

THE BOOK OF EXODUS.

CHAPTER I.

Exodus i.

1 Now these are the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt : every man and his household came with Jacob.

2 Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah,

3 Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin,

4 Dan, and Naphtali, Gad and Asher.

5 And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls : for Joseph was in Egypt *already*.

15 ¶ And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one *was* Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah :

16 And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and they bare a son, then ye shall kill him ; but if it *be* a daughter, then she shall live.

17 But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive.

18 And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing and have saved the men children alive ?

19 And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them :

20 Therefore God dealt well with the midwives : and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty.

21 And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.

22 And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.

THE Book of Exodus or the Departure, so called because of the escape of the children of Israel from the land of Egypt, and their wanderings in the wilderness for forty years, are herein recalled.

The unparalleled multiplication of the children of Israel renewed Pharaoh's anxiety especially as the Israelites were very large and strong as compared with the Egyptians, and their numbers were computed to double every fourteen years. Hence their multitude and power grew more formidable day by day in the eyes of the Egyptians, though they feared their presence, yet as their labors added greatly to the wealth of the nation, they were unwilling to let them go. Pharaoh hoped by making their daily tasks much harder and killing all the male children at birth, they would be so crippled and dispirited that there would be no danger of rebellion against his government.

For a list of the seventy souls, turn to Genesis, chapter xlvi, where Dinah, Jacob's daughter, and Sarah, Asher's daughter, are mentioned among the seventy souls. It is certainly curious that there should have been only two daughters to sixty-eight sons. But perhaps the seventy souls refer only to sons, and the daughters are merely persons, not souls. It is not an uncommon idea with many nations that women have no souls. A missionary to China tells of a native who asked him why he preached the Gospel to women. "To save their souls, to be sure." "Why," said he, "women have no souls." "Yes they have," said the missionary. When the thought dawned on the Chinaman that it might be true, he was greatly amused, and said, "Well, I'll run home and tell my wife she has a soul, and we will sit down and laugh together." We find at many points that the Bible does not reckon women as souls. It may be that because there is no future for them is the reason why they punish them here more severely than they do men for the same crimes. Here it is plainly asserted that all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy in number. The meaning conveyed may be that the man supplies the spirit and intellect of the race, and woman the body only. Some late writers take this ground. If so, the phraseology would have been more in harmony with the idea, if the seventy souls had emanated, Minerva-like, from the brain of father Jacob, rather than from his loins.

The children of Israel multiplied so rapidly that Pharaoh became alarmed, lest the nation should become mightier than the Egyptians, so he ordered all the males at birth to be slain. To this end he had a private interview with the midwives, two women, Shiphrah and Puah, and laid his commands upon them. But they did not obey his orders, and excused themselves on the ground that the Jewish women seldom needed their services. Here we have another example of women who "feared God," and yet used deception to accomplish what they deemed right.

The Hebrew God seemed to be well pleased with the de-

ception, and gave them each a house for their fidelity in saving the lives of his chosen children. Such is the plain English of the story. Origen ascribes a deep spiritual meaning to these passages, as more recent writers and speakers do, making the whole Bible a collection of symbols and allegories, but none of them are complimentary to our unfortunate sex. Adam Clarke says if we begin by taking some parts of the Scriptures figuratively we shall soon figure it all away. Though the midwives in their comfortable homes enjoyed the approbation of God, Pharaoh was not to be thwarted by their petty excuses, so he ordered his own people to cast into the river every Jewish boy that was born. We are so accustomed to the assumption that men alone form a nation, that we forget to resent such texts as these. Surely daughters in freedom could perpetuate family and national pride and honor, and if allowed to wed the men of their choice, their children would vindicate their ancestral dignity. The greatest block to advancing civilization all along the line has been the degradation of woman. Having no independent existence, no name, holding no place of honor or trust, being mere subjects in the family, the birth of a son is naturally considered more important than a daughter, as the one inherits because of sex all the rights and privileges denied the other.

