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1923.

THE 655TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, CENTRAL HALL,
WESTMINSTER, S.W., ON MONDAY, MAY 14TH, 1923,

AT 4.30 P.M.

LIEUT.-COLONEL G. MACKINLAY IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read, confirmed and signed, and the HON. SECRETARY announced the election of the following:—

The Rev. Hugh W. White, D.D., and John Charles Grocock, Esq.,
as Associates, and the Rev. Professor J. G. Machen as a Life
Associate.

The CHAIRMAN then introduced Professor T. G. Pinches, LL.D., M.R.A.S.,
to read his Paper on "Assyro-Babylonians and Hebrews—Likenesses and
Contrasts," which was illustrated by lantern slides.

*ASSYRO - BABYLONIANS AND HEBREWS — LIKE-
NESSES AND CONTRASTS.* By PROF. THEOPHILUS G.
PINCHES, LL.D., M.R.A.S.

(With Lantern Illustrations.)

AT what is regarded as a moderate estimate—that is, about 4000 years before Christ—there existed in Babylonia a number of small states, of non-Semitic origin (if we may judge from the language which the people spoke), which the Akkadians—otherwise the Semitic Babylonians—were even then beginning to overrun. These latter people, having assimilated with the old non-Semitic population—supposed to be more or less oblique-eyed Mongolians—became the ancestors of the Babylonians of Abraham's time, and, reinforced by other Semites from farther west—so-called Arabians and the fathers of the Chaldeans on the shores of the Persian Gulf—the forebears of the Babylonians of History.

Such, from the indications of the inscriptions which the Babylonians of all times left in such profusion, is the history of the people of that far-famed land. I need not point out how well this fits in with the indications given us in the tenth chapter of Genesis, which adds the information that their first king, a Cushite, was Nimrod, otherwise Merodach: that has already been repeatedly done. Many would doubtless make the Mongolians a perfectly distinct race from the Cushites, from whom

the Sumerians sprang, but this is not an absolute necessity: the Sumerians were probably the first, or one of the first, of the Turkoman waves of invasion from the far East, but a Semitic wedge from the south-west hindered their further progress, and many another wave of Mongolians, in all probability, would have penetrated to the west, and perhaps have reached Europe, had not the Semitic barrier been reinforced by Aryans from the east—Hittites, Kassites and Persians. We all know how very dense the populations of the farther Asiatic East are, and it seems by no means improbable that this is to a large extent due to the impossibility of their migrating to the west during the centuries when Babylonian power was consolidating itself; and, as we also know, no Mongolians have settled in Europe, except the Huns and the Turks, both of them a comparatively small invasion, now absorbed—the one Aryanized, and the other Semiticized.

During the period preceding the time of Abraham, then, the Babylonian nation was practically formed, and, as is well known, the great Hebrew patriarch and founder of the Israelitish nation dwelt in the plains near the city of Ur of the Chaldees, the Kamarina of Eupolemus and the Mugheir of the Arabs of today. It can hardly be maintained, however, that Abraham or his immediate ancestors were pure Babylonians—this the other patriarchal names in Genesis seem to disprove—but his father, Terah, was (according to Jewish tradition, as related in the Talmud) sufficiently Babylonian to be seduced by the heathen and idolatrous practices of the Babylonians to adopt their polytheistic faith. And in connection with this, it is to be noted, that in that legendary account, the way in which Abraham convinced his father of his error is not only striking in more ways than one, but also amusing.

The family of Abraham, then, we may take it, was not, in its origin, of Babylonian race, but had become Babylonian owing to their having settled in that country. From the time of Abraham onwards, however, the Hebrews held themselves aloof, and the gap between the two nations may be regarded as having widened; for, as we know, more than one nation and several nomadic tribes grew out of that Semitic family which migrated west to Palestine about the twentieth century before Christ.

And here we have, at the very outset of Israel's career as a nation, a picture, in miniature, of their characteristics whilst in the nomad state. This account, moreover, shows what the conditions of life were in Babylonia. In olden times, as now,

Arabs occupied the country parts, where they pastured their flocks and herds, whilst the fixed population occupied the towns, and a proportion of them cultivated the fields, and raised the crops of which the country stood in need. Under the shadow of the great temples of the land, and taught by the priests, the urban population learned the legends and the tenets of Babylonian polytheism, a form of religion which at all times maintained its hold upon them, but which, it may be imagined, had less influence with the pastoral population outside the city walls. Separated for periods, more or less extended, from the influence of their priests and their teaching, one and another shepherd-chief more intelligent than his fellows felt the influence of the Divine power on high, and fell away from Babylon's gross polytheism and its superstitions—just as men break away from the teachings of those regarded as their superiors even now—and struck out an intellectual path of their own.

In the *Journal* of this Institute for 1894 I contributed a paper with a Babylonian list of gods, indicating that there was a tendency to monotheism in Babylonia in ancient times, and influenced (under Divine guidance) by this movement, Abraham may well have turned reformer and destroyed, as the Talmud says, the gods of his father Terah. Here we have, displayed in a very striking way, the great difference between the Babylonians and the Hebrews—the polytheism of the former and the monotheism of the latter—though it cannot be said that there was absolute unanimity of belief in either case, for there were not only polytheists among the Hebrews, but also an extensive circle who admitted the *possibility* of polytheism, just as there was also a belief, more or less pronounced, in the truth of monotheism in Babylonia and Assyria. And in this I have only to mention the not uncommon name of Mordechai “the Merodachite” among the Hebrews, to prove their open-mindedness and liberality of thought with regard to the religion of the Babylonian state.

It is, however, impossible to contend that there was any likeness in the religion of the two peoples—in the main the Hebrews were monotheists, and the Babylonians polytheists. But in such polytheism among the former and such monotheism among the latter as may have existed it is worthy of note, that the Babylonian monotheist was a monotheist because he was a reformer, and believed in all sincerity that he had found a better faith than his fellow-countrymen, whilst the Hebrew polytheist

was probably a pervert, and a man who hankered after heathen mysticism and ceremonies—perhaps also after heathen lasciviousness and sensualism; but these renegades must have belonged to the more undesirable class of the people, just as those inclined in Babylonia to monotheism must have included all that was best in that land of romantic beliefs, of legends, and of gods without number, to say nothing of its kings, and priests, and its men of renown.

