

THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

CHAPTER I.

Genesis i: 26, 27, 28.

26 ¶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27 So God created man in his *own* image, in the

image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

HERE is the sacred historian's first account of the advent of woman; a simultaneous creation of both sexes, in the image of God. It is evident from the language that there was consultation in the Godhead, and that the masculine and feminine elements were equally represented. Scott in his commentaries says, "this consultation of the Gods is the origin of the doctrine of the trinity." But instead of three male personages, as generally represented, a Heavenly Father, Mother, and Son would seem more rational.

The first step in the elevation of woman to her true position, as an equal factor in human progress, is the cultivation of the religious sentiment in regard to her dignity and equality, the recognition by the rising generation of an ideal Heavenly Mother, to whom their prayers should be addressed, as well as to a Father.

If language has any meaning, we have in these texts a plain declaration of the existence of the feminine element in the Godhead, equal in power and glory with the masculine. The Heavenly Mother and Father! "God created man in his *own*

image, male and female." Thus Scripture, as well as science and philosophy, declares the eternity and equality of sex—the philosophical fact, without which there could have been no perpetuation of creation, no growth or development in the animal, vegetable, or mineral kingdoms, no awakening nor progressing in the world of thought. The masculine and feminine elements, exactly equal and balancing each other, are as essential to the maintenance of the equilibrium of the universe as positive and negative electricity, the centripetal and centrifugal forces, the laws of attraction which bind together all we know of this planet whereon we dwell and of the system in which we revolve.

In the great work of creation the crowning glory was realized, when man and woman were evolved on the sixth day, the masculine and feminine forces in the image of God, that must have existed eternally, in all forms of matter and mind. All the persons in the Godhead are represented in the Elohim the divine plurality taking counsel in regard to this last and highest form of life. Who were the members of this high council, and were they a duality or a trinity? Verse 27 declares the image of God male and female. How then is it possible to make woman an afterthought? We find in verses 5-16 the pronoun "he" used. Should it not in harmony with verse 26 be "they," a dual pronoun? We may attribute this to the same cause as the use of "his" in verse 11 instead of "it." The fruit tree yielding fruit after "his" kind instead of after "its" kind. The paucity of a language may give rise to many misunderstandings.

The above texts plainly show the simultaneous creation of man and woman, and their equal importance in the development of the race. All those theories based on the assumption that man was prior in the creation, have no foundation in Scripture.

As to woman's subjection, on which both the canon and the civil law delight to dwell, it is important to note that equal dominion is given to woman over every living thing, but not one word is said giving man dominion over woman.

Here is the first title deed to this green earth giving alike to the sons and daughters of God. No lesson of woman's subjection can be fairly drawn from the first chapter of the Old Testament. E. C. S.

The most important thing for a woman to note, in reading Genesis, is that that portion which is now divided into "the first three chapters" (there was no such division until about five centuries ago), contains two entirely separate, and very contradictory, stories of creation, written by two different, but equally anonymous, authors. No Christian theologian of to-day, with any pretensions to scholarship, claims that Genesis was written by Moses. As was long ago pointed out, the Bible itself declares that all the books the Jews originally possessed were burned in the destruction of Jerusalem, about 588 B. C., at the time the people were taken to Babylonia as slaves to the Assyrians, (see II Esdras, ch. xiv, v. 21, Apocrypha). Not until about 247 B. C. (some theologians say 226 and others 169 B. C.) is there any record of a collection of literature in the re-built Jerusalem, and, then, the anonymous writer of II Maccabees briefly mentions that some Nehemiah "gathered together the acts of the kings and the prophets and those of David" when "founding a library" for use in Jerusalem. But the earliest mention anywhere in the Bible of a book that might have corresponded to Genesis is made by an apocryphal writer, who says that *Ezra* wrote "all that hath been done in the world since the beginning," after the Jews returned from Babylon, under his leadership, about 450 B. C. (see II Esdras, ch. xiv, v. 22, of the Apocrypha).

When it is remembered that the Jewish books were written on rolls of leather, without much attention to vowel points and with no division into verses or chapters, by uncritical copyists, who altered passages greatly, and did not always even pretend to understand what they were copying, then the reader of Genesis begins to put herself in position to understand how it

can be contradictory. Great as were the liberties which the Jews took with Genesis, those of the English translators, however, greatly surpassed them.

The first chapter of Genesis, for instance, in Hebrew, tells us, in verses one and two, "As to origin, created the gods (Elohim) these skies (or air or clouds) and this earth. . . . And a wind moved upon the face of the waters." Here we have the opening of a polytheistic fable of creation, but, so strongly convinced were the English translators that the ancient Hebrews must have been originally monotheistic that they rendered the above, as follows: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. . . . And the spirit of God (!) moved upon the face of the waters."

It is now generally conceded that some one (nobody pretends to know who) at some time (nobody pretends to know exactly when), copied two creation myths on the same leather roll, one immediately following the other. About one hundred years ago, it was discovered by Dr. Astruc, of France, that from Genesis ch. i, v. 1 to Genesis ch. ii, v. 4, is given one complete account of creation, by an author who always used the term "the gods" (*Elohim*), in speaking of the fashioning of the universe, mentioning it altogether thirty-four times, while, in Genesis ch. ii, v. 4, to the end of chapter iii, we have a totally different narrative, by an author of unmistakably different style, who uses the term "Iahveh of the gods" twenty times, but "Elohim" only three times. The first author, evidently, attributes creation to a council of gods, acting in concert, and seems never to have heard of Iahveh. The second attributes creation to Iahveh, a tribal god of ancient Israel, but represents Iahveh as one of two or more gods, conferring with them (in Genesis ch. xiii, v. 22) as to the danger of man's acquiring immortality.

Modern theologians have, for convenience sake, entitled these two fables, respectively, the Elohist and the Iahvistic stories. They differ, not only in the point I have mentioned above, but in the order of the "creative acts;" in regard to the mutual attitude of man and woman, and in regard to human freedom from

prohibitions imposed by deity. In order to exhibit their striking contradictions, I will place them in parallel columns :

ELOHISTIC.

Order of Creation :
 First—Water.
 Second—Land.
 Third—Vegetation.
 Fourth—Animals.
 Fifth—Mankind ; male and female.

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In this story male and female man are created simultaneously, both alike, in the image of the gods, *after* all animals have been called into existence.

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Here, joint dominion over the earth is given to woman and man, without limit or prohibition.

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Everything, without exception, is pronounced "very good."

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Man and woman are told that "every plant bearing seed upon the face of the earth and *every tree*. . . "To you it shall be for meat." They are thus given perfect freedom.

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Man and woman are given special dominion over all the animals—"every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."

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IAHOISTIC.

Order of Creation :
 First—Land.
 Second—Water.
 Third—Male Man, only.
 Fourth—Vegetation.
 Fifth—Animals.
 Sixth—Woman.

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In this story male man is sculptured out of clay, *before* any animals are created, and *before* female man has been constructed.

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Here, woman is punished with subjection to man for breaking a prohibitory law.

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There is a tree of evil, whose fruit, is said by Iahveh to cause sudden death, but which does not do so, as Adam lived 930 years after eating it.

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Man is told there is *one tree* of which he must not eat, "for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."

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An animal, a "creeping thing," is given dominion over man and woman, and proves himself more truthful than Iahveh Elohim. (Compare Genesis chapter ii, verse 17, with chapter iii, verses 4 and 22.)

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Now as it is manifest that both of these stories cannot be true; intelligent women, who feel bound to give the preference to either, may decide according to their own judgment of which is more worthy of an intelligent woman's acceptance. Paul's rule is a good one in this dilemma, "Prove all things: hold fast to that which is good." My own opinion is that the second story was manipulated by some Jew, in an endeavor to give "heavenly authority" for requiring a woman to obey the man she married. In a work which I am now completing, I give some facts concerning ancient Israelitish history, which will be of peculiar interest to those who wish to understand the origin of woman's subjection.

E. B. D.

Many orientalists and students of theology have maintained that the consultation of the Gods here described is proof that the Hebrews were in early days polytheists—Scott's supposition that this is the origin of the Trinity has no foundation in fact, as the beginning of that conception is to be found in the earliest of all known religious nature worship. The acknowledgment of the dual principal, masculine and feminine, is much more probably the explanation of the expressions here used.

In the detailed description of creation we find a gradually ascending series. Creeping things, "great sea monsters," (chap. i, v. 21, literal translation). "Every bird of wing," cattle and living things of the earth, the fish of the sea and the "birds of the heavens," then man, and last and crowning glory of the whole, woman.

It cannot be maintained that woman was inferior to man even if, as asserted in chapter ii, she was created after him without at once admitting that man is inferior to the creeping things, because created after them.

L. D. B.

CHAPTER II.

Genesis ii: 21-25.

21 And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept ; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh thereof.

22 And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my

bone, and flesh of my flesh : she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man.

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife ; and they shall be one flesh.