Shiphrah and Puah, Aben Ezra tells us, were probably at the head of their profession, and instructed others in the science of obstetrics. At this time there were five hundred midwives among the Hebrews. This branch of the profession was, among the Egyptians, also in the hands of the women. Statistics show that the ratio of deaths among mothers and children at birth was far less than when under male supervision exclusively.

Moses spent the first forty years of his life in Egypt, the next forty with Jethro his father in law, and the next forty wandering in the wilderness. One writer said the Lord must have buried Moses, and no one ever knew where. There is no record of the burial place of Moses. As his life had been surrounded with mysteries, perhaps to verify his providential guidance in that long journey in the wilderness, he chose

to surround his death also with mystery, and arranged with members of the priesthood to keep his last resting place a profound secret. He was well versed in all the law and mythology of the Egyptians, and intended the people should no doubt think that Jehovah had taken the great leader to himself. For the purpose of controlling his followers in that long journey through the wilderness, he referred all his commands and actions to Jehovah. Moses declared that he met him face to face on Mount Sinai, veiled in a cloud of fire, received minute instructions how to feed and conduct the people, as well as to minister to their moral and spiritual necessities. In order to enforce his teachings, he said the ten commandments were written on tablets of stone by Jehovah himself, and given into his hands to convey to the people, with many ordinances and religious observances, to be sacredly kept. In this way the Jewish religion and the Mosaic code were established.

As these people had no written language at that time, and could neither read nor write, they were fitting subjects for all manner of delusions and superstitions. The question naturally suggests itself to any rational mind, why should the customs and opinions of this ignorant people, who lived centuries ago, have any influence in the religious thought of this generation?

E. C. S.

CHAPTER II.

Exodus ii.

1 And there went a man of the house of Levi and took to *wife* a daughter of Levi.

2 And the woman bare a son: and when she saw that he *was* a goodly *child*, she hid him three months.

3 And when she could not longer hide him she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid *it* in the flags by the river's brink.

4 And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him.

5 ¶ And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash *herself* at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side: and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it.

6 And when she had opened *it*, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This *is one* of the Hebrews' children.

7 Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?

8 And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother.

9 And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give *thee* thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it.

10 And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.

15 But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well.

16 Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters: and they came and drew *water*, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock.

17 And the shepherds came and drove them away: but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock.

18 And when they came to Reuel their father, he said, How *is it that* ye are come so soon to day?

19 And they said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and also drew *water* enough for us, and watered the flock.

20 And he said unto his daughters, And where *is* he? why *is it that* ye have left the man? call him, that he may eat bread.

21 And Moses was content to dwell with the man: and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter.

22 And she bare *him* a son, and he called his name Gershon: for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land.

THE account of the birth of Moses, his mother's anxiety in protecting him from the wrath of Pharaoh, and the goodness of the king's daughter, make altogether an interesting story, and is almost the first touch of sentiment with which the historian has refreshed us; a pleasant change from the continued accounts of corruption, violence, lust, war and petty falsehood, that have thus far marked the history of this people. The only value of these records to us is to show the character of the Jewish nation, and make it easy for us to reject their ideas as to the true status of woman, and their pretension of being guided by

the hand of God, in all their devious wanderings. Surely such teachings as these, should have no influence in regulating the lives of women in the nineteenth century. Moses' conduct towards the seven daughters of the priest at the well, shows that there were some sparks of chivalry here and there in a few representative souls, notwithstanding the contempt for the sex in general. These Hebrew wooings and weddings were curiously similar, alike marked for the beauty and simplicity of the daughters of the land, the wells, the flocks, the handsome strangers, the strong, active young men who will prove so helpful in cultivating the lands. The father-in-law usually gets the young husband completely under his thumb, and we hear nothing of the dreaded mother-in-law of the nineteenth century. If we go through this chapter carefully we will find mention of about a dozen women, but with the exception of one given to Moses, all are nameless. Then as now names for women and slaves are of no importance; they have no individual life, and why should their personality require a life-long name? To-day the woman is Mrs. Richard Roe, to-morrow Mrs. John Doe, and again Mrs. James Smith according as she changes masters, and she has so little self-respect that she does not see the insult of the custom. We have had in this generation one married woman in England, and one in America, who had one name from birth to death, and though married they kept it. Think of the inconvenience of vanishing as it were from your friends and correspondents three times in one's natural life.