In all probability it will be admitted that most of the Semitic nations show an equal amount of imagination-power—a gift which they possessed in common with the Egyptians, whose language seems to have been akin to the Semitic tongues. As to which of the Semitic nations stands out most prominently as the inventor of literary histories and legends, there will in all probability be much difference of opinion; but, owing to the fact that the records of Babylonia and Assyria have been more plentifully preserved than those of any other Semitic nation, a greater quantity of material enabling us to judge has come to light, and the palm of greatest production must, at least provisionally, be given to them.

And to what did they devote their inventive powers? The researches and the discoveries of the last two-thirds of a century show this very fully. It is from Babylon (often through Assyria) that we get the most entertaining fables, the most engaging mythological stories, and the most noteworthy traditions, in some cases half-historical, and probably capable, later on, of being traced to their true historical source. But most noteworthy of all are the Babylonian accounts of the Creation and the Flood, of which from time to time fresh versions continue to come to light.

We all know these versions and their strange and fanciful word-pictures of the events recorded—pictures due to the imagination of their priestly scribes untold centuries before the Christian era, wedded to the more or less crude ideas of the primitive philosophers of those equally remote ages. Let us look for a moment at the events of the Semitic story of the Creation—the version inscribed upon the seven tablets, and of which the first translations were made by that Assyriological pioneer, George Smith. It is the Creation story told so well by the Syrian Damascius in his *Doubts and Solutions of the first Principles*, in which he points out that the Babylonians deny the one principle, and constitute two, Tauthe and Apon, the ocean and the

sea (so I render them roughly, to make a distinction). Dwelling as the Babylonians did in a land of extremes of moisture and drought, they had early realized what scientists now tell us, that there can be no life without moisture. In Palestine, on the other hand, there is a climate more in accordance with what Europeans are accustomed to, and on that account the Hebrews regarded the theories of the Babylonians with regard to the origins of things as unreasonable. This shows that all primitive nations are the creatures of their surroundings and their climatic conditions, not only in the matter of their way of life and the work connected therewith, but also in the matter of their teaching and philosophy in general. The doctrine of the dual principle of the universe was not, however, acceptable to the Jews, who combated it with the monotheistic teaching of the creation of the world which we know so well. In this matter, therefore, the Babylonians and the Hebrews were poles apart. The author to whom I have referred, Nicholas of Damascus, was a neo-Platonist, and studied the Babylonian legends of the Creation to try to find the solutions of the "first principles" to which he had been paying attention. This "first principle" of all things he judged to be "an unfathomable and unspeakable Divine depth, being all in one, but undivided." He, too, it would appear from this, disagreed with the Babylonian view, and upon practically the same grounds as the Hebrews, who point out that it was God who, in the beginning, made heaven and earth.

Notwithstanding untrustworthiness of detail in the Talmudic account of Abraham and his father Terah, there can be but little doubt that that part of the great book of Hebrew tradition reflects correctly the rather meagre details given in Genesis with regard to Abraham's creed at the time when he decided to leave Ur of the Chaldees. The most instructive passage referring to Abraham's faith is that describing the event following the battle of the four kings against five, when the Elamite and Babylonian united forces took Abraham's nephew, Lot, prisoner, and plundered his house. Abraham (as my audience will remember) set out to rescue his relative, and having thrown the allied forces into disorder by a night-attack, succeeded in releasing Lot and recapturing his goods, and then marched home again. On his return he was met by Melchizedek, king of Salem, the priest of 'Ēl-'Elyôn, the "Most High God," the centre of whose worship was probably in this priest-king's capital. Melchizedek on this occasion brought forth his priestly offering

of bread and wine, and blessed Abraham, saying "Blessed be Abraham who (belongeth) to 'El-'Elyôn, possessor of (the) heavens and (the) earth; and blessed be 'El-'Elyôn, who is the deliverer of thine enemies into thine hand." And he gave him tithe of all. The king of Sedom (Sodom) then asked for the persons (apparently those who had been rescued), and told Abraham to take the goods for himself. The Patriarch's answer was: "I have lift up my hand to the Lord, the most high God (*Yahwah* 'El-'Elyôn), the possessor of (the) heavens and the earth, if I take from a thread and even a shoe-latchet, of all that is thine; and thou shalt not say 'I have made Abraham rich.'"

Here we have a distinct identification of 'El-'Elyôn, the most high God, with *Yahwah* (Jehovah), who is specially designated "the possessor of (the) heavens and the earth"—an assertion of the "One Principle" of the universe, in contradistinction to the two, which, as Nicholas of Damascus said in the fifth century of our era, was the belief of the Babylonians.

But the Hebrews did not entirely break off from the Babylonians' beliefs, though they changed (for the better) to the worship of the Deity whom they regarded as the special representatives of monotheism—the worship of *Yahwah* (Jehovah), which, as the Bible says (Gen. iv, 26), was recognized as the name of the Almighty as early as the time of Enos, the grandson of Adam. The Babylonian inscriptions have no traces of this most sacred name before 2000 B.C.—and, indeed, it is doubtful whether it was used even then. The nearest approach to it is *Yawau*^m, in the proper name *Yawau*^mili ("Yawah is (my) god"). In the late transcriptions of Hebrew names having this component the name seems to appear as *Yaawa* or *Yawa* (see the *Transactions of the Victoria Institute* for 1895-6, p. 22). It is noteworthy that the Jews of Babylonia, during the later period, did not conform to the earlier spelling and pronunciation—a circumstance which leads one to suspect that they did not regard the two forms as representing the same name. But this may simply arise from the earlier form having been forgotten.