25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

AS the account of the creation in the first chapter is in harmony with science, common sense, and the experience of mankind in natural laws, the inquiry naturally arises, why should there be two contradictory accounts in the same book, of the same event? It is fair to infer that the second version, which is found in some form in the different religions of all nations, is a mere allegory, symbolizing some mysterious conception of a highly imaginative editor.

The first account dignifies woman as an important factor in the creation, equal in power and glory with man. The second makes her a mere afterthought. The world in good running order without her. The only reason for her advent being the solitude of man.

There is something sublime in bringing order out of chaos ; light out of darkness ; giving each planet its place in the solar system ; oceans and lands their limits ; wholly inconsistent with a petty surgical operation, to find material for the mother of the race. It is on this allegory that all the enemies of women rest their battering rams, to prove her inferiority. Accepting the view that man was prior in the creation, some Scriptural writers say that as the woman was of the man, therefore, her position should be one of subjection. Grant it, then as the historical fact is reversed in our day, and the man is now of the woman, shall his place be one of subjection ?

The equal position declared in the first account must prove more satisfactory to both sexes; created alike in the image of God—The Heavenly Mother and Father.

Thus, the Old Testament, "in the beginning," proclaims the simultaneous creation of man and woman, the eternity and equality of sex; and the New Testament echoes back through the centuries the individual sovereignty of woman growing out of this natural fact. Paul, in speaking of equality as the very soul and essence of Christianity, said, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." With this recognition of the feminine element in the Godhead in the Old Testament, and this declaration of the equality of the sexes in the New, we may well wonder at the contemptible status woman occupies in the Christian Church of to-day.

All the commentators and publicists writing on woman's position, go through an immense amount of fine-spun metaphysical speculations, to prove her subordination in harmony with the Creator's original design.

It is evident that some wily writer, seeing the perfect equality of man and woman in the first chapter, felt it important for the dignity and dominion of man to effect woman's subordination in some way. To do this a spirit of evil must be introduced, which at once proved itself stronger than the spirit of good, and man's supremacy was based on the downfall of all that had just been pronounced very good. This spirit of evil evidently existed before the supposed fall of man, hence woman was not the origin of sin as so often asserted. E. C. S.

In v. 23 Adam proclaims the eternal oneness of the happy pair, "This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh;" no hint of her subordination. How could men, admitting these words to be divine revelation, ever have preached the subjection of woman!

Next comes the naming of the mother of the race. "She

shall be called Woman," in the ancient form of the word Womb-man. She was man and more than man because of her maternity.

The assertion of the supremacy of the woman in the marriage relation is contained in v. 24: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and cleave unto his wife." Nothing is said of the headship of man, but he is commanded to make her the head of the household, the home, a rule followed for centuries under the Matriarchate. L. D. B.

CHAPTER III.

Genesis iii: 1-24.

1 Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

3 But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

6 And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

8 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees in the garden.

9 And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where *art* thou?

10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I *was* naked; and I hid myself.

11 And he said, Who told thee that thou *wast* naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?

12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

13 And the Lord God said unto the woman, What *is* this *that* thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

14 And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou *art* cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:

15 And I will put enmity between *thee* and the woman, and between thy seed and *her* seed; it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel.

16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life;

18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.

20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.

21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them.

22 ¶ And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever;

23 Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

24 So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

ADAM CLARKE, in his commentaries, asks the question, "is this an allegory?" He finds it beset with so many difficulties as an historical fact, that he inclines at first to regard it as a fable, a mere symbol, of some hidden truth. His

mind seems more troubled about the serpent than any other personage in the drama. As snakes cannot walk upright, and have never been known to speak, he thinks this beguiling creature must have been an ourang-outang, or some species of ape. However, after expressing all his doubts, he rests in the assumption that it must be taken literally, and that with higher knowledge of the possibilities of all living things, many seeming improbabilities will be fully realized.

A learned professor in Yale College,* before a large class of students, expressed serious doubts as to the forbidden fruit being an apple, as none grew in that latitude. He said it must have been a quince. If the serpent and the apple are to be withdrawn thus recklessly from the tableaux, it is feared that with advancing civilization the whole drama may fall into discredit. Scientists tells us that "the missing link" between the ape and man, has recently been discovered, so that we can now trace back an unbroken line of ancestors to the dawn of creation.

As out of this allegory grows the doctrines of original sin, the fall of man, and woman the author of all our woes, and the curses on the serpent, the woman, and the man; the Darwinian theory of the gradual growth of the race from a lower to a higher type of animal life, is more hopeful and encouraging. However, as our chief interest is in woman's part in the drama, we are equally pleased with her attitude, whether as a myth in an allegory, or as the heroine of an historical occurrence.

In this prolonged interview, the unprejudiced reader must be impressed with the courage, the dignity, and the lofty ambition of the woman. The tempter evidently had a profound knowledge of human nature, and saw at a glance the high character of the person he met by chance in his walks in the garden. He did not try to tempt her from the path of duty by brilliant jewels, rich dresses, worldly luxuries or pleasures, but with the promise of knowledge, with the wisdom of the Gods.

* Daniel Cady Eaton, Professor of Botany.

Like Socrates or Plato, his powers of conversation and asking puzzling questions, were no doubt marvellous, and he roused in the woman that intense thirst for knowledge, that the simple pleasures of picking flowers and talking with Adam did not satisfy. Compared with Adam she appears to great advantage through the entire drama.

The curse pronounced on woman is inserted in an unfriendly spirit to justify her degradation and subjection to man. With obedience to the laws of health, diet, dress, and exercise, the period of maternity should be one of added vigor in both body and mind, a perfectly natural operation should not be attended with suffering. By the observance of physical and psychical laws the supposed curse can be easily transformed into a blessing. Some churchmen speak of maternity as a disability, and then chant the Magnificat in all their cathedrals round the globe. Through all life's shifting scenes, the mother of the race has been the greatest factor in civilization.

We hear the opinion often expressed, that woman always has, and always will be in subjection. Neither assertion is true. She enjoyed unlimited individual freedom for many centuries, and the events of the present day all point to her speedy emancipation. Scientists now give 85,000 years for the growth of the race. They assign 60,000 to savagism, 20,000 to barbarism, and 5,000 to civilization. Recent historians tell us that for centuries woman reigned supreme. That period was called the Matriarchate. Then man seized the reins of government, and we are now under the Patriarchate. But we see on all sides new forces gathering, and woman is already abreast with man in art, science, literature, and government. The next dynasty, in which both will reign as equals, will be the Amphiararchate, which is close at hand.

Psychologists tell us of a sixth sense now in process of development, by which we can read each other's mind and communicate without speech. The Tempter might have had that sense, as he evidently read the minds of both the creature and

the Creator, if we are to take this account as literally true, as Adam Clarke advises. E. C. S.

Note the significant fact that we always hear of the "fall of man," not the fall of woman, showing that the consensus of human thought has been more unerring than masculine interpretation. Reading this narrative carefully, it is amazing that any set of men ever claimed that the dogma of the inferiority of woman is here set forth. The conduct of Eve from the beginning to the end is so superior to that of Adam. The command not to eat of the fruit of the tree of Knowledge was given to the man alone before woman was formed. Genesis ii, 17. Therefore the injunction was not brought to Eve with the impressive solemnity of a Divine Voice, but whispered to her by her husband and equal. It was a serpent supernaturally endowed, a seraphim as Scott and other commentators have claimed, who talked with Eve, and whose words might reasonably seem superior to the second-hand story of her companion—nor does the woman yield at once. She quotes the command not to eat of the fruit to which the serpent replies "Dying ye shall not die," v. 4, literal translation. In other words telling her that if the mortal body does perish, the immortal part shall live forever, and offering as the reward of her act the attainment of Knowledge.

Then the woman fearless of death if she can gain wisdom takes of the fruit; and all this time Adam standing beside her interposes no word of objection. "Her husband with her" are the words of v. 6. Had he been the representative of the divinely appointed head in married life, he assuredly would have taken upon himself the burden of the discussion with the serpent, but no, he is silent in this crisis of their fate. Having had the command from God himself he interposes no word of warning or remonstrance, but takes the fruit from the hand of his wife without a protest. It takes six verses to describe the "fall" of

woman, the fall of man is contemptuously dismissed in a line and a half.

The subsequent conduct of Adam was to the last degree dastardly. When the awful time of reckoning comes, and the Jehovah God appears to demand why his command has been disobeyed, Adam endeavors to shield himself behind the gentle being he has declared to be so dear. "The woman thou gavest to be with me, she gave me and I did eat," he whines—trying to shield himself at his wife's expense! Again we are amazed that upon such a story men have built up a theory of their superiority!