In helping the children of Israel to escape from the land of Egypt the Lord said to Moses:

Exodus iii.

19 ¶ And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand.

20 And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go.

21 And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty:

22 But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put *them* upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.

The role assigned the women, in helping the children of

Israel to escape in safety from bondage, is by no means complimentary to their heroism or honesty. To help bear the expenses of the journey, they were instructed to steal all the jewels of silver and gold, and all the rich raiment of the Egyptian ladies. The Lord and Moses no doubt went on the principle that the Israelites had richly earned all in the years of their bondage. This is the position that some of our good abolitionists took, when Africans were escaping from American bondage, that the slaves had the right to seize horses, boats, anything to help them to Canada, to find safety in the shadow of the British lion. Some of our pro-slavery clergymen, who no doubt often read the third chapter of Exodus to their congregations, forgot the advice of Moses, in condemning the abolitionists; as the Americans had stolen the African's body and soul, and kept them in hopeless bondage for generations—they had richly earned whatever they needed to help them to the land of freedom. Stretch the principle of natural rights a little further, and ask the question, why should women, denied all their political rights, obey laws to which they have never given their consent, either by proxy or in person? Our fathers in an inspired moment said, "No just government can be formed without the consent of the governed."

Women have had no voice in the canon law, the catechisms, the church creeds and discipline, and why should they obey the behests of a strictly masculine religion, that places the sex at a disadvantage in all life's emergencies?

Our civil and criminal codes reflect at many points the spirit of the Mosaic. In the criminal code we find no feminine pronouns, as "He," "His," "Him," we are arrested, tried and hung, but singularly enough, we are denied the highest privileges of citizens, because the pronouns "She," "Hers" and "Her," are not found in the constitutions. It is a pertinent question, if women can pay the penalties of their crimes as "He," why may they not enjoy the privileges of citizens as "He"?

E. C. S.

CHAPTER III.

Exodus iv.

18 ¶ And Moses went and returned to Jethro his father in law, and said unto him, let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren which are in Egypt, and see whether they be yet alive. And Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace.

19 And the Lord said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life.

20 And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand.

21 And the Lord said unto Moses, when thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all

those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go.

22 And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, *even* my firstborn:

23 And I say unto thee, let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, *even* thy firstborn:

24 ¶ And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the Lord met him, and sought to kill him.

25 Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and circumcised her son.

26 So he let him go.

WHEN Moses married Zipporah he represented himself as a stranger who desired nothing better than to adopt Jethro's mode of life, But now that he desired to see his own people, his wife has no choice but to accompany him. So Moses took his wife and his sons and set them on an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt.

The reason the Lord met them and sought to kill the son, was readily devined by Zipporah; her son had not been circumcised; so with woman's quick intuition and natural courage to save the life of her husband, she skillfully performed the necessary operation, and the travellers went on their way rejoicing. The word circumcision seems to have a very elastic meaning "uncircumcised lips" is used to describe that want of power to speak fluently, from which Moses suffered and which he so often deplored.

As in every chapter of Jewish history this rite is dwelt upon it is worthy of remark that its prominence as a religious observance means a disparagement of all female life, unfit for offerings, and unfit to take part in religious services, incapable of consecration. The circumcision of the heart even, which women might achieve, does not render them fit to take an active part in any of the holy services of the Lord. They were per-

mitted to violate the moral code of laws to secure liberty for their people, but they could not officiate in any of the sacraments nor eat of the consecrated bread at meals. Although the Mosaic code and customs so plainly degrade the female sex, and their position in the church to-day grows out of these ancient customs, yet many people insist that our religion dignifies women. But so long as the Pentateuch is read and accepted as the Word of God, an undefined influence is felt by each generation that destroys a proper respect for all womankind.