At the time when Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees, he was naturally a man of the open air—a cattle-keeper, and only in the smallest way a farmer. Now farmers and citizens are equally necessary in every country, and Abraham naturally took up the same occupation when he arrived in Palestine as he and his family had carried on in Babylonia. After the exodus a change in the habits of the Jews of necessity took place, and

the population was divided, as in other countries, into workers on the land and city-dwellers. I do not know whether I am right or not, but I am inclined to think that the population of Palestine, after the entry of the Jews, was more homogeneous than in Babylonia, where there were many more or less nomadic tribes, akin, in their habits and way of life at least, to the Arabs. To these tribal bands the early Chaldean and Aramean clans who settled in Babylonia (apparently during the early Semitic period) probably belonged, and we may imagine that the vanguard of these were the early Semitic Babylonian settlers, some of whom, after their arrival, began to build the Tower of Babel as a rallying-point for their fellow-countrymen and themselves.

It would thus seem that notwithstanding the nomadic instincts of the primitive Semites there came at last the feeling and the tendency to settle down and establish themselves in the land of their adoption, and this is what Abraham's descendants decided to do after the arrival of their great forefather in Palestine. History here repeated itself, and has similarly repeated itself since the arrival of mankind upon the earth.

As, during the time of Abraham and the patriarchs descended from him, the life of the people was more or less nomadic, this naturally offers a strong contrast to the comparatively settled conditions of constitutional government which he had left when he migrated from Babylonia. This nomadic life lasted until the entry into Egypt by Jacob and his sons, and was resumed when the exodus took place. The exodus, however, was a nomadic life with a purpose—the object was to find a new home and adopt the settled conditions of the other nations, not only the Babylonians with whom tradition associated them, but also the settled conditions of the Egyptians in whose country, until after the death of Joseph and the rise of Moses and Aaron, they had lived. Their leaders had thus had the opportunity of studying the system of government in use in Egypt, and it is not improbable that they had been able to compare with it that of Babylonia.

At the time when the Hebrews came out of Egypt, Babylonia was apparently the most advanced Semitic state at that early period. In this state, however, the Sumerians—so-called Cushites and supposed by some, with probability, to have been Mongolians—had been the governing power. When the Semites who had entered the country were sufficiently advanced to take the reins of government, they continued the system initiated by the Sumerians, their predecessors, and this seems to some

extent to have been that adopted by the Hebrews when they acquired their inheritance after the exodus.

And in connection with this, the effect of the invasion and acquisition of Babylonia by what was probably the Arabian dynasty of Berosus—"the dynasty of Babylon" in the records of the Babylonians—has to be considered. The means by which this "Arabian" dynasty attained the supreme power in that wonderful Eastern state north of the Persian Gulf has still to be found out. It is to be noted, however, that the king of this line who identified himself most fully with the people of his house's adopted country was Hammu-rabi, the sixth in succession from Sumu-abi, the founder of the dynasty, and the possible conqueror of the land. Was it Hammu-rabi, Babylonia's earliest Semitic law-giver, who first introduced the idea of the identification of all the great Babylonian gods with Merodach? As we see from the text printed in the *Transactions* of this Institute for 1895, pp. 9-10, *Rev.* line 7, the inscription asserting these identifications was placed behind "the gate of Babylon." Whether this had any signification or not, I am unable to say, but it is to be noted that it may have something to do with the name "Gate of God"—*Ka-dingira*=*Bâb-îli*—which it bore. As is well known, the Hebrews reproduced this name as *Babel*, and translated it "Confusion," because the Lord there confounded the language of its people, who wished impiously to mount, on the great tower which they were building, to heaven. The form *Babilam*,* which is also found, seems to support another rendering than the native *Bâb-îli*, "Gate of God."

Can we see in this a likeness and a comparison—a likeness brought about by nearer kinship—the kinship of these later accessions to the Babylonian race, who, bringing into the land a tendency to monotheism, asserted it in the way above indicated, and thus led to the monotheism of Abraham and his descendants? I make no assertion in the matter, and am content to allow the discoveries of the future to settle the question if it be the will of the Lord of mankind that we should know.

In Babylonia the office of Head of the State, as is well known, was hereditary, but under the king or the viceroy was a host of officials—distinguished, maybe, each in his special sphere, but with a distinction (during the Sumerian period of influence)

* The place-name *Babalam*, which is also found, may be a variant of this.

based, not, apparently, upon learning, nor upon interest in high places, nor upon the advantages of high birth, but upon the shaven crown; upon the fact that they were priests, and as such administrators and well acquainted with the ways of men. Indeed, with the Semites of Babylonia and Assyria, the king was the great high priest and representative of the gods. In Sumerian times, and possibly later, the priests were chosen by oracle, and were probably often invested by the king, as is recorded in a letter of the time of Sennacherib, who performed (or confirmed) the consecrations.

As may be judged from this tendency of the people of the south Mesopotamian Plain, we have here an indication of the characteristic trend of Oriental thought, whether Semitic or (in this case) Sumerian; the strong religious convictions which they possessed, and in which their modern representatives are not one whit behind them. But in order to realize to the full their aspirations in things religious, many orders of priests had been instituted—sacerdotal men of renown, of whom a few stood out with great prominence. One of these in ancient Babylonia, in prehistoric times, was *Enweduranki* (pronounce *Éuedōrançhî*), king of Sippar, a great, “divine,” a royal and priestly ceremonialist who, by the rites which he performed, wrought wonders and miracles, owing to the perfection of his form and the acceptability of his ceremonial acts, and by the offerings which he made to his gods—flour (the representative of bread) and probably wine being, as in the case of Melchizedek, among them. Here, again, is a parallel, but how far there may be a contrast we do not know. Both Melchizedek and *Enweduranki* were prominent personages in their respective states, and the former, as a king ruling under Babylonian protection, must have known of the renown of his aforetime predecessor. Let us picture to ourselves *Enweduranki*. He was probably tall and majestic, and we may also say that his hair (if he had not been clean shaven) was black and his complexion dark. His eyes, too, were dark, and his black eyebrows almost met over his nose. Unless he belonged to an order of bearded priests, he was beardless, and the *gallābu*—the sacerdotal barber—had, by his skill, brought to view the proportions of his (probably) shapely skull. It is not unlikely that he wore white robes, like those of the Babylonians in general according to Herodotus. It was his outer garment, in all probability, which proclaimed his priestly status and rank. This consisted of a mantle of ample extent, held in place by a

simple fastening, and with one side thrown over his left shoulder, leaving his right arm free for whatever movement he found necessary, for it is probable that he had to perform many ritual acts. This outer garment was fringed all the way down the front edge (or edges), and some similar decoration may have adorned the lower edge near the feet also. It is probable that the priests of this early period either went barefoot or wore only sandals.

