is the way of religious education. Now this is a difficult topic, and our author is fully alive to the difficulty. What is the most satisfactory plan for real religious education? The Sunday school has its weaknesses. In this country it may not be so 'obsolescent' as Canon BELL holds it to be, but we all know the difficulties.

The worst difficulty is that one brief hour a week seems far too little. Some prefer a Children's Service to a Sunday school, but this difficulty remains. A daily religious lesson in the parochial school seems at first view to be preferable, but here the difficulty is that a 'Bible story' is so often taken to be all that can be done, plus a certain amount of 'catechism,' and to get a really good catechism seems unattainable. The Canon concludes that only in the home can real religious education be hopefully carried on, although well-managed Sunday schools or day school religious lessons are far from valueless.

Next, if children can be best educated only in the home, how are parents to be fitted to impart spiritual truth? Canon BELL lays great stress on preaching and on a certain kind of preaching. He has some hard things to say of much present-day preaching. It is so unsystematic. It consists so often of bright little essays on topics the inter-relationship of which is never revealed and certainly could never be guessed. There is immeasurable need of teaching from the pulpit. The ordinary listener has next to no knowledge of what the essential Christian doctrines are. Our author's own experience has been that if real teaching is given, there are many who receive it gladly. In his own phrase, they 'lap it up.' Whether or not that would be the fortune of all ministers who gave themselves to systematic teaching is difficult to say. Beyond all doubt, as has been emphasized in our columns before now, Canon BELL says what needs to be said about preaching.

Thirdly, the Christian preacher must inculcate the vital relationship between religion and social service. 'Men and women who matter are not likely to turn to God unless and until they perceive in Christians a social pertinency of creed and cult and code.' Christians are tempted to cease to face social difficulties and become 'other-worldly,' and that only leads the man in the street to regard religion as but an escape-mechanism. No, we must not run away from the problems, we must face up to them. Not that the Church is called to solve them. But it is the Christian's task to uphold certain ideals and strive towards them; ideals such as peace, righteousness, co-operation among men. And as the outsider sees us bearing witness to the social derivatives of the Christian doctrine of man, he will be more willing than now he is to 'turn to Him who alone can make men really men and women really women.' He will 'much more easily learn to believe in God if he sees us willing to contend for God—at whatever cost—in the economic and political complications of our difficult day.'

Recent Biblical Archaeology.

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SURPRISE has sometimes been expressed that in a country like Palestine, where there is abundance of stone, the great majority of buildings in ancient times—the superstructures at least—should have been of brick. It must be remembered, however, that the quarrying and dressing of stone necessitated the use of metal tools, and these, if they could be secured at all, were scarce and costly, whereas the Palestinian soil was rich in excellent clay which could easily be moulded into brick squares (לְבֵנִים, Gn 11[3]). Consequently, whenever a settled population abandoned their semi-nomad huts (generally

made of reed-mud) and erected permanent dwellings, they made use of brick, as being more readily obtained and more easily handled than stone. The most ancient bricks unearthed are found to have been hand-modelled, made of compact clay, plano-convex in shape, and simply dried in the sun. Fitzgerald has drawn attention to the exclusive use of such bricks in the oldest strata at Bethshan (levels xviii and xvii). At some places, such as Teleilât Ghassûl (in the early Bronze Age), they consisted simply of clods of clay, shaped (generally flattened) by the hand after prolonged kneading. The finger marks, which are still visible on them, are not accidental but were intended to insure a better adherence of the mortar. Woolley discovered the same at Ur, and Macalister found indentations, evidently intended for the same purpose, on bricks at Gezer.