It is the contempt that the canon and civil law alike express for women that has multiplied their hardships and intensified man's desire to hold them in subjection. The sentiment that statesmen and bishops proclaim in their high places are responsible for the actions of the lower classes on the highways. We scarce take up a paper that does not herald some outrage committed on a matron on her way to church, or the little girl gathering wild flowers on her way to school; yet you cannot go so low down in the scale of being as to find men who will enter our churches to desecrate the altars or toss about the emblems of the sacrament; because they have been educated with some respect for churches, altars and sacraments. But where are any lessons of respect taught for the mothers of the human family? And yet as the great factor in the building of the race, are they not more sacred than churches, altars, sacraments or the priesthood?

Do our sons in their law schools, who read the old common law of England and its commentators, rise from their studies with higher respect for women? Do our sons in their theological seminaries rise from their studies of the Mosaic laws and Paul's epistles with higher respect for their mothers? Alas! in both cases they may have learned their first lessons of disrespect and contempt. They who would protect their innocent daughters from the outrages so common to-day, must lay anew the foundation stones of law and gospel in justice and equality, in a profound respect of the sexes for each other. E. C. S.

CHAPTER IV.

Exodus xii.

12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast : and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment : I *am* the Lord.

18 And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye *are* : and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy *you*, when I smite the land of Egypt.

43 ¶ And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, This *is* the ordinance of the passover : There shall no stranger eat thereof:

44 But every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof.

45 A foreigner and a hired servant shall not eat thereof.

46 In one house shall it be eaten : thou shalt not carry forth aught of the flesh abroad out of the house : neither shall ye break a bone thereof.

47 All the congregation of Israel shall keep it.

48 And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it : and he shall be as one that is born in the land : for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.

IN commemoration of this promise of the Lord's to pass over their homes in executing vengeance on the Egyptians, and of the prolonged battles between Jehovah and Moses on the one side, and Pharaoh and his Cabinet on the other, the Jews held an annual feast to which all circumcised males were summoned. The point of interest to us is whether women were disqualified, not being circumcised, or whether as members of the congregation they could slip in under the provision in the 47th verse, and enjoy the unleavened bread and nice roast lamb with the men of their household. It seems from the above texts that this blessed feast of deliverance from bondage must have been confined to males, that they only, could express their joy and gratitude. But women were permitted to perform a subordinate part in the grand hegira, beside carrying their respective infants they manifested their patriotism by stealing all the jewels of gold and silver, all the rich silks and velvets from their Egyptian neighbors, all they could carry, according to the commands of Moses. And why should these women take any part in the passover ; their condition remained about the same under all dynasties in all lands. They were regarded merely as necessary factors in race building. As Jewish wives or Egyptian concubines, there was no essential difference in their social status.

As Satan, represented by a male snake, seemed to be women's counsellor from the beginning, making her skillful in cunning and tergiversation, it is fair to suppose that they were destined to commune with the spirit of evil for ever and ever, that is if women have souls and are immortal, which is thought to be doubtful by many nations. There is no trace thus far that the Jews believed in a future state, good or bad. No promise of immortality is held out to men even. So far the promise to them is a purely material triumph, "their seed shall not fill the earth."

The firstborn of males both man and beast are claimed by the Lord as his own. From the general sentiment expressed in the various texts, it is evident that Satan claims the women as his own. The Hebrew God had very little to say in regard to them. If the passover, the lamb and the unleavened bread, were necessary to make the males acceptable in religious services, the females could find no favor in the eyes of either God or man.

