out at one and the same time the beginning of the day, and of the month, and of the year. It was the natural, indeed the inevitable, sign of the first month of the year—the year beginning with spring-time. Had the Babylonians begun their year with the young moon of autumn, their symbol for the Moon-god would have been the crescent with its horns, the one vertically above the other, as on the Turkish flag at the present day. But the symbol of the Babylonian Moon-god is never found in any other position than with the line of its horns horizontal.

Just as the first member of the Triad of Stars set forth the presiding deity of the first month of the year, so the other two members—the two stars—set forth the presiding deities of the second month of the year; for the second month was



Spring. Autumn.

Position of the Crescent Moon at the two Equinoxes, for Latitude 35° N.

held to be under the patronage of a pair of deities, 'the Heavenly Twins.' And, as the symbol for the first month expressed an easily observed astronomical fact, so did the symbols for the second month. For about 2000 B.C. the young moon of the second month of the year set together with the bright twin stars, Castor and Pollux, as we name them to-day.

At the time when the second month of the year was marked by the setting together of the young moon and the twin stars, the first month was marked by the setting of the young moon, and Capella, and an inscription, translated by Professor Sayce and Mr. Bosanquet in the *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*, vol. xxxix. p. 455, shows, not only that the beginning of the year was fixed in this manner, but that a certain curious relation had also been recognized and turned to use. Their translation runs as follows:

> 'When on the first day of the month Nisan the star of stars (or *Dilgan*) and the moon are parallel, that year is normal. When on

the third day of the month Nisan the star of stars and the moon are parallel, that year is full.'

In this observation the young moon was used as a pointer to connect the position of the sun with the index star. In the ordinary way this setting together of the moon and the index star, which in this case was Capella, could only take place on one of the first three evenings of the first month; for if in any month the two set together on the fourth evening, they would also set together on the first evening of the next month, which would thus be pointed out as the actual 'Nisan.' The setting together of the moon and star on the third evening meant that the moon had by that time moved more than twenty degrees further from the position of the sun, so that the sun would be more than twenty degrees—equivalent to the distance which it moves in twenty days—further short of the position of the star. The beginning of the year, therefore, would be put very early. As twelve lunations are eleven days short of a solar year, these eleven days *plus* the twenty or more days by which a year thus opening would begin early, would make up an entire month, and the year would have to be reckoned as 'full,' that is, as containing a thirteenth month.

But the constant recurrence of the Triad of Stars, as practically a single symbol, is not fully explained by referring it to a combination of the symbols for the first two months. About 4000 B.C., the setting together of the young moon with the twin stars, Castor and Pollux, took place, on the average, about the time of the spring equinox. For many centuries, therefore, the moon on its back, side by side with a pair of bright stars, was seen low down on the western horizon, on one of the first three evenings of the first month of the year. The Triad of Stars is therefore nothing but a picture of a single astronomical configuration, observed by men year after year, through many centuries, some six thousand years ago. It was therefore the natural, the inevitable, symbol of the beginning of the year, and therefore of the year itself, and of time generally.

The sunset gave the beginning of the day; the young moon, seen in the sunset glow, gave the beginning of the month; the young moon, seen on its back in the sunset glow, together with the twin stars, gave the beginning of the year. No simpler means for recognizing the commencement of the year, and for synchronizing the month with the year and with the day, could have been devised. It required no instruments; no knowledge of the principles of astronomy; no recognition of particular stars other than the two used as the index; and in the words of the inscription over the shrine of the Sun-god at Sippar, the Triad of Stars, dwellers in the abyss of heaven would

'Announce to the years what they are to expect';

the observation of the beginning of the year, itself indicating whether the year was to be one of twelve months or of thirteen.