The use of a wooden mould (מַלְבֵּן) for shaping the bricks developed in course of time. The clay, after being mixed with chopped straw or reeds to give it more consistence, was worked up with the feet, and then shaped in the moulds. This method is referred to in Ex 5^{7}, and the successive operations are succinctly described in Nah 3^{14}, 'Go into the clayey ground, tread the clay, lay hold of the brick-mould' (cf. R.V.m). This kind of labour was arduous, and was generally done by prisoners or slaves, and hence it was that David, after the capture of Rabboth-Ammon and in view of his building projects, put the captives to work in the brick-fields and quarries (2 S 12^{31}). Some of the bricks found in Israelite and older buildings have the manufacturer's mark (generally an ancient Semitic letter) stamped on them, and a large square brick from Tell el-Qedaḥ (Hazor, Jos 11^{1}) belonging to the Early Iron Age bears an imprint of the 'Shield of David.'[1] Besides such marks, others due to accidental causes have been found. Dogs or calves, for instance, running over the fields where the bricks were lying in the hot sun to dry, have left the trace of their paws or hoofs on the clay which was still soft. Picturesque details of this nature have been found by Mallon at Teleilât Ghassûl, by Rowe at Bethshan, and by Macalister at Gezer. This drying of the bricks in the sun, rather than baking them in an oven, was the usual custom in Palestine, as it was in Mesopotamia. In Palestine baked bricks were hardly used except for plinths and paving, and in Mesopotamia they appear to have been kept for the binding of walls or their exterior facing, for the sides of certain canals, and for making water-tight pavements and courtyards. The use of baked bricks, indeed, in earliest times was so exceptional that the author of Gn 11^{3}, in describing the construction of the tower of Babel, refers to them as an exotic production.

The builders frequently consolidated the brick walls by placing thick planks or wooden beams at intervals in them. They did this even in the case of substantial stone structures, where such beams were certainly less needed. The inner court of Solomon's temple was thus constructed (cf. 1 K 6^{36}), 'Three rows of hewn stone, and a row of cedar beams.' Woolley, in his recent excavation of the palace at Atchana (the ancient city of Alalakh in Syria), has noted the large amount of wood in the walls, some of the beams being about a foot square, and all of them flush with the wall face. He has found the same characteristic in the eighth-century palace at Tainat, near Atchana, so that the tradition of elaborate half-timber work must have been long-lived. The practice was intended to prevent any giving-way in the walls and to assure the rigidity of the whole structure; but, on the other hand, the wood easily became a prey to fire, and this led sometimes to the sinking or fall of the walls—the very danger it was desired to obviate. The presence of wood probably accounts for the masses of ashes and charcoal which have been discovered in some ruins, and perhaps affords reason why such superstructures as those of the governor's residence at Megiddo and of the royal palaces at Samaria have long since collapsed and practically disappeared.

Dampness was an enemy as destructive as fire, and the inevitable crumbling or disintegration of the surface of the bricks during rainy seasons called for frequent rough-casting or repair. The water worked itself in, with the result that the bricks began to swell and the walls to crack or fall. Sometimes, after a few rainy seasons, the walls completely softened and left merely a little mound of dirt to mark the site. In this matter ancient builders with brick were at fault in not securing the foundations especially from water or damp. It has been found at Bethshan that the dwellings (in levels xviii–xvi) rested directly on the soil. In time, however, builders began to place their brick walls on a course of gravel or rubble, or in a trench lined with river sand, and this permeable foundation allowed drainage of the infiltrated water. Such a precaution has been found at *Tell el-Ḥesī*

[1] This motif ('Magên David'), which was in the form of a Hexagram, has also been found on one of the acropolis stones at Megiddo, and like the more common Pentagram ('Seal of Solomon') may have been of astral origin.

(Eglon) at different epochs, in some of the buildings at *Tell Djemmeh* (perhaps Gerar), and in some of the constructions at *Tell el-Fâra* (Beth-pelet). The practice was the usual one in Mesopotamia, the original brick-building country, and was probably more general in Palestine than excavations would lead us to suppose.