In most of the sacrifices female animals are not accepted, nor a male, born after a female by the same parent. Males are the race, females only the creatures that carry it on. This arrangement must be providential, as it saves men from many disabilities. Men never fail to dwell on maternity as a disqualification for the possession of many civil and political rights. Suggest the idea of women having a voice in making laws and administering the Government in the halls of legislation, in Congress, or the British Parliament, and men will declaim at once on the disabilities of maternity in a sneering contemptuous way, as if the office of motherhood was undignified and did not comport with the highest public offices in church and state. It is vain that we point them to Queen Victoria, who has carefully reared a large family, while considering and signing all state papers. She has been a pattern wife and mother, kept a clean court, and used her influence as far as her position would admit, to keep peace with all nations. Why should representative American women be incapable of discharging similar public and private duties at the same time in an equally commendable manner?

E. C. S.

CHAPTER V.

Exodus xviii.

1 When Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father in law, heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel his people, *and* that the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt ;

2 Then Jethro, Moses' father in law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her back.

3 And her two sons ; of which the name of one *was* Gershom ; for he said, I have been an alien in a strange land :

4 And the name of the other *was* Eliezer ; for the God of my father, *said he, was* mine help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh ;

5 And Jethro, Moses father in law, came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at the mount of God :

6 And he said unto Moses, I thy father in law Jethro am come unto thee, and thy wife, and her two sons with her.

7 ¶ And Moses went out to meet his father in law, and did obeisance, and *kissed him* ; and they asked each other of *their* welfare ; and they came into the tent.

8 And Moses told his father in law all that the Lord had done unto Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, *and* all the travail that had come upon them by the way, and *how* the Lord delivered them.

AFTER a long separation the record of the meeting between Moses and his wife Zipporah is very unsatisfactory to the casual reader. There is some sentiment in the meeting of Jethro and Moses, they embraced and kissed each other. How tender and beautiful the seeming relation to a father in law, more fortunate than the mother in law in our time. Zipporah like all the women of her time was hustled about, sent forward and back by husbands and fathers, generally transported with their sons and belongings on some long-suffering jackass. Nothing is said of the daughters, but the sons, their names and their significance seem of vital importance. We must smile or heave a sigh at all this injustice, but different phases of the same guiding principle blocks woman's way to-day to perfect liberty. See the struggle they have made to gain admittance to the schools and colleges, the trades and professions, their civil and political rights. The darkest page in history is the persecutions of woman.

We take note of these discriminations of sex, and reiterate them again and again to call the attention of women to the real source of their multiplied disabilities. As long as our religion teaches woman's subjection and man's right of domination, we shall have chaos in the world of morals. Women are never referred to as persons, merely as property, and to see why,

you must read the Bible until you also see how many other opportunities for the exercise of sex were given to men, and why the single one of marriage to one husband was allowed to women.

In all the directions given Moses, for the regulation of the social and civil life of the children of Israel, and in the commandments on Mount Sinai, it is rarely that females are mentioned. The regulations are chiefly for males, the offerings are male, the transgressions referred to are male.

When the Lord was about to give the ten commandments to the children of Israel he gave the most minute directions as to the preparatory duties of the people. It is evident from the text that males only were to witness Moses' ascent to Mount Sinai and the coming of the Lord in a cloud of fire.

Exodus xix.

12 And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, *that ye go not* up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death.

13 There shall not a hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether *it be*

beast or man, it shall not live: when the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount.

14 ¶ And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their clothes.

16 And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third day: come not at *your* wives.

The children of Israel were to sanctify themselves for this great event. Besides a thorough cleaning of their persons and clothes, they were to have no affiliations or conversations with women for the space of three days. The Hebrew laws regulating the relations of men and women are never complimentary to the latter.

This feeling was in due time cultivated in the persecutions women endured under witchcraft and celibacy, when all women were supposed to be in collusion with the spirit of evil, and every man was warned that the less he had to do with the "daughters of men" the more perfect might be his communion with the Creator. Lecky in his History of Rationalism shows what women endured when these ideas were prevalent, and their sufferings were not mitigated until rationalism took the place of religion, and reason triumphed over superstition. E. C. S.