This picture of *Enweduranki* might well stand also for Melchizedek, who probably conformed to Babylonian sacerdotal fashion. It is not impossible, however, that he dressed like king Hammurabi, wearing a long beard and a thick-brimmed hat. The advent of the so-called "Arabian" dynasty of Babylon must have brought about changes in dress, the more especially as it was a Semitic dynasty.

In this one particular—religious enthusiasm and conviction—there can be no doubt that the Hebrews and the Babylonians were very similar, as I have already indicated; moreover they were both very unwilling to change their creed. Nevertheless, the Jews did not like being different from the nations around them, and it is probably for this reason that they joined in the heathen practices which prevailed among them, thus calling down upon themselves the wrath of their prophets and of their God. It will also be remembered that it was this desire to be like their neighbours which caused them to abandon their more or less republican and theocratic form of government and set up that of a monarchy. My view upon this point will doubtless be looked upon as more or less unorthodox, but it will be better understood and appreciated if I preface it by the statement that in all probability the Jews of the time when the monarchy was set up had in their minds the scandals and the misrule of the times of the Judges, and thought that the dignity inherent in a kingly court would have a counteracting influence—a view which will meet with the approval of all right-minded people even now. But in all this they probably never lost sight of the fact that the God whom they served continually was their King—invisible, but nevertheless their sure refuge and defence whom they could trust in the day of affliction and distress. It was He who had led them out of the captivity of Egypt, and given them the promised land—and that, notwithstanding the improbability that they would ever become its possessors. It was He who led them in the Pillar and in the Cloud, and set up

His abode in the great Temple at Jerusalem—a sacred and a visible presence to those privileged to see.

A theocracy such as this the Babylonians did not, apparently, possess—their religion was polytheistic, with Merodach at its head. Now Merodach was the god of Babylon—the other cities of the state had deities of their own. Thus there was, at Sippar, the sun-god Šamaš, with Ištar or Anunitum; at Cuthah the chief deity was Nergal, god of war and plague (or disease in general); at Larsa (an independent state in the time of IJammu-rabi), Šamaš, the sun-god; at Delmu, the modern Dailem, near Babylon, the god Uraš, who presided over agriculture; and at Nippur (Niffer), Enlil, the older Bel, in the earlier ages, and later En-urta (Ninip), the son of Enlil. It will thus be seen that in Babylonia a theocratic state like that of the Hebrews was an impossibility.

In the case of Assyria, however, other conditions prevailed, for the great god of the land was Aššur, to the exclusion of the deities of the great cities—Nebo at Calah (Nimroud), Nergal at Tarbiši, Ištar at Nineveh and Arbela, etc. I imagine that Assyria was never divided into small states in the same way as Babylonia was, and the city of Aššur, the great centre of the worship of the god of the same name, assumed the position of capital at an early date, and retained it until superseded by Nineveh. By that time the country had become unalterably known as Aššur—that is, Assyria—and every state therein acknowledged Aššur as the great national god, who, like the Hebrew Yahwah, led its armies on to victory. But the likeness seems to have ended there, for whilst the Hebrews were strongly monotheistic, the Assyrians were polytheists, notwithstanding any leaning there may have been in later times to monotheism under the tendency to that creed which existed in Babylonia.

LITERARY COMPARISONS.

Of special interest in this branch of my subject is the legend of the sea-monster Rahab, in the Book of Job and elsewhere in the Old Testament. In this, it is thought, we have a Hebrew version of the Babylonian version of the fight between Bel and the Dragon—Merodach and Tiawath (as Tiamat was undoubtedly pronounced) in the wedge-formed characters of Babylonia and Assyria.

Describing the power of God, Job says (ix, 12):—

“ Behold, He seizeth, who can hinder Him ?
 Who will say unto Him, What doest Thou ?
 God will not withdraw His anger,
 The helpers of Rahab* stooped under Him.
 How much less shall I answer Him,
 And choose out my words *to reason* with Him ?
 Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not
 answer ;
 I would make supplication to mine adversary.”

(In the Babylonian legend, Tiawath (=Rahab) was not altogether silent before Merodach, the king of the gods, for she sought to enlist the fates in her favour by uttering incantations and charms ; but her followers, the rebellious gods, were silent. How much less, therefore, should Job answer the God whom he worshipped ?)

Job xxvi, 12 :

“ He stirreth up the sea with His power,
 And by His understanding He smiteth through Rahab.”

(In the Babylonian Creation-story, Merodach pierced Tiawath with his spear preparatory to dividing her and constituting with the two halves of her body the “ waters above the firmament ” and the sea, which constituted those below on the earth. With the Babylonians it was apparently thus that the dry land, the abode of men and animals which dwelt thereon, was made to appear.)

This legend of Rahab is not confined, however, to the Book of Job, but references to the great sea-monster appear in other books of the Old Testament. Thus is Ps. lxxxix, 9-10, we find the following words:—

“ Thou rulest the pride of the sea ;
 When the waves thereof arise, Thou stillest them.
 Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain ;
 Thou hast scattered Thine enemies with the arm of Thy
 strength.”

* The Septuagint has κήτη, “ sea-monsters.”

In this passage Rahab is regarded as standing for Egypt, and doubtless a reference to the crossing by the Israelites of the Red Sea, which, for their passage, was divided into two parts. On the occasion of their exodus, however, the Egyptians suffered, for the Pharaoh and his army is said to have been overwhelmed by the returning waters. The same identification of Rahab with Egypt occurs in Ps. lxxxvii, 4, which says :

“ I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon as among them that know Me.”