Then follows what has been called the curse. Is it not rather a prediction? First is the future fate of the serpent described, the enmity of the whole human race—"it shall lie in wait for thee as to the head" (v. 15, literal translation). Next the subjection of the woman is foretold, thy husband "shall rule over thee," v. 16. Lastly the long struggle of man with the forces of nature is portrayed. "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat food until thy turning back to the earth" (v. 19, literal translation). With the evolution of humanity an ever increasing number of men have ceased to toil for their bread with their hands, and with the introduction of improved machinery, and the uplifting of the race there will come a time when there shall be no severities of labor, and when women shall be freed from all oppressions.

"And Adam called his wife's name Life for she was the mother of all living" (v. 20, literal translation).

It is a pity that all versions of the Bible do not give this word instead of the Hebrew Eve. She was Life, the eternal mother, the first representative of the more valuable and important half of the human race.

L. D. B.

CHAPTER IV.

Genesis iv: 1-12, 19, 23.

1 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord.

2 And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.

4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering.

5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

6 And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted: and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door: and unto thee *shall be* his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

8 And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

9 ¶ And the Lord said unto Cain, where *is* Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: *Am* I my brother's keeper?

10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

11 And now *art* thou cursed from the earth which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand.

12 When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

19 ¶ And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one *was* Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.

23 And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech.

ONE would naturally suppose that Cain's offering of fruit indicated a more refined and spiritual idea of the fitness of things than Abel's of animal food. Why Cain's offering was rejected as unworthy does not appear.

There is something pathetic in Eve's joy and faith at the advent of her first-born: "Lo I have a man child from the Lord." She evidently thought that Cain was to be to her a great blessing. Some expositors say that Eve thought that Cain was the promised seed that was to bruise the serpent's head; but Adam Clarke, in estimating woman's reasoning powers, says, "it was too metaphysical an idea for that period." But as that is just what the Lord said to Eve, she must have had the capacity to understand it. But all speculations as to what Eve thought in that eventful hour are vain. Clarke asserts that Cain and Abel were twins. Eve must have been too much occupied with her vacillating joys and sorrows to have indulged in any connected

train of thought. Her grief in the fratricidal tragedy that followed can be more easily understood. The dreary environments of the mother, and the hopeless prophecies of her future struggling life, banished to a dreary, desolate region, beyond the love and care of her Creator, is revenged on her children. If Adam and Eve merited the severe punishment inflicted on them, they should have had some advice from the Heavenly Mother and Father as to the sin of propagating such an unworthy stock. No good avails in increasing and multiplying evil propensities and deformities that produce only crime and misery from generation to generation. During the ante-natal period the mother should be held sacred, and surrounded with all the sweetest influences that Heaven and earth can give, loving companionship, beautiful scenery, music and flowers, and all the pleasures that art in its highest form can produce.

As the women at this period seem to be myths, no one takes the trouble to tell from whence they came. It is sufficient that their husbands know, and it is not necessary that the casual reader should. The question is often asked, whom did Cain marry? Some expositors say that Adam and Eve had other sons and daughters living in different parts of the planet, and that they married each other.

There seems to have been no scarcity of women, for Lamech, Cain's great grandson, took unto himself two wives. Thus early in the history of the race polygamic relations were recognized. The phraseology announcing the marriage of Lamech is very significant.

In the case of Adam and Eve the ceremony was more imposing and dignified. It was declared an equal relation. But with the announcement of Lamech's, he simply took two wives, Adah and Zillah. Whether the women were willingly captured will ever remain an open question. The manner in which he is accustomed to issue his orders does not indicate a tender relation between the parties.

“Hear my voice : ye wives of Lamech, and hearken unto my speech !”

As the wives made no reply, it shows that they had already learned that discreet silence is the only security for domestic happiness.

Naamah the sister of Tubal Cain was supposed to be the wife of Noah. Her name in Hebrew signifies the beautiful or the gracious. Jewish doctors say her name is recorded here because she was an upright, chaste woman, but others affirm the contrary because "the whole world wandered after her." But the fact that Naamah's beauty attracted the multitude, does not prove that she either courted or accepted their attentions.

The manner in which the writer of these chapters presents the women so in conflict with Chapters i and v, which immediately precede and follow, inclines the unprejudiced mind to relegate the ii, iii and iv chapters to the realm of fancy as no part of the real history of creation's dawn.

The curse pronounced on Cain is similar to that inflicted on Adam, both were to till the ground, which was to bring forth weeds abundantly. Hale's statistics of weeds show their rapid and widespread power of propagation. "A progeny," he says, "more than sufficient in a few years to stock every planet of the solar system." In the face of such discouraging facts, Hale coolly remarks. "Such provisions has the just God made to fulfil the curse which he promised on man."

It seems far more rational to believe that the curses on both woman and man were but figments of the human brain, and that by the observance of natural laws, both labor and maternity may prove great blessings.

With all the modern appliances of steam and electricity, and the new inventions in machinery, the cultivation of the soil is fast coming to be a recreation and amusement. The farmer now sits at ease on his plough, while his steed turns up the furrows at his will. With machinery the sons of Adam now sow and reap their harvests, keep the wheels of their great manufactories in motion, and with daily increasing speed carry on the commerce of the world. The time is at hand when the heavy

burdens of the laborer will all be shifted on the shoulders of these tireless machines. And when the woman, too, learns and obeys the laws of life, these supposed curses will be but idle dreams of the past. The curse falls lightly even now on women who live in natural conditions, and with anæsthetics is essentially mitigated in all cases.

When these remedial agents were first discovered, some women refused to avail themselves of their blessings, and some orthodox physicians refused to administer them, lest they should interfere with the wise provisions of Providence in making maternity a curse.

E. C. S.

MYTHS OF CREATION.

Nothing would be more interesting in connection with the "Woman's Bible" than a comparative study of the accounts of the creation held by people of different races and faiths. Our Norse ancestors, whose myths were of a very exalted nature, recorded in their Bible, the Edda, that one day the sons of Bor (a frost giant), Odin, Hoener, and Loder, found two trees on the sea beach, and from them created the first human pair, man and woman. Odin gave them life and spirit, Hoener endowed them with reason and motion, and Loder gave them the senses and physical characteristics. The man they called Ask, and the woman Embla. Prof. Anderson finds in the brothers the three-fold Trinity of the Bible. It is easy to fancy that there is some philological connection between the names of the first pair in the Bible and in the Edda. Perhaps the formation of the first pair out of trees had a deep connection with the tree of life, Ygdrasil, which extended, according to Norse mythology throughout the universe, furnishing bodies for mankind from its branches. It had three great roots, one extending to the nebulous world, and this was constantly gnawed by the serpent Nidhug. There was nothing in the Norse mythology that taught the degradation of woman, and the lay of Sigdrifa, in the Edda, is one of the noblest conceptions of the character of woman in all literature.

North American Indian mythology has the human race born of the earth, but the writer cannot learn that women held an inferior place. Among the Quiches the mothers and fathers of old slept in the waters, covered with green, under a limpid twilight, from which the earth and they were called out by a mighty wind. The Algonkins believed the human family were the children of Michabo, the spirit of the dawn, and their supreme deity. In their language the words earth, mother and father were from the same root. Many tribes claim descent from a raven, symbolizing the clouds; others from a dog, which is the symbol of the water goddess.

Dr. and Madame Le Plongeon relate that in their discoveries among the buried remains of the Mayas in Yucatan, everything marks a very high state of civilization. In one of the exhumed temples they found pictures on the walls, which seem to be a combination of the stories of the Garden of Eden and Cain and Abel. The Serpent was always the royal emblem, because the shape of Yucatan is that of a serpent ready to spring. It was the custom among the Mayas for the oldest son of the king to be a priest, and the second son to marry the oldest daughter. The pictures represent that the oldest son in this particular case was dissatisfied with this arrangement, and wanted to marry the sister himself. To tempt her he sends a basket of apples by a messenger. He stands watching the way in which the present is received, and the serpent in the picture (indicating the royal family), makes it curiously suggestive of the temptation of Eve. The sister, however, rejects the present, and this so enrages the elder brother that he kills the younger, who accordingly is deified by the Mayas. The image of Chacmohl was discovered by the Le Plongeon, and is now in the possession of the Mexican Government. Perhaps these brothers were twins, as the commentator says Cain and Abel were, and that gave rise to the jealousy.

Nothing can surpass in grandeur the account in the first chapter of Genesis of the creation of the race, and it satisfies the highest aspirations and the deepest longings of the human

soul. No matter of what material formed, or through how many ages the formative period ran, or is to run, the image of God is the birthright of man, male and female. Whatever the second chapter may mean, it cannot set aside the first. It probably has a deep spiritual significance which mankind will appreciate when cavilling about the letter ceases. To the writer's mind its meaning is best expressed in the words of Goethe: "The eternal womanly leads us on." C. B. C.

CHAPTER V.

Genesis v: 1, 2.

1 This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him.

2 Male and female created he them ; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.

HERE we have the first account of the dual creation verified. Man and woman a simultaneous creation, alike in the image of God.