In our previous article we referred to the hoards of gold and silver objects found at *Tell el-Ajjûl* (ancient Gaza), and evidently intended to be melted down or exchanged for commercial products. Schæffer, the director of the expedition to Ras Shamra (Ugarit), states that in several of the larger houses at this Phœnician seaport hoards of metal have also been found, in the form of ingots and ornaments of gold, silver, and electrum, cut up or crumpled ready for the smelting pot. These hoards probably belonged to Mycenæan or Ægean jewellers, moneylenders, or dealers in precious metal, who had lucrative businesses of exchange and sale here in the fifteenth century B.C. Several of their balances have been discovered, made of bronze, the scale trays being pierced by four holes, like those found at Mycenæ, and in one instance a complete set of weights has been found beside the two trays, some of the weights being made in the shape of an animal lying down and others in the likeness of a human being. These discoveries, both at Gaza in the south of Palestine and Ras Shamra in the far north, give us another proof of the abundance of precious metal in the land in the pre-Israelite period. Achan is said to have appropriated from the spoils of Jericho two hundred shekels of silver and an ingot (לָשׁוֹן, 'tongue') of gold of fifty shekels in weight (Jos 7^{21}). Certainly, the quantity of precious metal demanded as tribute by Thutmose III. (*c.* 1501–1447 B.C.) could have been borne only by a rich country. Schæffer has also brought to light heaps of murex-shells at Minet-el-Beida, which is the port quarter of Ugarit. It was from this species of shell-fish, found in great quantities on the Phœnician coast, that the valuable purple dye was extracted, and the discovery shows that establishments for this purpose existed here as well as in Tyre, which has hitherto been regarded as the only seat of the manufacture. On some of the pottery fragments found in these establishments the purple colour is still vivid after lying buried in the ground for more than three thousand years. As the Israelites could not readily procure the particular shell-fish referred to, they could not themselves have produced the costly purple (אַרְגָּמָן) and violet (תְּכֵלֶת) so renowned among the ancients, but must have been dependent on these northern sources. The purple of the Tabernacle, if made by the Hebrews, was probably of a different nature, obtained by other methods. According to Schæffer, only one eighth of the whole surface of the Ras Shamra hill has so far been excavated, and of this area only the uppermost layers have been explored. The ground may yet turn out to be one of the richest and most productive sites in the Near East.

A study of Sumerian and Babylonian King-Lists throws some light on the extraordinary long lives of the patriarchs. In these lists there are kings credited with fantastic reigns of centuries and even of more than a thousand years, but in certain cases at least it has been found that some names have fallen out, and the sum total of two, three, or more reigns is attributed to the one name that survives. It is something similar that has undoubtedly happened in the case of the patriarchs and others in the Old Testament. The problem of their protracted ages cannot be solved by supposing that each year was meant to be shorter than ours, and that therefore the life of Methuselah, who is stated to have lived 969 years, was not much more than the usual three score and ten. The fact is that the Hebrew historians, in trying to bridge the gap between their supposed date of the Creation and the beginning of historical times (for this latter at least they had reliable records), found that they had only a limited number of names to do it with, and rather than invent new ones they simply lengthened the lives of those they had. This dropping out of certain generations, and the summarizing of a period under the name of one outstanding figure is a perfectly normal proceeding, for which we have parallels not only in Mesopotamian custom but in Hebrew and Arabian family trees, where one item may bridge several generations of men. The period of 175 years, which is given in Scripture for Abraham and which is impossible as the span of one man's life, may thus represent a conflation of two or even three individuals (who may have borne the same name Abram-Abraham) and the sum total of their lives.