Both Egypt and Babylonia realized the power of the God of Israel, hence, apparently, this coupling of the two together. That the crossing of the Red Sea is referred to when Rahab is mentioned in connection with Egypt is supported by that remarkable passage in Isaiah, where the prophet calls upon the arm of the Lord to awake and put on strength : for was it not that which cut Rahab in pieces and pierced the dragon—which dried up the sea, and made of its waters a way for the redeemed to pass over ? In Isaiah, xxx, 7, Yahwah gives the reason why Egypt was called Rahab—it was because Egypt helped in vain and to no purpose ; she was “ Rahab that sitteth still ”—the dead sea-monster, half in the heavens and half on the earth. In the Talmud, Rahab is described as *sar ha-yām*, “ master of the sea,” and it is noteworthy that in this description *sar* is masculine, showing how the idea of strength had influenced the writer to change the gender.

In this legend of the great dragon of Chaos, whom the Hebrews called Rahab, and the Assyrians and Babylonians Tiawath, we have a literary subject offering both comparisons and contrasts. In the Babylonian Creation stories Merodach is the one who pierced the dragon of Chaos, but in the Old Testament it was Yahwah ; He, however, was regarded as having pierced her when the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, and not at the Creation. Nevertheless, the Babylonian legend which makes Merodach the piercer of the Dragon points to the possibility that Yahwah was also regarded in that light (at the Creation) by the Hebrews at some early period, and suggests that Mordechai became a Hebrew name owing to the identification of Merodach with Yahwah.

Notwithstanding all that has been written, and the supposed parallels which have been made, I cannot say that I find many likenesses between the Hebrew and the Babylonian accounts of

the Creation; indeed, I have long been of opinion that the one was written to refute the other—the Hebrew account of the Creation to put forward something less childish, and therefore more reasonable, than that of the Babylonians. As I have already pointed out, it is the “one principle” of the universe against the Babylonian theory of two principles—that philosophical theory of a single transcendent god ruling and governing the universe and all creation.

And belonging to the account of the Creation there is naturally the description of Paradise. With the Hebrews, Paradise was apparently a distant land—“eastward in Eden.” There is more than one eastern district which might be identified therewith, but as space is limited I confine myself to the question of its identification with Babylonia, which has a claim to be regarded as the tract in question far outweighing that of the others. In this paper, therefore, “eastward in Eden” means “eastward in the Babylonian plain”—the native country of the Babylonians, which they thought of as the blissful abode of the first of men—the man with whom time may be said to have begun; and they probably imagined, that their land might possibly again become the Garden of the Blest when the gods should have made up the number of their elect. Being a distant country, the Hebrews thought of Paradise as the place of the four rivers, the identification of which has caused so much trouble to commentators, and which are not satisfactorily located even now. For the Babylonians, however, the “four rivers” were four of the renowned canals of southern Babylonia, near the point where tradition located the Paradise-city Êridu:—

“ (In) Êridu a dark vine grew,
 In a holy place it was brought to view;
 Its substance bright was lapis white,*
 Which to the Deep† extended quite.
 In Êridu lord Hea’s path
 The fulness of abundance hath;
 His seat’s the place of mid-earth’s floor,
 With couch the chamber of Engur.‡

* Blue and white lapis-lazuli, the white portions suggesting clouds in the sky. This fine stone seems in a very special way to have been sacred to Tammuz.

† The Persian Gulf.

‡ The god of the ocean-depth.

In his holy house, which is like a wood,
 Doth pleasant shadow ever brood ;
 To its midst is no-one led.
 Shamash-Tammuz dwells therein,
 Between the mouths of rivers twin :—
 The Spring of abundance, the Mouth of the same ;
 The Spring of Perfection, the Mouth of like name ;
 The Stream in whose Spring and whose Mouth there is
 Life ;
 And then yet another with Freedom from Strife.
 The Vine of Êridu they keep—
 The spell they utter of the Deep—
 He hath set it by the sick man's head.”*

(That is, a cutting of the Vine of Êridu was placed by the sick man's head ; and in the text here paraphrased, the Incantation of the Deep—or of Êridu—immediately follows.)

But of all the series of legends revealed by Babylonian literature, that which agreed most closely with the Hebrew narrative is the story of the Flood. This has been treated of many times, and it is therefore at present only needful to point out the contrasts and the likenesses. To begin with, the differences in the name of the hero of the Flood are striking. The Hebrews spoke of him as Noah, “rest” ; the Babylonians called him Ut-napišti^m, “the expectant of life,” otherwise Atra-basis, “the exceedingly wise,” and Zi-û-suddu, “the life of extended days,” or the like. In the Hebrew account the Patriarch and

* The names in this metrical reproduction of the Assyro-Babylonian text are naturally paraphrased. In the original they appear as follows :—

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Ka-hengala</i> | <i>Igi-hengala ;</i> |
| <i>Ka-na-ab-ul</i> | <i>Igi-na-ab-ul ;</i> |
| <i>Ka-ba-ni-namtila</i> | <i>Igi-bi-šu-namtila ;</i> |
| <i>Ka-ba-ni-silima</i> | <i>Igi-bi-šu-silima.</i> |

These are given in the list published in *Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets*, xxiv, pl. 29, and apparently appear in their fullest form. The incantation giving the description of Paradise and its Vine seems to have had the names of three rivers (or canals) only, and in the oldest version (which has yet to be found) may have had only two. Each of the above names may have been preceded by the word *hid*, “waterway,” which is the first syllable of the Biblical *Hiddekel*. *Silim* in the last two names is derived from the Semitic *salimu*, “to be at peace and prosperous,” hence the rendering “Freedom from Strife.” For further details, see the *Expository Times*, March, 1918, p. 288.