The dual relation, both in the Godhead and humanity, is here again declared, though contradicted in the intervening chapters. In this and the following chapters we have a prolix statement of the births, deaths, and ages in the male line. They all take wives, beget sons, but nothing is said of the origin or destiny of the wives and daughters ; they are incidentally mentioned merely as necessary factors in the propagation of the male line.

The men of this period seem to have lived to a ripe old age, but nothing is said of the age of the women ; it is probable as child-bearing was their chief ambition, that men had a succession of wives, all gathered to their fathers in the prime of life. Although Eve and her daughters devoted their energies to this occupation, yet the entire credit for the growth of the race is given to Adam and his male descendants. In all this chapter the begetting of the oldest son is made prominent, his name only is given, and the begetting of more "sons and daughters" is cursorily mentioned. Here is the first suggestion of the law of primogeniture responsible for so many of the evils that perplexed our Saxon fathers.

E. C. S.

Genesis vi: 1-8, 14-22.

1 And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

2 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they *were* fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

3 And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also *is* flesh: yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years.

4 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare *children* to them, the same *became* mighty men which *were* of old, men of renown.

5 ¶ And God saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

6 And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

7 And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

13 And God said unto Noah,

14 ¶ Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms

shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

15 And this *is the fashion* which thou shalt make it *of*; The length of the ark *shall* be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits and the height of it thirty cubits.

16 A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; *with* lower, second, and third *stories* shalt thou make it.

17 And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein *is* the breath of life, from under heaven; *and* everything that *is* in the earth shall die.

18 But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

19 And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every *sort* shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep *them* alive with thee; they shall be male and female.

20 Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth, after his kind; two of every *sort* shall come unto thee, to keep *them* alive.

21 And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather *it* to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them.

22 Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

The Jews evidently believed the males the superior sex. Men are called "the sons of God," women "the daughters of men." From the text it would seem that the influence of the wives was not elevating and inspiring, and that the sin and misery resulting from their marriages, all attributed to the women. This condition of things so discouraged the Creator that he determined to blot out both man and beast, the fowls of the air and the creeping things on the earth. How very human this sounds. It shows what a low ideal the Jews had of the great first cause, from which the moral and material world of thought and action were evolved.

It was in mature life, when chastened by the experiences and trials of her early day, that Seth was born to Eve. It was among the descendants of Seth that purer morals and religion were cultivated. Intermarriage with the descendants of Cain

had corrupted the progeny, perplexed the Creator, and precipitated the flood.

The female of each species of animal was preserved; males and females all walked into the ark two by two, and out again in equal and loving companionship. It has been a question with critics whether the ark was large enough for all it was supposed to contain. Commentators seem to agree as to its capacity to accommodate men, women, children, animals, and the food necessary for their preservation. Adam Clarke tells us that Noah and his family and the birds occupied the third story, so they had the benefit of the one window it contained.

The paucity of light and air in this ancient vessel shows that woman had no part in its architecture, or a series of port holes would have been deemed indispensable. Commentators relegate all difficulties to the direct intervention of Providence. The ark, made by unseen hands, like a palace of india rubber, was capable of expanding indefinitely; the spirit of all good, caused the lion and lamb to lie down peaceably together. To attribute all the myths, allegories, and parables to the interposition of Providence, ever working outside of his own inexorable laws, is to confuse and set at defiance human reason, and prevent all stimulus to investigation.

In several following chapters we have the history of Abram and Sarah, their wanderings from the land of their nativity to Canaan, their blunders on the journey, their grief at having no children, except one son by Hagar, his concubine, who was afterwards driven from their door, into the wilderness. However, Sarah in her old age was blessed with a son of her own, which event gave them great joy and satisfaction. As Sarah did not possess any of the heroic virtues, worthy our imitation, we need not linger either to praise or blame her characteristics. Neither she nor Abraham deemed it important to speak the truth when any form of tergiversation might serve them. In fact the wives of the patriarchs, all untruthful, and one a kleptomaniac, but illustrate the law, that the cardinal virtues are seldom found in oppressed classes.

E. C. S.

A careful study of the Bible would alter the views of many as to what it teaches about the position of women. The trouble is too often instead of searching the Bible to see what is right, we form our belief, and then search for Bible texts to sustain us, and are satisfied with isolated texts without regard to context, and ask no questions as to the circumstances that may have existed then but do not now. We forget that portions of the Bible are only histories of events given as a chain of evidence to sustain the fact that the real revelations of the Godhead, be it in any form, are true. Second, that our translators were not inspired, and that we have strong presumptive proof that prejudice of education was in some instances stronger than the grammatical context, in translating these contested points. For instance, the word translated *obey* between husband and wife, is in but one instance in the New Testament the word used between master and servant, parent and child, but is the word that in other places is translated *defer*. The one instance states Sarah obeyed Abram. Read that history and you will find that in both instances in which she obeyed, God had to interfere with a miracle to save them from the result of that obedience, and both Abram and Sarah were reprov'd. While twice, once by direct command of God, Abram obeyed Sarah. You cannot find a direct command of God or Christ for the wife to obey the husband.

It was Eve's curse that her desire should be to her husband, and he should rule over her. Have you not seen her clinging to a drunken or brutal husband, and read in letters of fire upon her forehead her curse? But God did not say the curse was good, nor bid Adam enforce it. Nor did he say, all men shall rule over thee. For Adam, not Eve, the earth was to bring forth the thorn and the thistle, and he was to eat his bread by the sweat of his brow. Yet I never heard a sermon on the sin of uprooting weeds, or letting Eve, as she does, help him to bear his burden. It is when she tries to lighten her load that the world is afraid of sacrilege and the overthrow of nature.

C. B. C.

In the story "of the sons of God, and the daughters of men"—we find a myth like those of Greek, Roman and Scandinavian fable, demi-gods love mortal maidens and their offspring are giants. Then follows the traditional account of some great cataclysm of the last glacial epoch. According to the latest geological students, Wright, McGee and others; the records of Niagara, the falls of St. Anthony and other glacial chasms, indicate that the great ice caps receded for the last time about seven thousand years ago; the latest archeological discoveries carry our historical knowledge of mankind back nearly four thousand years B. C., so that some record of the mighty floods which must have followed the breaking of great glacial dams might well survive in the stories of the nations.

Abram who came from Ur of the Chaldees brought with him the Chaldean story of the flood. At that time Ur, now a town fifty miles inland, was a great seaport of the Persian gulf. Their story of the flood is that of a maritime people; in it the ark is a well built ship, *Hasisadra*, the Chaldean Noah takes on board not only his own family, but his neighbors and friends; a pilot is employed to guide the course, and proper provision is made for the voyage. A raven and a dove are sent out as in the biblical account, and a fortunate landing effected.

L. D. B.

CHAPTER VI.

Genesis xxi.

1 And the Lord visited Sarah as he had said.
 2 For Sarah bare Abraham a son in his old age.
 3 And Abraham called the name of his son whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.
 5 And Abraham was a hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.
 6 ¶ And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me.
 9 ¶ And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had borne unto Abraham, mocking.
 10 Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.
 11 And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight.
 12 ¶ And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.
 13 And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he *is* thy seed.
 14 And Abraham rose up early in the morning,

and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave *it* unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away; and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

15 And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs.

17 And she went, and sat her down over against *him* a good way off: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she lifted up her voice, and wept.

17 And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he *is*.

18 Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand: for I will make him a great nation.

19 And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water: and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink.

20 And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer.

21 And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.

THE great event of Isaac's birth having taken place, Sarah is represented through several chapters as laughing, even in the presence of angels, not only in the anticipation of motherhood, but in its realization. She evidently forgot that maternity was intended as a curse on all Eve's daughters, for the sin of the first woman, and all merry-making on such occasions was unpardonable. Some philosophers consider the most exalted of all forms of love to be that of a mother for her children. But this divine awakening of a new affection does not seem to have softened Sarah's heart towards her unfortunate slave Hagar. And so far from Sarah's desire being to her husband, and Abraham dominating her, he seemed to be under her control, as the Lord told him "to hearken to her voice, and to obey her command." In so doing he drives Hagar out of his house.

In this scene Abraham does not appear in a very attractive light, rising early in the morning, and sending his child and its mother forth into the wilderness, with a breakfast of bread and water, to care for themselves. Why did he not provide them with a servant, an ass laden with provisions, and a tent to shelter them from the elements, or better still, some abiding, resting place. Common humanity demanded this much attention to his own son and the woman who bore him. But the worst feature in this drama is that it seems to have been done with Jehovah's approval.

Does any one seriously believe that the great spirit of all good talked with these Jews, and really said the extraordinary things they report? It was, however, a very cunning way for the Patriarchs to enforce their own authority, to do whatever they desired, and say the Lord commanded them to do and say thus and so. Many pulpits even in our day enforce their lessons of subjection for woman with the same authority, "Thus saith the Lord," "Thou shalt," and "Thou shall not." E. C. S.

Genesis xxiii.