CHAPTER VI.

Exodus xv.

20 ¶ And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.

21 And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

AFTER many previous disappointments from Pharaoh, the children of Israel were permitted to start from Egypt and cross the Red Sea, while Pharaoh and his host in pursuit, were overwhelmed in the waters.

Then Moses and the children of Israel expressed their gratitude to the Lord in a song, comprising nineteen verses, while Miriam and the women expressed theirs in the above two. Has this proportion any significance as to the comparative happiness of the men and the women, or is it a poor attempt by the male historian to make out that though the women took part in the general rejoicing, they were mutinous or sulky. We know that Miriam was not altogether satisfied with the management of Moses at many points of the expedition, and later on expressed her dissatisfaction. If their gratitude is to be measured by the length of their expression, the women were only one-tenth as grateful as the men. It must always be a wonder to us, that in view of their degradation, they ever felt like singing or dancing, for what desirable change was there in their lives—the same hard work or bondage they suffered in Egypt. There, they were all slaves together, but now the men, in their respective families were exalted above their heads. Clarke gives the song in metre with a chorus, and says the women, led by Miriam, answered in a chorus by themselves which greatly heightened the effect.

Exodus xvi.

23 And he said unto them, This *is that* which the Lord hath said, To morrow *is* the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord: bake *that* which ye will bake *to-day*, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.

29 See, for that the Lord hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.

30 So the people rested on the seventh day.

In these texts we note that the work of men was done on the sixth day, but the women must work as usual on the seventh. We see the same thing to-day, woman's work is never done. What irony to say to them rest on the seventh day. The Puritan fathers would not let the children romp or play, nor give their wives a drive on Sunday, but they enjoyed a better dinner on the Sabbath than any other day; yet the xxxi chapter and 15th verse contains the following warning :

15 Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: | whosoever doeth *any* work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

As the women continued to work and yet seemed to live in the flesh, it may refer to the death of their civil rights, their individuality, as nonentities without souls or personal responsibility.

A critical reading of the ten commandments will show that they are chiefly for men. After purifying themselves by putting aside their wives and soiled clothes, they assembled at the foot of Mount Sinai. We have no hint of the presence of a woman. One commandment speaks of visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children. There is an element of justice in this, for to talk of children getting iniquities from their mothers, in a history of males, of fathers and sons, would be as ridiculous as getting them from the clothes they wore.

"Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work." With the majority of women this is impossible. Men of all classes can make the Sabbath a day of rest, at least a change of employment, but for women the same monotonous duties must be performed. In the homes of the rich and poor alike, most women cook, clean, and take care of children from morning till night. Men must have good dinners Sundays above all other days, as then they have plenty of time in which to eat. If the first born male child lifts up his voice at the midnight hour, the female attendant takes heed to his discontent; if in the early morning at the cock crowing, or the eventide, she is there. They who watch and guard the infancy of men are like faithful sentinels, always on duty.

The fifth commandment will take the reader by surprise. It is rather remarkable that the young Hebrews should have been told to honor their mothers, when the whole drift of the teaching thus far has been to throw contempt on the whole sex. In what way could they show their mothers honor? All the laws and customs forbid it. Why should they make any such manifestations? Scientists claim that the father gives the life, the spirit, the soul, all there is of most value in existence. Why honor the mother, for giving the mere covering of flesh. It was not her idea, but the father's, to start their existence. He thought of them, he conceived them. You might as well pay the price of a sack of wheat to the field, instead of the farmer who sowed it, as to honor the mother for giving life. According to the Jewish code, the father is the great factor in family life, the mother of minor consideration. In the midst of such teachings and examples of the subjection and degradation of all womankind, a mere command to honor the mother has no significance.

E. C. S.

CHAPTER VII.

Exodus xxxii

1 And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.

2 And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which *are* in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring *them* unto me.

And all the people brake off the golden earrings which *were* in their ears, and brought *them* unto Aaron.