the God whom he worshipped are the only characters mentioned. As to the God of the Hebrews, we all know His name (or names) well, but in the Babylonian narrative the deities are numerous, and the intrigue of their rivalries shows up the defects of a polytheistic creed in all its undesirableness. In this version it is the gods of the Babylonian city of Šuripak—apparently an ancient Sumerian foundation—who decide to make a Flood and destroy all life from the face of the earth. These deities were Anu, the god of the heavens; Enlila or Illil, the god of the earth—uncompromising and austere; En-urta, son of En-lila, the god of vegetation and of precious and semi-precious stones; and En-nugi, the *guzalū* or thronebearer of En-lila. It was apparently a little group of Enlil's sympathizers who, jealous for him of the glory of Merodach as the creator of living things, decided to destroy them. There is doubt as to the reading of one of the words of the next line—whether it is to be read *tame-ma* or *tašib-ma*. As, with the present interpretation, *tašib* seems to be preferable, this line should apparently be rendered “Nin-igi-azaga” (“the lord of the bright eye,” one of the appellations of Éa, god of the sea and of deep wisdom) sat with them, and repeated their decision to the earth (saying) “Earth, earth, town, town! Earth, hear, and town, understand!” Having done this, the father of the creator of living things proceeds to warn Ut-napišti^m, the Babylonian Noah, of the impending doom.

With regard to the other incidents of the narrative, the version translated by the late George Smith in 1872 (which is the most perfect known) describes how the vessel was completed and freighted with the necessary provisions; and in a few lines the nature of the possessions which Ut-napišti^m conveyed therein, with his family and relations, the beasts and animals of the fields, and the artificers—apparently those who had aided in the building of the ship—is indicated. There is a good description of the coming of the storm, in the midst of which Hadad (Rimmon) thundered, and many a god of the Babylonian pantheon took part. Ištar lamented the destruction of life on the earth, as did also “the Lady of the gods,” Maḫ or Aruru, who, with Merodach, had created mankind. The storm lasted seven days, and the Babylonian Noah then waited another seven for the waters to subside, during which time three birds (instead of the Biblical two) were sent forth. As the third (the raven) was able to wade, Ut-napišti^m judged that the earth was dry enough for human habitation, and, sending forth the animals, landed himself,

built an altar on the peak of the mountain, and offered a sacrifice to the gods. Enlil, the god hostile to man, lays upon the god Êa the blame for revealing to Ut-napišti^m the decision of the gods to destroy mankind by drowning them, but Êa denies it. He admits, however, that he caused Ut-napišti^m to see a dream, and in that dream he apparently found himself in the council-chamber of the gods, and able to learn what they had decided to do. This is not in accordance with the details in the earlier portions of the narrative, in which Êa tells the Patriarch to destroy (or forsake) his house and build a ship; but as he is also told to inform the people that he was going to dwell with Êa, his lord, and nothing is said about the Flood, there is really no contradiction in the statement. The apotheosis of Ut-napišti^m and his wife, however, presents a totally different ending from the account of the Flood in Genesis; and when the god takes them to himself, he makes true the statement which he had directed the Babylonian Noah to give to those who, before the coming of the waters, should ask him why he built the ship. The place where the Patriarch was to dwell lay "afar at the mouths of the rivers"—those sacred canals which flowed into the Persian Gulf. It is only to be noted that this is in accordance with the account of the Flood as related, from the Babylonian records, by Alexander Polyhistor, who says that when Xisuthrus (=Ut-napišti^m) asked whither he was to sail, the deity answered "To the gods." In Genesis, on the other hand, Noah lived 350 years after the great catastrophe—a total of 950 years in all.

But it is time to draw these inadequate notes to an end, notwithstanding that much more could be said upon the contrasts and the likenesses between the Babylonians, the Hebrews, and their records, not only from the religious point of view, but also from that of history, manners and customs. It might also be shown how both nationalities were equally brave; how the Babylonians were equally virtuous, moral and law-abiding. Points upon which they differed would be such things as the laws which they obeyed, the social customs and the family relations which prevailed amongst them, and the differing national characteristics brought about by the differing climatic conditions in which they lived. But climatic conditions were not the only causes of the differences existing between these two nations of the same race. There was also the fact of the admixture of other races—the Sumerians in the case of Babylonia, and the Armenians of the north in the case of Assyria. In addition to

this, however, the geographical conformation of their respective countries stood for something, and many things combined to produce the legends and the traditions upon which their differing national characteristics were based, and by which the Palestinian and the Mesopotamian nationalities in general acted and reacted upon each other.

Among the pictures shown were types of the Sumerians and Akkadians (Semitic Babylonians), the remains of the temple tower at Ur of the Chaldees, the Babylonian gods, the wild looking man and woman (Adam and Eve ?), hunting wild animals, the Creation and Flood tablets, including that giving the cause of toothache, ploughs with seeding tubes, Merodach fighting with the dragon, and several others of equal interest.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN then proposed a hearty vote of thanks to Prof. Pinches for his most valuable paper, the culmination of a series before the Victoria Institute which he began nearly thirty years ago. This was warmly carried by acclamation.

The CHAIRMAN, in opening the discussion, said :—In comparing the Assyro-Babylonians and the Hebrews we remember that Abraham, the great ancestor of the latter, came out of Ur of the Chaldees, and this fact seems to have borne fruit in the resemblance of the laws of Khamurab with those divinely promulgated by Moses. Note, for instance, the command against removing a neighbour's landmark in both (*see* Deut. xix, 14 ; xxvii, 17 ; Prov. xxii, 28 ; xxiii, 10) and compare with them the curses inscribed in actual Babylonian boundary stones, now in the British Museum, against any one who should move them. The resemblance of the narrative of the flood in the Bible and in the Babylonian records also dates from about this time.

The Egyptians had a great influence on the Hebrews, demonstrated by the fact that at the end of this bondage, idolatry had great prevalence among the latter, as witnessed by the worship of the golden calf. The Hebrews long continued to practise idolatry, copied from the neighbouring nations, until the time of the Kings, when they were punished by the Babylonian captivity, from which Judah only returned.