1 And Sarah was a hundred and seven and twenty years old.

2 And Sarah died in Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.

3 ¶ And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth, saying,

4 I *am* a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a buryingplace with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.

5 And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him.

6 Hear us, my lord: thou *art* a mighty prince among us: in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead; *none* of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre.

7 And Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land.

8 And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my

sight, hear me, and entreat Ephron the son of Zohar.

9 That he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which is in the end of his field; for as much money as it is worth.

14 And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him.

15 My lord, hearken unto me: the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver; what is that betwixt me and thee? bury therefore thy dead.

16 And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current *money* with the merchant.

19 And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre.

20 And the field, and the cave that is therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a buryingplace by the sons of Heth.

It is seldom that the age and death of any woman, are recorded by the sacred historian, but Sarah seems to have been specially honored, not only in the mention of her demise and

ripe years, but in the tender manifestations of grief by Abraham, and his painstaking selection of her burial place. That Abraham paid for all this in silver, "current money with the merchant," might suggest to the financiers of our day that our commercial relations might be adjusted with the same coin, especially as we have plenty of it.

If our bimetallists in the halls of legislation were conversant with sacred history, they might get fresh inspiration from the views of the Patriarchs on good money.

Some critics tell us that there was no coined money at that time ; the Israelites had no written language, no commerce with neighboring tribes, and that they could neither read nor write.

Whilst we drop a tear at the tomb of Sarah, we cannot recommend her as an example to the young women of our day, as she lacked several of the cardinal virtues. She was undignified, untruthful, and unkind to Hagar. But our moral standard differs from that of the period in which she lived, as our ideas of right and wrong are not innate, but depend on education. Sarah probably lived up to the light that was in her. E. C. S.

The cruelty and injustice of Abraham and Sarah, as commented on by Mrs. Stanton, doubtless stand out much more prominently in this condensed account than their proper proportions to the motives which actuated the figures in the drama. If we take any part of the story we must take it all, and remember that it had been promised to Abraham that of Ishmael a great nation should be born. Whether this was an actual revelation from God, or a prophetic vision that Abraham had, or is interpolated by the historian to correspond with the actual facts that transpired, in either case the firm belief that no harm could come to Ishmael, must be taken into account when estimating the motives which led Abraham and Sarah, for doubtless Abraham told Sarah of his vision, to send Hagar and her son off into the wilderness ; just as much as the firm belief that the promise of God with regard to his seed would be fulfilled made Abraham, a little afterward, prepare to offer up his son Isaac.

Abraham loved and honored his wife very greatly, probably admiring equally her beauty and strength of character. Abraham was ten years older than Sarah and we read that he was seventy-five years old when he started from Haran for the land of Canaan. Some time after this driven, by famine, he went down into Egypt, and here when she must have been at least seventy years of age the Egyptians saw that she was very fair, and the princes of Pharaoh so praised her beauty to their royal master that he sent and took her for his wife. The same thing happened when she was ninety years old, when she was seized by Abimelech, king of Gerar. In both cases they told, not a lie, but a half truth, for Sarah was Abraham's half sister. It being then the custom for children of the same father by different mothers to marry. Abraham's deceit was brought about by cowardice, while Sarah connived at the fraud for love of her husband, being besought to do so to save his life. Perhaps, too, she might have been amenable to the gracious tribute to her beauty that Abraham gave in making the request.

Sarah's strength of character is shown all through her history. Wherever she is mentioned the reader is made to feel that she is an important part of the narrative, and not merely a connecting link between two generations. In this story she carries her point, and Abraham follows her instructions implicitly, nay, is even commanded by God to do so.

Notwithstanding that Abraham mourned Sarah so sincerely, within three years after she died, and when at the ripe age of a hundred and forty years, he married again and the six children he begat by Keturah he took quite as a matter of course, although half a century before, when told that a son should be born to him, he laughed incredulously. Abraham had his failings, some of which are shared by the moderns, yet doubtless he was a moral giant compared with other men of the land from which he came and of the nations around him. As such he was chosen as the founder of a race whose history should promulgate the idea of the one true God. Certainly the descendants from this remarkable trio have retained their own

peculiar characteristics and have ever been worshippers at the shrine of Jehovah.

A singular fact may be mentioned here that Mrs. Souvielle in her book "The Sequel to the Parliament of Religions," has shown that from Midian, one of the sons of Keturah, came Jethro or Zoroaster.

Western thinkers are so matter-of-fact in their speech and thought that it might not have occurred to them that the true value of this story of Sarah and Hagar, like that of all else, not only in our own Bible but in the scriptures of other faiths, lies in the esoteric meaning, had it not been for Paul, that prince of occult philosophers, who distinctly says, according to the old version, that it is an allegory; according to the revised, that it contains an allegory: "for these women are two covenants," one bearing children unto bondage, the other unto freedom. It is our privilege, Paul goes on to teach, to be children of the free woman, but although we are this by birthright, yet there has to be a personal appreciation of that fact, and an effort to maintain our liberty. The mystical significance of this allegory has never been elucidated in reference to the position of woman, but it may well be considered as establishing her claim, not only for personal freedom, but for the integrity of the home. Acting according to the customs of the day, Sarah connived at her own degradation. Later, when her womanly dignity was developed by reason of her motherhood, she saw what should be her true position in her home, and she made her rightful demand for unrivalled supremacy in that home and in her husband's affections. She was blessed of God in taking that attitude, and was held up to the elect descendants of Abraham nearly 1660 years later by the Apostle Peter as an example to be imitated. And these later women are to be Sarah's daughters, we are told, if like her, they "are not afraid with any amazement," or as the new version hath it, if they "are not put in fear by any terror."

Even as mere history the life and character of Sarah certainly do not intimate that it was the Divine plan that woman was to be a subordinate, either in person or in her

home. Taken esoterically, as all ancient Oriental writings must be to get their full significance, it is an inspiration to woman to-day to stand for her liberty. The bondwoman must be cast out. All that makes for industrial bondage, for sex slavery and humiliation, for the dwarfing of individuality, and for the thralldom of the soul, must be cast out from our home, from society, and from our lives. The woman who does not claim her birthright of freedom will remain in the wilderness with the children that she has borne in degradation, heart starvation, and anguish of spirit, only to find that they are Ishmaels, with their hand against every man. They will be the subjects of Divine care and protection until their destiny is worked out. But she who is to be the mother of kings must herself be free, and have surroundings conducive to maintaining her own purity and dignity. After long ages of freedom shall have eradicated from woman's mind and heart the thought habits of the slave, then will she be a true daughter of Sarah, the Princess. C. B. C.

Abraham has been held up as one of the model men of sacred history. One credit he doubtless deserves, he was a monotheist, in the midst of the degraded and cruel forms of religion then prevalent in all the oriental world ; this man and his wife saw enough of the light to worship a God of Spirit. Yet we find his conduct to the last degree reprehensible. While in Egypt in order to gain wealth he voluntarily surrenders his wife to Pharaoh. Sarah having been trained in subjection to her husband had no choice but to obey his will. When she left the king, Abraham complacently took her back without objection, which was no more than he should do seeing that her sacrifice had brought him wealth and honor. Like many a modern millionaire he was not a self-made but a wife-made man. When Pharaoh sent him away with his dangerously beautiful wife he is described as, "being rich in cattle, in silver and in gold," but it is a little curious that the man who thus gained wealth as the price of his wife's dishonor should have been held up as a model of all the patriarchal virtues. L. D. B.

CHAPTER VII.

Genesis xxiv.

37 And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shall not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites in whose land I dwell.

38 But thou shalt go unto my fathers house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son.

39 And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me.

40 And he said unto me, The Lord, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house:

42 And I came this day unto the well, and said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, if now thou do prosper my way which I go:

43 Behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that when the virgin cometh to draw *water*, and I say to her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink:

44 And she say to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels: *let* the same *be* the woman whom the Lord hath appointed out for my master's son.

45 And before I had done speaking in mine heart behold Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down unto the well, and drew *water*: and I said unto her; Let me drink, I pray thee.

46 And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her *shoulder*, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: so I drank, and she made the camels drink also.

47 And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter *art* thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel Nahor's son, whom Malcah bare unto him: and I put the earring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands.

49 And now, if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me: and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left.

50 Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said. The thing proceedeth from the Lord: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good.

51 Behold, Rebekah *is* before thee; take *her*, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken.

53 And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave *them* to Rebekah; he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things.

56 And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the Lord hath prospered my way; send me away that I may go to my master.

57 And they said, we will call the damsel and inquire at her mouth.

58 And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.

59 And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse and Abraham's servant, and his men.

61 ¶ And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels; and followed the man: and the servant took Rebekah and went his way.

63 And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and behold, the camels *were* coming.

64 And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she lighted off the camel.

65 For she *had* said unto the servant, What man *is* this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant *had* said, It *is* my master: therefore she took a vail, and covered herself.

66 And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done.

67 And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife: and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's *death*.