No simpler method could then have been devised. But it had one drawback, a drawback which the early observers could not have understood or foreseen. Owing to the 'precession' of the earth's axis, a sidereal year—that is, a year as marked by the return of the sun to the neighbourhood of the same star—is slightly longer than a solar or tropical year, marked by the return of the sun to the same part of the celestial equator. As the terrestrial seasons depend on the position of the sun relative to the equator, a sidereal year tends to have its commencement later and later in the seasons, at the rate of about one day in a little less than seventy-two years. In two thousand years, the beginning of the year, as given by the observation of the Triad of Stars, would have fallen a full month late. When this was recognized the error could easily be corrected, since the bright star Capella was then so placed as to be ready to serve as index star in the place of the twin stars. As the constellation figures which have come down to us through the Babylonians and Aratus and Ptolemy were designed some time in the third millennium before the Christian era, it is not improbable that the change of index stars was made at the same time. Capella probably continued to be the index star until about 700 B.C.; it seems clear that it was still in use in the year 1063 B.C. For the eclipse of the sun which was total at Babylon on July 31 of that year was recorded as having taken place on Sivan 26. Had the Babylonians at that date reckoned their year from the new moon next after the spring equinox, Sivan 26 could not have fallen so late as July 31; whereas, if the Capella method was still in use, the month Sivan would have practically coincided with July, as the eclipse shows to have been the case.

At some date, not very far removed from

700 B.C., an important astronomical revolution was effected. We have no historical record of the revolution, but its results are apparent. The Zodiac which had hitherto been divided into eleven or twelve constellations of very unequal extent, was now divided into twelve signs, all exactly equal. The Bull, which had hitherto been the first constellation, now became the second sign, and the Ram, which had been the last constellation, became the first sign. It is probable that at the same time Capella was abandoned as the index star, since it now gave an obviously late beginning for the year; and there being no suitable star to take its place, the method of using an index star was superseded by the direct observation of the equinox.

It is easy to see how the original meaning of the Triad passed out of recollection, whilst the symbol itself was still retained. When Capella became the index star, the Triad became divided, and the crescent on its back being naturally assigned to the first month, drew with it the allotment of that month to Sin, the Moon-god, whose symbol the crescent was. The twin stars, now symbol of the second month, just as naturally involved the allotment of that month to the Heavenly Twins—the king and queen of heaven—Šamaš and Ištar—the ruler of the day and the ruler of the night. At a much later date, when the planets were recognized, and Venus the morning star was identified with Venus the evening star, it was natural to assign this beautiful attendant on the sun to Ištar as the consort of Šamaš. Consequently in the later presentations of the Triad we find the twin stars differentiated in form; one is a disc bearing a four-rayed star with four streams of light, elsewhere the symbol of Šamaš, the Sun-god; the other an ordinary eight-rayed star. But on the earliest example that we have of the Triad—the triumphal stele of Naram-Sin, now in the Louvre—we find both stars are of the latter type; both simple eight-rayed stars; neither of them the solar disc.

Recent Foreign Theology.

The New 'Herzog.'

AMONGST the articles which give distinction to vol. xix. of the Hauck-Herzog *Realencyclopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche* are Kattenbusch on 'Symbolik,' Nestle on 'The Syrian Church,' Strack on 'The Talmud,' Preuschen on 'Tatian,' and Bertheau on 'Tischendorf.' On these various themes the scholars named respectively furnish concise and comprehensive dissertations, illuminating to read and valuable for purposes of reference, though they cannot easily be summarized.

To the Leipzig Professor of Philosophy—not of Theology,—Dr. Hauck has entrusted the important subject of

THEISM.

Accordingly, the real theme of Professor Heinze's article is the Philosophy of Theism, and his method is that of historical exposition. He is an authority on Kant, and discusses at considerable length the question: 'Should Kant be described as a Deist, or as a Theist?' The reply is that if by Theism is meant not knowledge of God gained as a critical philosopher, but faith in God, then Kant was a Theist; for assuredly he believed in a God possessed not only of such metaphysical attributes as omnipresence and eternity, but also of such moral attributes as righteousness and goodness. Kant ascribes to God reason and will, though he does not go so far as to maintain the possibility of personal communion between man and God. Therefore, if Theism is held to include belief in the answering of prayer, Kant was not a Theist.

An interesting account is given of the establishment in 1837, for the advocacy of speculative Theism, of the *Zeitschrift für Philosophie und spekulative Theologie*. Its first editor was Immanuel Hermann Fichte, and amongst its earliest contributors were the philosophers Fr. Hoffmann and Weisse, also the theologians Neander and Rothe. The name of the journal was afterwards changed to that which it now bears, namely, *Zeitschrift für Philosophie und philosophische Kritik*. Both under the editorship of Fichte and of Ulrici a vigorous polemic was waged against the pantheism of Hegel. As regards Fichte himself, his Theism was ethical; in the absolute personality of God he found the solution of the riddles of the universe. The same