Though the Babylonians were idolators, the Scripture record tells us of the *faithfulness* of the captive men of Judah under severe temptations, witness Daniel, Shadrack, Meshach, and Abednego. After their return to their own country in the times of Ezra and Nehemiah it appears that the Hebrews had learnt their lesson and they were then a practically monotheistic nation.

Babylon was throughout polytheistic, as Prof. Pinches tells us, but the chief influence it exerted upon the Hebrews was caused by its riches and luxury. As early as the time of Joshua we read that Achan coveted and stole a goodly Babylonian garment, some silver, and a wedge of gold (Josh. vii, 21); and more than seven hundred years afterwards, King Hezekiah ostentatiously displayed his riches and treasures to the envoys of the King of Babylon (2 Kings xx, 12-19; 2 Chron. xxxii, 31); while nearly eight hundred years later still, we find that Babylon is referred to as representative of luxury and wicked worldliness (Rev. xvi, 19, xvii, 5). The Hebrews apparently followed the Babylonians in these vices, as far as they had opportunity.

The CHAIRMAN then drew attention to some pictures and a long column in the *Times* of that day, describing recent archæological discoveries in Mesopotamia, and expressing the opinion that many more will probably be made during the next few years. The CHAIRMAN expressed a hope that Prof. Pinches would keep the Victoria Institute informed of all these new discoveries in the Ancient Land of Babylon.

Mr. SIDNEY COLLETT said:—I am sure we must all feel grateful to Dr. Pinches for his learned and interesting lecture. Indeed, we always listen to him with profit.

There are, however, one or two things in the paper which call for comment.

On page 191, the Lecturer says:—"The Jews of the time, when the Monarchy was set up, had in their minds the scandal and misrule of the times of the Judges, and thought that the dignity inherent in a Kingly Court would have a counteracting influence."

Now, this view is not borne out by Scripture. For in 1 Sam. viii, 6, we read: "*the thing displeased Samuel when they said, give us a King.*" And then in verse 7 God Himself said: "*they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.*"

Then on page 192, when he speaks of "the legend of the sea monster, Rahab, in the Book of Job." It would have been better had he said : "the *reference* in the Book of Job to the legend of the sea monster," etc. Indeed, as Dr. Pinches himself shows, on page 194, Rahab in Scripture more than once refers to *Egypt*. So that it may be questioned whether in this passage the "Babylonian legend" is referred to at all.

Also, on page 195, I cannot agree with the lecturer when he says that "The Hebrew account of Creation was given in order to refute the Babylonian Account." No doubt, incidentally, it did have that effect, as all Scripture Truth corrects all unscriptural errors. But, surely, it had a far wider purpose than that ; and would have been written as the commencement of Holy Scripture, even if no Babylonian account had ever existed.

Mr. AVERY FORBES pointed out, with regard to the view of monotheism found in the earlier history of the Babylonians, Assyrians, and other ancient nations, that there was a remarkable similarity of name in the mythical founder of, or the chief deity worshipped by, several nations, far apart, and with little or nothing else in common. Thus the earliest Egyptians were said to have been monotheistic, and their first mythical King was called *Menes*. The Hindus derive many of their caste laws from *Manu*, a mythical son of Brahma. The Greeks had two mythical Kings, descendants of Zeus, named *Minos*. Tacitus, in his *Germania*, tells us that the German nation looked on *Mannus* as their divine founder. The North American Indians call their supreme deity *Manito* (*vide Hiawatha*). Does not this seem to point to a common origin and a common monotheism for the human race ?

Mr. THEODORE ROBERTS thought some of the objections raised by previous speakers were founded upon misconceptions of the paper. In particular, he instanced Mr. Collett's with regard to the Israelites desiring a king. No doubt this was well intentioned, but was only a makeshift consequent upon the failure of the people to realize the ideal theocracy which God had provided for them. The same kind of thing had happened in much later times when the breakdown of the ideal presented in Scripture had led people to have recourse to human arrangements not sanctioned by God.

He thought the lecturer on page 184 had implied that the Hebrews had been monotheists from earliest times.

He was struck with what he might call the restraint of inspiration found in Genesis as contrasted with the fanciful accounts of creation and the flood which the lecturer had given us from the Babylonian tablets. He asked how was it that the Biblical records had eschewed all these unscientific and ridiculous particulars unless it was that their writing was controlled by divine inspiration.

Mr. **HOSTE** remarked that the Genesis account of the Noachian Deluge was popularly believed by the Neo-Critics to be a composite narrative from sources P and J combined by some Redactor. This editor was so slovenly in his methods that instead of assimilating his authorities and producing a succinct and unified account, as an ordinary historian would, used scissors and paste-pot and produced a composite account, which the Critics profess to be able to dissect into its component parts. Mr. Hoste asked the lecturer whether it was not a fact that the Chaldean account of the Deluge, deciphered in 1872 by George Smith, tallies to all intents and purposes, names and numbers excepted, with our Genesis account, so much so that we are told by the Critics, that the latter must have been derived from it. It is rather difficult to see how the same account can be at once a composite from P and J and directly derived from the Chaldean account. Would not this rather tend to discredit the Critical theory? Is it not more likely that the Hebrew and Chaldean accounts represent, the one, the original, pure, monotheistic narration, and the other the corrupted polytheistic tradition of the same events?

Who can get a clean thing out of an unclean—monotheism out of polytheism? No, monotheism corrupts into polytheism, and polytheism refines into pantheism.

Mr. **EDMUND KIMBER** said:—On the whole I think Dr. Pinches' excellent discoveries and interpretations corroborate the Biblical history of the Creation of the world and of the Deluge. Of course, there are critics among us who see a divergence between the First and Second Chapters of Genesis. I don't. Substantially they agree and must be read together, and we must put upon them the "best construction" just as all lawyers and judges do upon our Acts of Parliament. "We continue to act," as Burke said, "upon the early received and the uniformly continued sense of mankind." We might just as well say the landing of Julius Cæsar in these

islands in 55 B.C., or of William the Conqueror, about 1,000 years afterwards, was legendary, as to say the Biblical story was legendary. There is nothing to contradict it and there are many things to corroborate it. Take the first two verses of the First Chapter of Genesis where we are told that "in the beginning the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." What more beautiful and what more natural? How came the historian or chronicler to write this? Who saw it? Who told him of it? How did he know the face of the waters moved or that the Spirit of God moved thereon? The witness did not see the Spirit but he saw the surface move and ripple, and wondered how it was caused. He could see nothing except the water undulating. He found that it did so in obedience to the invisible wind which was set in motion by an unseen Power, and he was forced to the conclusion that it must be the "Spirit of God." It is impossible to get over this sublime incident in the Creation of the World, and to deny that the Hand that made it as well as the Story are Divine.