HERE is the first account we have of a Jewish courtship. The women seem quite as resigned to the custom of "being taken" as the men "to take." Outside parties could no doubt in most cases make more judicious selections of

partners, than young folks themselves under the glamour of their ideals. Altogether the marriage of Isaac, though rather prosaic, has a touch of the romantic.

It has furnished the subject for some charming pictures, that decorate the galleries in the old world and the new. "Rebekah at the well," has been immortalized both on canvas and in marble. Women as milk-maids and drawers of water, with pails and pitchers on their heads, are always artistic, and far more attractive to men than those with votes in their hands at the polling booths, or as queens, ruling over the destinies of nations.

In fact, as soon as man left Paradise, he began by degrees to roll off of his own shoulders all he could of his curse, and place it on woman. Why did not Laban and Bethuel draw the water for the household and the cattle. Scott says that Eliezer had attendants with him who might have saved Rebekah the labor of drawing water for ten camels, but he would not interfere, as he wished to see whether she possessed the virtues of industry, affability and cheerfulness in being serviceable and hospitable.

It was certainly a good test of her patience and humility to draw water for an hour, with a dozen men looking on at their ease, and none offering help. The Rebekahs of 1895 would have promptly summoned the spectators to share their labors, even at the risk of sacrificing a desirable matrimonial alliance. The virtue of self-sacrifice has its wise limitations. Though it is most commendable to serve our fellow-beings, yet woman's first duty is to herself, to develop all her own powers and possibilities, that she may better guide and serve the next generation.

It is refreshing to find in the fifty-eighth verse that Rebekah was really supposed to have some personal interest and rights in the betrothal.

The meeting of Isaac and Rebekah in the field at eventide is charming. That sweet restful hour after the sun had gone down, at the end of a long journey from a far-off country. Rebekah must have been in just the mood to appreciate a strong

right arm on which to rest, a loving heart to trust, on the threshold of her conjugal life. To see her future lord for the first time, must have been very embarrassing to Rebekah. She no doubt concealed her blushes behind her veil, which Isaac probably raised at the first opportunity, to behold the charms of the bride whom the Lord had chosen for him. As Isaac was forty years old at this time, he probably made a most judicious and affectionate husband.

The 67th verse would be more appropriate to the occasion if the words "took Rebekah" had been omitted, leaving the text to read thus: "And Isaac brought her into his mother's tent, and she became his wife, and he loved her." This verse is remarkable as the first announcement of love on the part of a husband at first sight. We may indulge the hope that he confessed his love to Rebekah, and thus placed their conjugal relations on a more spiritual plane than was usual in those days. The Revising Committees by the infusion of a little sentiment into these ancient manuscripts, might have improved the moral tone of our ancestors' domestic relations, without falsifying the important facts of history. Many ancient writings in both sacred and profane history might be translated into more choice language, to the advantage of the rising generation. What we glean in regard to Rebekah's character in the following chapter shows, she, too, is lacking in a nice sense of honor.

With our ideal of the great first cause, a God of justice, wisdom and truth, the Jewish Lord, guiding and directing that people in all their devious ways, and sanctioning their petty immoralities seems strangely out of place; a very contradictory character, unworthy our love and admiration. The ancient Jewish ideal of Jehovah was not an exalted one.

E. C. S.

This romantic pastoral is most instructive as to the high position which women really held among the people whose religious history is the foundation of our own, and still further substanti-

ates our claim that the Bible does not teach woman's subordination. The fact that Rebekah was drawing water for family use does not indicate lack of dignity in her position, any more than the household tasks performed by Sarah. The wives and daughters of patriarchal families had their maid-servants just as the men of the family had their man-servants, and their position indicates only a division of responsibility. At this period, although queens and princesses were cooks and waiters, kings and princes did not hesitate to reap their own fields and slay their own cattle. We are told that Abraham rushed out to his herd and caught a calf to make a meal for the strangers, and that while he asked Sarah to make the cakes, he turned over the calf to a man servant to prepare for the table. Thus the labor of securing the food fell upon the male sex, while the labor of preparing it was divided between both.

The one supreme virtue among the patriarchs was hospitality, and no matter how many servants a person had it must be the royal service of his own hands that he performed for a guest. In harmony with this spirit Rebekah volunteered to water the thirsty camels of the tired and way-worn travellers. It is not at all likely that, as Mr. Scott suggests, Eliezer waited simply to test Rebekah's amiability. The test which he had asked for was sufficiently answered by her offering the service in the first place, and doubtless it would have been a churlish and ungracious breach of courtesy to have refused the proffered kindness.

That the Jewish women were treated with greater politeness than the daughters of neighboring peoples we may learn from the incident narrated of the daughters of Jethro who, even though their father was high priest of the country were driven away by the shepherds from the wells where they came to water their flocks. Of all outdoor occupations that of watering thirsty animals is, perhaps, the most fascinating, and if the work was harder for Rebekah than for our country maidens who water their animals from the trough well filled by the windmill she had the strength and the will for it, else she would have en-

trusted the task to some of the damsels of whom we read as her especial servants and who, as such, accompanied her to the land of Canaan.

The whole narrative shows Rebekah's personal freedom and dignity. She was alone at some distance from her family. She was not afraid of the strangers, but greeted them with the self-possession of a queen. The decision whether she should go or stay, was left wholly with herself, and her nurse and servants accompanied her. With grace and modesty she relieved the embarrassment of the situation by getting down from the altitude of the camel when Isaac came to meet her, and by enshrouding herself in a veil she very tactfully gave him an opportunity to do his courting in his own proper person, if he should be pleased to do so after hearing the servant's report.

It has been the judgment of masculine commentators that the veil was a sign of woman's subject condition, but even this may be disputed now that women are looking into history for themselves. The fashion of veiling a prospective bride was common to many nations, but to none where there were brutal ceremonies. The custom was sometimes carried to the extent, as in some parts of Turkey, of keeping the woman wholly covered for eight days previous to marriage, sometimes, as among the Russians, by not only veiling the bride, but putting a curtain between her and the groom at the bridal feast. In all cases the veil seems to have been worn to protect a woman from premature or unwelcome intrusion, and not to indicate her humiliated position. The veil is rather a reflection upon the habits and thoughts of men than a badge of inferiority for women.

How serenely beautiful and chaste appear the marriage customs of the Bible as compared with some that are wholly of man's invention. The Kamchatkan had to find his future wife alone and then fight with her and her female friends until every particle of clothing had been stripped from her and then the ceremony was complete. This may be called the other extreme from the veil. Something akin to this appears among our own kith and kin, so to speak, in modern times. Many instances of

marriage *en chemise* are on record in England of quite recent dates, the notion being that if a man married a woman in this garment only he was not liable for any debts which she might previously have contracted. At Whitehaven, England, 1766, a woman stripped herself to her chemise in the church and in that condition stood at the altar and was married.

There is nothing so degrading to the wife in all Oriental customs as our modern common law ruling that the husband owns the wife's clothing. This has been so held times innumerable, and in Connecticut quite recently a husband did not like the gowns his wife bought so he burned them. He was arrested for destruction of property, but his claim was sustained that they were his own so he could not be punished.

As long as woman's condition, outside of the Bible, has been as described by Macaulay when he said: "If there be a word of truth in history, women have been always, and still are over the greater part of the globe, humble companions, playthings, captives, menials, and beasts of burden," it is a comfort to reflect that among the Hebrews, whose records are relied on by the enemies of woman's freedom to teach her subjection, we find women holding the dignified position in the family that was held by Sarah and Rebekah.

C. B. C.

CHAPTER VIII.

Genesis x.vii.

1 Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah.

2 And she bare him Zimran and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.

5 ¶ And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac.

6 But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, unto the east country.

7 And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, a hundred and three score and fifteen years.

8 Then Abraham gave up the ghost.

9 And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the grave of Machpelah.

10 The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth; there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.

21 And Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

24 ¶ And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled she bore twins.

27 And the boys grew; and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob *was* a plain man, dwelling in tents.

28 And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of *his* venison; but Rebekah loved Jacob.

29 ¶ And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he *was* faint.

30 And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red *pottage*; for I am faint; therefore was his name called Edom.

31 And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.

32 And Esau said, Behold, I *am* at the point to die; and what profit shall this birthright do to me?

33 And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him; and he sold his birthright unto Jacob.

34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

IN these verses we have the account of Abraham's second marriage, and the birth of several sons. It does not seem clear from the text whether Keturah was a legal wife, or one of the Patriarch's numerous concubines. Clarke inclines to the latter idea, on account of Abraham's age, and then he gave all that he had to Isaac, and left Keturah's sons to share with those of other concubines, to whom he gave gifts and sent them away from his son Isaac to an eastern country. Abraham evidently thought that the descendants of Isaac might be superior in moral probity to those of his other sons, hence he desired to keep Isaac as exclusive as possible. But Jacob and Esau did not fulfill the Patriarch's expectations. Esau in selling his birthright for a mess of pottage, and Jacob taking advantage of his brother in a weak moment, and overreaching him in a bargain, alike illustrate the hereditary qualities of their ancestors.