And he received *them* at their hand, and fash-

ioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These *be* thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

5 And when Aaron saw *it*, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To-morrow *is* a feast to the Lord.

6 And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings, and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.

7 ¶ And the Lord said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted *themselves*.

SO tired were the children of Israel waiting at the foot of Mount Sinai for the return of Moses, that Aaron to pacify them made a golden calf which they worshipped. To procure the gold he took the jewelry of the women young and old, men never understanding how precious it is to them, and the great self-sacrifice required to part with it. But as the men generally give it to them during courtship, and as wedding presents, they feel that they have a vested right therein for emergencies.

It was just so in the American Revolution, in 1776, the first delicacy the men threw overboard in Boston harbor was the tea, woman's favorite beverage. The tobacco and whiskey, though heavily taxed, they clung to with the tenacity of the devil-fish. Rather than throw their luxuries overboard they would no doubt have succumbed to King George's pretensions. Men think that self-sacrifice is the most charming of all the cardinal virtues for women, and in order to keep it in healthy working order, they make opportunities for its illustration as often as possible. I would fain teach women that self-development is a higher duty than self-sacrifice.

The pillar of cloud for day and light for night, that went before the children of Israel in the wilderness, was indeed a marvel. It was an aqueous cloud that kept them well watered by day, and shadowed from the heat of the sun ; by night it showed its light side to the Israelites, and its dark side to whatever enemy might pursue them. It is supposed that about 3,200,000 started on this march with 165,000 children. They carried all their provisions, cooking utensils, flocks, herds and all the gold, silver, precious stones and rich raiment that they borrowed (stole) of the Egyptians, besides the bones of the twelve sons of Jacob. It is said the Israelites spent forty years wandering in the wilderness, kept there because of their wickedness, though they might have accomplished the journey in a few weeks. They disobeyed the commandments given them by Moses, and worshipped a golden calf, so they journeyed through deep waters, woe and tribulation. Fire was always a significant emblem of Deity, not only among the Hebrews but many other ancient nations, hence men have adopted it as a male emblem. They talk of Moses seeing God ; but Moses says : "ye saw no manner of similitude on the day the Lord spoke unto me on Mount Horeb out of the cloud of fire."

E. C. S.

CHAPTER VIII.

Exodus xxxiv.

12 Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee ;

13 But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves :

14 For thou shalt worship no other god : for the Lord, who *is* a jealous God.

15 Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and *one* call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice ;

16 And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go after their gods, and make thy sons go after their gods.

23 ¶ Thrice in the year shall all your men children appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel.

24 For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders ; neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year.

25 Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven ; neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the passover be left unto the morning.

26 The first of the first fruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.

THE Jews did not seem to have an abiding faith in the attractions of their own religion. They evidently lived in constant fear lest their sons and daughters should worship the strange gods of other nations. They seem also to have had most exaggerated fears as to the influence alien women might exert over their sons. Three times in the year all the men were to appear before the Lord. Why the women were not commanded to appear has been a point of much questioning. Probably the women, then as now, were more conscientious in their religious duties, and not so susceptible to the attractions of alien men and their strange gods.

If the Lord had talked more freely with the Jewish women and impressed some of his wise commands on their hearts, they would have had a more refined and religious influence on the men of Israel. But all their knowledge of the divine commands was second hand and through an acknowledged corrupt medium.

“Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.” After all the learning critics have bestowed on this passage, the simple meaning, says Adam Clarke, seems to be this: Thou shalt do nothing that may have a tendency to blunt thy moral feelings, or teach thee hardness of heart. Even human nature shudders at the thought of taking the mother's milk to seethe

the flesh of her own dead lamb. With all their cruelty towards alien tribes and all their sacrifices of lambs and kids, there is an occasional touch of tenderness for animal life among the Hebrews that is quite praiseworthy.

Exodus xxxvi.

22 And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, *and* brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold; and every man *offered* an offering of gold unto the Lord.