Lieut.-Colonel RIACH desired to associate himself with the questions which had been put and inquired further whether any remains now exist which might be thought to be those of the Tower of Babel, also whether any authority is known for the statement that the purpose of the tower was to reach heaven.

DR. PINCHES' REPLY.

Dr. PINCHES expressed his thanks to the Chairman for his kind and appreciative words, and the further instances, illustrating in such an interesting way the subject under discussion. He was glad that his paper comparing the Babylonians and the Hebrews had met with Col. Mackinlay's approval, and he was all the more gratified because, when he came to write it, he (the author) found that he was doing it upon somewhat different lines, and in a less interesting way than he had at first contemplated. He hopes, therefore, that, notwithstanding its defects, it will appeal to most of the members of the *Victoria Institute* as a contribution (though possibly an imperfect one) to a very important branch of Biblical study. It is needless to say, that this contrast between the Babylonians and the Hebrews might have been greatly extended, but

time and space failed for a longer paper upon the subject than that which the lecturer had just read.

After denying the implication by Mr. Sidney Collett that he (the lecturer) had substituted unorthodox and unscriptural explanations of certain Biblical statements, the lecturer said that he had not been able, during the course of the discussion, to verify the passages referred to, but that, if he found anything undoubtedly wrong, he would make the necessary changes in his paper before it went to press. The author then thanked all those who had taken part in the discussion, and thus added interest to the subject dealt with. He was greatly interested in the pictures from the *Times* placed on the table by the Chairman. He had not been able to examine these pictures, which were not over-well reproduced. He hoped, however, to be able to refer to them later on.

He has sent the following replies to the points raised in the course of the discussion :—

I am sorry that Mr. Collett did not add my qualifying words “in all probability” to the quotation from p. 191 with which he found fault. In these circumstances I do not see that I have stated any unorthodox view, especially as (so it seems to me) more than one reason for desiring a king may have existed. In the matter of the sea-monster, Rahab, the question may be asked, “Are there no ‘legends’ in the Bible?” Analysing my feelings at the time of writing, I think I can say, that I hesitated to identify Yahwah with Merodach, notwithstanding that the Jews (or certain of them) seem to have had no scruples in the matter.

The names quoted by Mr. Avery Forbes are exceedingly interesting, but the question naturally arises whether the likenesses between them may not be merely coincidences. The names quoted, moreover, are not all divine, as Mr. Forbes justly states. The Hebrews seem to have revered a god of fate named Meni, possibly identical with the *Manû rabû* of the mythological lists of Babylonia. He is described as *ša mâmitu isbat-su*, “whom the oath took,” pointing to some interesting legend concerning him which has yet to be discovered.

I am not only gratified, but I am also much struck by Mr. Theodore Roberts’ remarks. The probability that the Hebrews had failed to realize the ideal theocracy is an excellent suggestion. Mr. Roberts is also right upon another point, namely, that I regard

the Hebrews as having been monotheists from the first moment of their national existence. His final paragraph is also most noteworthy.

In answer to our Secretary, Mr. Hoste, I am glad to be able to confirm his suggestions. It is a fact that the Hebrew account of the Flood agrees, in all essential points, with that current in ancient Babylonia, names, numbers, and religious element excepted. This would naturally tend to discredit the theories of the higher critics. To all appearance there was a common source for both, and each nation developed it in a different way—monotheistically in the case of the Hebrews, and polytheistically in the case of the Babylonians.

All will, I am sure, regard Mr. Edmund Kimber's well-expressed remarks as most appropriate. Though the Babylonian story of the Creation differs entirely from that of the Hebrews, they, too, were influenced by the sight of the waters which broke in surf on their southern shores, and attributed its motion, as well as the varied and wonderful life which it contained, to divine power and activity, though, being polytheists, they treated the subject in an entirely different way.

In answer to Col. Riach it is to be noted that only the core of the real Tower of Babel at present exists, the upper portion having been destroyed in ancient times, and the burnt brick outer covering of the lowest platform, which gave it its solidity, having (so it is said) been removed for building purposes quite recently. As, however, Borsippa (the Birs Nimroud) was called by the Babylonians "the 2nd Babylon," this gives a certain confirmation to the tradition, that that building was "the Tower of Babel." This view, however, could only have been put forward as a serious identification in later times, when Ê-temenan-ki, as the true Tower was called, was no longer the centre of Babylonian worship owing to the abandonment of the fanes and the shrines in the capital.

The New Discoveries at Ur.

Referring to the pictures from the *Times* of this date shown by Col. Mackinlay, the headless diorite statue of En-anna-tum, king of Ur and Lagaš about 2900 B.C., is quite in the Sumerian style of the period. Architects will probably be interested in the "chamber reserved for private worship" in the Temple of the Moongod Sin or Nannar at Ur in the time of Nebuchadrezzar. As is usual in Babylonian buildings, it was of brick, and paved with tiles. The altar,

offering-table, and a portion described as a screen are shown. The other pictures show an inscribed clay cone like a gigantic nail—it details the architectural works of Rîm-Sin, king of Larsa (Ellasar) and Ur (about 1850 B.C.), and beside it is an inscribed pivotstone from one of the gates of the sacred precinct at Ur. This is inscribed with the name of Bûr-Sin, king of Ur about 2225 B.C.

There is hardly any doubt that numerous other antiquities and inscriptions will, in course of time, be found in Babylonia, and much bearing upon the Old Testament and its wonderful story may still be expected.