Genesis xxvi.

6 ¶ And Isaac dwelt in Gerar.

7 And the men of the place asked him of his wife ; and he said, She *is* my sister ; for he feared to say, *She is* my wife ; lest, *said he*, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah ; because she was fair to look upon.

9 And Abimelech called Isaac, and said Behold, of a surety she *is* thy wife ; and how saidst thou, She *is* my sister ? And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die for her.

11 And Abimelech charged all *his* people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.

34 ¶ And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite ;

35 Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah.

The account of the private family affairs of Isaac and Rebekah ; their partiality to different sons ; Jacob, aided and abetted by his mother, robbing his elder brother of both his birthright and his father's blessing ; the parents on one of their eventful journeys representing themselves as brother and sister, instead of husband and wife, for fear that some potentate might kill Isaac, in order to possess his beautiful wife ; all these petty deceptions handed down from generation to generation, show that the law of heredity asserted itself even at that early day.

Abraham through fear denied that Sarah was his wife, and Isaac does the same thing. The grief of Isaac and Rebekah over Esau, was not that he took two wives, but that they were Hittites. Chapter xxvii gives the details of the manner that Jacob and his mother betrayed Isaac into giving the blessing to Jacob intended for Esau. One must read the whole story in order to appreciate the blind confidence Isaac placed in Rebekah's integrity ; the pathos of his situation ; the bitter disappointment of Esau ; Jacob's temptation, and the supreme wickedness of Rebekah in deceiving Isaac, defrauding Esau, and undermining the moral sense of the son she loved.

Having entirely undermined his moral sense, Rebekah fears the influence of Jacob's marriage with a daughter of the Hittites, and she sends him to her own people, to find a wife in the household of her uncle Laban. This is indeed a sad record of the cruel deception that Jacob and his mother palmed off on Isaac and Esau. Both verbal and practical lying were necessary to defraud the elder son, and Rebekah was equal to the

occasion. Neither she nor Jacob faltered in the hour of peril. Altogether it is a pitiful tale of greed and deception. Alas! where can a child look for lessons in truth, honor, and generosity, when the mother they naturally trust, sets at defiance every principle of justice and mercy to secure some worldly advantage. Rebekah in her beautiful girlhood at the well drawing water for man and beast, so full of compassion, does not exemplify the virtues we looked for, in her mature womanhood. The conjugal and maternal relations so far from expanding her most tender sentiments, making the heart from love to one grow bountiful to all, seem rather to have narrowed hers into the extreme of individual selfishness. In obedience to his mother's commands, Jacob starts on his journey to find a fitting wife. If Sarah and Rebekah are the types of womanhood the Patriarchs admired, Jacob need not have gone far to find their equal.

In woman's struggle for freedom during the last half century, men have been continually pointing her to the women of the Bible for examples worthy imitation, but we fail to see the merits of their character, their position, the laws and sentiments concerning them. The only significance of dwelling on these women and this period of woman's history, is to show the absurdity of pointing the women of the nineteenth century to these as examples of virtue.

E. C. S.

Keturah is spoken of as a concubine in I Chronicles i, 32. As such she held a recognized legal position which implied no disgrace in those days of polygamy, only the children of these secondary wives were not equal in inheritance. For this reason the sons of Keturah had to be satisfied with gifts while Isaac received the patrimony. Notice the charge of Abimelech to his people showing the high sense of honor in this Philistine. He seems also in the 10th verse to have realized the terrible guilt that it would have been if one of them had taken Rebekah, not knowing she was Isaac's wife. With all Rebekah's faults she seems to have had things her own way and therefore she did

not set any marked example of wifely submission for women of to-day to follow. Her great error was deceiving her husband to carry her point and this is always the result where woman is deprived in any degree of personal freedom unless she has attained high moral development.

C. B. C.

CHAPTER IX.

Genesis xxix.

1 Then Jacob went on his journey, and came into the land of the people of the east.

2 And he looked, and behold a well in the field, and lo, there *were* three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks; and a great stone *was* upon the well's mouth.

3 And thither were all the flocks gathered, and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in his place.

4 And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence be ye? And they said, Of Haran *are* we.

5 And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, we know *him*.

6 And he said unto them, *Is* he well? And they said, *He is* well: and behold Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep.

9 ¶ And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep: for she kept them.

10 And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban, his mother's brother, and Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother.

11 And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept.

12 And Jacob told Rachel that he *was* her father's brother, and that he was Rebekah's son: and she ran and told her father:

13 And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things.

14 And Laban said to him, Surely thou *art* my bone and my flesh. And he abode with him the space of a month.

15 ¶ And Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou *art* my brother, shouldst thou therefore serve me for nought? tell me, what shall thy wages *be*?

18 And Jacob loved Rachel: and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter.

19 And Laban said, *It is* better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man: abide with me.

20 And Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her.

21 ¶ And Jacob said unto Laban, Give *me* my wife, for my days are fulfilled.

JACOB'S journey to the land of Canaan in search of a wife, and the details of his courtship, have a passing interest with the ordinary reader, interested in his happiness and success. The classic ground for the cultivation of the tender emotions in these early days, seems to have been near a well, where the daughters of those who were rich in flocks and herds found opportunities to exhibit their fine points in drawing water for men and cattle. From the records of these interesting events, the girls seemed ready to accept the slightest advances from passing strangers, and to give their hands and hearts as readily as they gave a drink of water to the thirsty. Marriage was as simple a contract as the purchase of a lamb, the lamb and the woman having about an equal voice in the purchase, though

the lamb was not quite as ready to leave his accustomed grazing ground. Jacob loved Rachel at first sight, and agreed to serve Laban seven years, but when the time expired Laban did not keep his agreement, but insisted on Jacob taking the other sister, and serving seven years more for Rachel. Jacob submitted, but by the knowledge of a physiological law of which Laban was ignorant, he revenged himself, and obtained all the strongest and best of the flocks and herds. Thus in their business relations as well as in family matters, the Patriarchs seem to have played as sharp games in overreaching each other as the sons of our Pilgrim Fathers do to-day. In getting all they could out of Laban, Jacob and Rachel seem to have been of one mind.

A critical study of the Pentateuch is just now agitating the learned classes in Germany. Bonn is an ancient stronghold of theological learning, and two of the professors of its famous university have recently exhibited a courage in Biblical criticism and interpretation which has further extended the celebrity of the school, if it has not added to its repute for orthodoxy. In a course of lectures held during the university holidays, addressed to and largely attended by pastors, they declared the Old Testament history to "be a series of legends, and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob mythical persons." Israel, they declared, was an idolatrous people, Jehovah being nothing more than a "God of the Jewish Nation." This radical outbreak of criticism and interpretation has aroused considerable attention throughout Germany, and a declaration against it and other teachings of the kind has been signed by some hundreds of pastors and some thousands of laymen, but so far it has produced no effect whatever on the professors of Bonn, and there is no prospect of its doing so. It is fortunate for the faith thus assailed that the critical and rhetorical style of the ordinary German professor is too heavy for export or general circulation. So that the theories of Messrs. Graef and Meinhold are not likely to do the faith of the Fatherland any particular harm. That country has always

been divided into two classes, one of which believes nothing and the other everything, the latter numerically preponderant, but the former exceeding in erudition and dialectic—a condition of things quite certain to continue and on which a few essays more or less in destructive criticism can produce little effect.

E. C. S.

Mrs. Stanton's statements concerning the undeveloped religious sentiment of the early Hebrews cannot be criticized from the orthodox standpoint as in this account, where the God of Abraham is represented as taking an active personal interest in the affairs of the chosen people, they did not trust wholly to Him, but kept images of the gods of the neighboring tribes in their houses, Laban feeling sorry enough over their loss to go seven days' journey to recover them while his daughter felt she could not leave her father's house without taking the images with her as a protection.

The faults of Laban, of Jacob and of most of his sons are brought out without any reserve by the historian who follows the custom of early writers in stating things exactly as they were. There was no secrecy and little delicacy in connection with sexual matters. It may, however, be noticed that while this people had the same crude notions about these things that were common to other nations, yet every infraction of the Divine law of monogamy, symbolized in the account of the creation of woman in the second chapter of Genesis, brings its own punishment whether in or out of the marriage relation. When one or another people sinned against a Jewish woman the men of the family were the avengers, as when the sons of Jacob slew a whole city to avenge an outrage committed against their sister. Polygamy and concubinage wove a thread of disaster and complications throughout the whole lives of families and its dire effects are directly traceable in the feuds and degeneration of their descendants. The chief lesson taught by history is danger of violating, physically, mentally, or spiritually the personal integrity of woman. Customs of the

country and the cupidity of Laban, forced polygamy on Jacob, and all the shadows in his life, and he had no end of trouble in after years, are due to this. Perhaps nothing but telling their stories in this brutally frank way would make the lesson so plain.