23 And every man, with whom was found blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' *hair*, and red skins of rams, and badgers' skins, brought *them*.

25 And all the women that were wise hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, *both* of blue, and of purple, *and* of scarlet, and of fine linen.

26 And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun goats' *hair*.

Women were always considered sufficiently clean to beg, work and give generously for the building and decoration of churches, and the support of the priesthood. They might always serve as inferiors, but never receive as equals.

Great preparations were made for building the Tabernacle, and all the willing hearted were invited to bring all their ornaments and all manner of rich embroideries, and brilliant fancy work of scarlet, blue and purple. As usual in our own day the Jewish women were allowed to give generously, work untiringly and beg eloquently to build altars and Tabernacles to the Lord, to embroider slippers and make flowing robes for the priesthood, but they could not enter the holy of holies or take any active part in the services.

Some women in our times think these unhappy Jewesses would have been much "wiser hearted" if they had kept their jewelry and beautiful embroideries to decorate themselves and their homes, where they were at least satellites of the dinner pot and the cradle, and Goddesses at their own altars. Seeing they had no right inside the sacred Temple, but stood looking-glass in hand at the door, it would have indicated more self-respect to have washed their hands of all that pertained to male ceremonies, altars and temples. But the women were wild with enthusiasm, just as they are to-day with fairs and donation parties, to build churches, and they brought such loads of

bric-a-brac that at last Moses compelled them to stop, as the supply exceeded all reasonable demand. But for the building of the Tabernacle the women brought all they deemed most precious, even the most necessary and convenient articles of their toilets.

Exodus xxviii.

8 ¶ And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the looking glasses of the

women assembling at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

The men readily accepted the sacrifice of all their jewelry, rich laces, velvets and silks, their looking glasses of solid precious metal. These being made of metal could be used for building purposes. The women carried these with them wherever they went, and always stood with them in hand at the door of the Tabernacle, as they were the doorkeepers standing outside to watch and guard the door from those not permitted to enter.

An objective view of the manner these women were imposed upon, wheedled and deceived with male pretensions and the pat use of the phrase "thus saith the Lord," must make every one who reads indignant at the masculine assumption, even at this late day.

E. C. S.

At every stage of his existence Moses was indebted to some woman for safety and success. Miriam, by her sagacity, saved his life. Pharaoh's daughter reared and educated him and made the way possible for the high offices he was called to fill; and Zipporah, his wife, a woman of strong character and decided opinions, often gave him good advice. Evidently from the text she criticised his conduct and management as a leader, and doubted his supernatural mission, for she refused to go out of Egypt with him, preferring to remain with her sons under her father's roof—Jethro, a priest of Midian. After the destruction of Pharaoh's host, when the expedition, led by Moses seemed to be an assured success, she followed with her father to join the leader of the wandering Israelites. (Chapter xviii, 2.)

In the ordinances which follow the ten commandments.

exact judgment and cruel punishment are ordained alike for man and woman ; life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand and foot for foot (Chapter xxi, 23).

In pronouncing punishments, woman's individuality and responsibility are always fully recognized, alike in the canon and civil laws, which reflect the spirit of the Mosaic code.

Exodus xxii.

21 ¶ Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him : for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

22 ¶ Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child.

23 If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry ;

24 And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless:

This special threat against those who oppress the widow and the fatherless, has a touch of tenderness and mercy, but if the vengeance is to make more widows and fatherless, the sum of human misery is increased rather than diminished. As to the stranger, after his country has been made desolate, his cities burned, his property, cattle, lands and merchandise all confiscated, kind words and alms would be but a small measure of justice under any circumstances.

In closing the book of Exodus, the reader must wonder that the faith and patience of the people, in that long sorrowful march through the wilderness, held out as long as it did. Whether fact or fiction, it is one of the most melancholy records in human history. Whether as a mere work of the imagination, or the real experience of an afflicted people, our finer sentiments of pity and sympathy find relief only in doubts of its truth.

L. D. B.