Parrot has furnished us with further reports of his recent excavations at Mari (on the Upper Euphrates), one of the main centres on the great caravan route between the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean over four thousand years ago. Among the innumerable finds, including over two thousand tablets, is a small gypsum sculpture (only the bust about ten inches in height remains) representing some personage bearing a kid in his arms, pressed to his bosom. The expression on the face

is one of serenity and beatitude. The object dates probably from about 2400 B.C., and was discovered on the esplanade of the ziggurat, where a similar one was found in 1933. Such sculptures were, of course, intended to represent some individual—probably a 'maître du sacrifice'—carrying an animal to be laid on the ritual table, but in course of time the idea found its way to the West, where it was adopted as a symbol of 'The Good Shepherd' (cf. Is 40^{11}, Jn 10^{11}). The representation, indeed, existed as far back as the pre-Sargonic Age (about 3000 B.C.). Sculptured specimens have been found at Susa, Ur, Tello (ancient Lagash), Niffar (ancient Nippur), and other places; numerous figurines of the same type, contemporary at least with the Third Dynasty of Ur (*c.* 2400 B.C.), have come to light in south Mesopotamia; and a larger number still of glyptics bearing the representation have been unearthed at various places, dating from the Dynasty of Agade (2752 B.C.) down to Neo-Babylonian times. In some cases it is an ordinary individual who carries the kid or lamb, and in other cases the bearer is a divinity. Even Gilgamesh and Enkidu are sometimes figured with an animal in their arms. The idea developed in various forms as the ages rolled on, and continued down to the Christian era, when it seems to have been taken as a beautiful and appropriate emblem of Christ.[1] We find it in early Christian art, painting, embroidery, and statuary, and it comes to Christians naturally in their hymns and prayers, though few, if any, are aware of its origin.

At Brak, an ancient capital city of 3000 B.C., in northern Mesopotamia, Mallowan has laid bare a temple containing such an enormous number of 'magic eyes' embedded in the site, that he has named the building 'The Temple of a Thousand Eyes.' They are mostly in white alabaster, with a few in black burnished clay or limestone. They were evidently votive deposits placed there at the time of the foundation of the building. Their purpose has been variously interpreted. It has been suggested that Brak was a centre for the cure of eye diseases—a kind of ancient Lourdes—but we would suggest rather that the temple was a place where the people could secure, as they thought, a defence or protection against the 'evil eye,' belief in which was so prevalent in Semitic lands. This popular superstition is not directly referred to in Scripture—it does not seem to be implied in the 'ogling' (מְשַׂקְּרוֹת) of the women in Is 3^{16}, nor in Mk 7^{22} (cf. Mt 20^{15})—but the use of amulets for such a purpose by the Israelites cannot be doubted, though they were actively condemned by the prophets. Evidently Magic Eyes were placed beneath the site of the temple at Brak as a remedy against this supposed danger, on the principle that like averts like, just as demoniacal human heads or monstrous animal forms, made in clay or metal, were often carried on the person as a preventive against demons. This explanation of the eyes seems to be borne out by the extraordinary number of beads unearthed at the spot (according to Mallowan, a vast hoard of at least fifty thousand recovered is probably 'only a fraction of the total'), for these trinkets were (and still are) considered in the Near East as a safeguard against the 'evil eye.'

The use of amulets to ward off evil spirits was widespread, even among the Israelites. Innumerable specimens of them have been found in Mesopotamia and Palestine. Many of them were suspended round the neck and worn over the heart, under the clothing. Some so-called 'idols' (גִּלּוּלִים) were of this nature, a fact which throws light on an obscure passage in Ezekiel ($14^{3.\ 7}$). The text, according to both the Authorized and Revised Versions, speaks of people who take 'idols into their heart,' but the rendering should probably be 'wear idol-charms over their heart' (עַל־לִבָּם). An amulet, in the form of a tablet, recently discovered at Arslan Tash, in the Middle Euphrates region, appears to have been used as such. It contains inscriptions showing that it was specially intended as a prophylactic against nocturnal demons and their terrors, and there is a round hole at the top, with traces of a suspension cord for hanging round the neck.

[1] Cf. 'Le Bon Pasteur, à propos d'une statue de Mari,' in *Mélanges Syriens*, i. 171 ff.