If we search this narrative ever so closely it gives us no hint of Divinely intended subordination of woman. Jacob had to buy his wives with service which indicates that a high value was placed upon them. Now-a-days in high life men demand instead of give. The degradation of woman involved in being sold to a husband, to put it in the most humiliating way, is not comparable to the degradation of having to buy a husband. Euripides made Medea say: "We women are the most unfortunate of all creatures since we have to buy our masters at so dear a price," and the degradation of Grecian women is repeated—all flower-garlanded and disguised by show—in the marriage sentiments of our own civilization. Jacob was dominated by his wives as Abraham and Isaac had been and there is no hint of their subjection. Rachel's refusal to move when the gods were being searched for, showed that her will was supreme, nobody tried to force her to rise against her own desire.

The love which Jacob bore for Rachel has been through all time the symbol of constancy. Seven years he served for her, and so great was his love, so pure his delight in her presence that the time seemed but as a day. Had this simple, absorbing affection not been interfered with by Laban, how different would have been the tranquil life of Jacob and Rachel, developing undisturbed by the inevitable jealousies and vexations connected with the double marriage. Still this love was the solace of Jacob's troubled life and remained unabated until Rachel died and then found expression in tenderness for Benjamin, "the son of my right hand." It was no accident, but has a great significance, that this most ardent and faithful of Jewish lovers should have deeper spiritual experiences than any of his predecessors.

C. B. C.

CHAPTER X.

Genesis, xxix, xxxi.

18 And Jacob loved Rachel; and said I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter.

19 And Laban said, *It is* better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man; abide with me.

20 And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him *but* a few days, for the love he had to her.

21 ¶ And Jacob said unto Laban, Give *me* my wife, for my days are fulfilled.

22 And Laban gathered together all the men of the place and made a feast.

23 And it came to pass in the evening that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him.

26 And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the first-born.

27 We will give thee Rachel also thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.

28 And Jacob did so, and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also.

25 ¶ And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto my mine own place, and to my country.

26 Give *me* my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee, and let me go; for thou knowest my service which I have done thee.

17 ¶ Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels;

18 And he carried away all his cattle, and all his goods which he had gotten, the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padan-aram, for to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan.

19 And Laban went to shear his sheep; and Rachel had stolen the images that *were* her father's

20 And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled;

22 And it was told Laban on the third day, that Jacob was fled.

23 And he took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey; and they overtook him in the mount Gilead.

WHILE Laban played his petty deceptions on Jacob, the latter proved himself in fraud and overreaching fully his match. In being compelled to labor fourteen years for Rachel instead of seven, as agreed upon, he amply revenged himself in getting possession of all Laban's best cattle, availing himself of a physiological law in breeding of which Laban was profoundly ignorant.

The parting of Jacob and Laban was not amicable, although they did not come to an open rupture. Rachel's character for theft and deception is still further illustrated. Having stolen her father's images and hidden them under the camel's saddles and furniture, and sat thereon, when her father came to search for the images, which he valued highly, she said she was too ill to rise, so she calmly kept her seat, while the tent was searched and nothing found, thus by act as well as word, deceiving her father.

Jacob and his wives alike seemed to think Laban fair game for fraud and deception. As Laban knew his images were gone, he was left to suspect that Jacob knew where they were, so little regard had Rachel for the reputation of her husband. In making a God after their own image, who approved of whatever they did, the Jews did not differ much from ourselves; the men of our day talk too as if they reflected the opinions of Jehovah on the vital questions of the hour. In our late civil war both armies carried the Bible in their knapsacks, and both alike prayed to the same God for victory, as if he could be in favor of slavery and against it at the same time.

Like the women, too, who are working and praying for woman suffrage, both in the state legislature and in their closets, and others against it, to the same God and legislative assembly. One must accept the conclusion that their acquaintance with the Lord was quite as limited as our own in this century, and that they were governed by their own desires and judgment, whether for good or evil, just as we are; their plans by day and their dreams by night having no deeper significance than our own. Some writers say that the constant interposition of God in their behalf was because they needed his special care and attention. But the irregularity and ignorance of their lives show clearly that their guiding hand was of human origin. If the Jewish account is true, then the God of the Hebrews falls far short of the Christian ideal of a good, true manhood, and the Christian ideal as set forth in the New Testament falls short of our ideal of the Heavenly Father to-day. We have no fault to find with the Bible as a mere history of an ignorant, undeveloped people, but when special inspiration is claimed for the historian, we must judge of its merits by the moral standard of to-day, and the refinement of the writer by the questionable language in which he clothes his descriptions.

We have often wondered that the revising committees that have gone over these documents so often, should have adhered so closely to such gross translations. Surely a fact related to us in coarse language, is not less a fact when repeated in choice

words. We need an expurgated edition of most of the books called holy before they are fit to place in the hands of the rising generation.

Some members of the Revising Committee write me that the tone of some of my comments should be more reverent in criticising the "Word of God." Does any one at this stage of civilization think the Bible was written by the finger of God, that the Old and New Testaments emanated from the highest divine thought in the universe? Do they think that all the men who wrote the different books were specially inspired, and that all the various revising committees that have translated, interpolated, rejected some books and accepted others, who have dug round the roots of the Greek and Hebrew to find out the true meaning, have one and all been watched and guided in their literary labors by the great spirit of the universe, who by immutable law holds the solar system in place, every planet steadily moving in its own elliptic, worlds upon worlds revolving in order and harmony?

These great object-lessons in nature and the efforts of the soul to fathom the incomprehensible, are more inspiring than any written page. To this "Word of God" I bow with reverence, and I can find no language too exalted to express my love, my faith, my admiration.

To criticise the peccadilloes of Sarah, Rebekah and Rachel does not shadow the virtues of Deborah, Huldah and Vashti; to condemn the laws and customs of the Jews as recorded in the book of Genesis, does not destroy the force of the golden rule and the ten commandments. Parts of the Bible are so true, so grand, so beautiful, that it is a pity it should have been bound in the same volume with sentiments and descriptions so gross and immoral.

E. C. S.

CHAPTER XI.

Genesis xxv.

8 But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Beth-el under an oak: and the name of it was called Allonbachuth.

9 ¶ And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-aram, and blessed him.

10 And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: Thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel.

16 ¶ And they journeyed from Beth-el; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labor.

17 The midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also.

18 And it came to pass as her soul was in departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin.

19 And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Beth-lehem.

20 And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.

WHY Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, should be interjected here does not appear. However, if all Isaac's and Jacob's children had been intrusted to her care through the perils of infancy, it was fitting that the younger generation with their father should pause in their journey and drop a tear to her memory, and cultivate a tender sentiment for the old oak tree at Bethel.

There is no manifestation of gratitude more beautiful in family life than kindness and respect to servants for long years of faithful service, especially for those who have watched the children night and day, tender in sickness, and patient with all their mischief in health. In dealing with children one needs to exercise all the cardinal virtues, more tact, diplomacy, more honor and honesty than even an ambassador to the Court of St. James. Children readily see whom they can trust, on whose word they can rely.

In Rachel's hour of peril the midwife whispers sweet words of consolation. She tells her to fear not, that she will have a son, and he will be born alive. Whether she died herself is of small importance so that the boy lived. Scott points a moral on the death of Rachel. He thinks she was unduly anxious to have sons, and so the Lord granted her prayers to her own

destruction. If she had accepted with pious resignation whatever weal or woe naturally fell to her lot, she might have lived to a good old age, and been buried by Jacob's side at last, and not left alone in Bethlehem. People who obstinately seek what they deem their highest good, oftentimes perish in the attainment of their ambition. (Thus Scott philosophizes.)

Jacob was evidently a man of but little sentiment. The dying wife gasps a name for her son, but the father pays no heed to her request, and chooses one to suit himself. Though we must admit that Benjamin is more dignified than Ben-oni; the former more suited to a public officer, the latter to a household pet. And now Rachel is gone, and her race with Leah for children is ended. The latter with her maids is the victor, for she can reckon eight sons, while Rachel with hers can muster only four. One may smile at this ambition of the women for children, but a man's wealth was estimated at that time by the number of his children and cattle; women who had no children were objects of pity and dislike among the Jewish tribes. The Jews of to-day have much of the same feeling. They believe in the home sphere for all women, that wifehood and motherhood are the most exalted offices. If they are really so considered, why does every Jew on each returning Holy Day say in reading the service, "I thank thee, oh Lord! that I was not born a woman!"? And if Gentiles are of the same opinion, why do they consider the education of boys more important than that of girls? Surely those who are to fill the most responsible offices should have the most thorough and liberal education.

The home sphere has so many attractions that most women prefer it to all others. A strong right arm on which to lean, a safe harbor where adverse winds never blow, nor rough seas roll, makes a most inviting picture. But alas! even good husbands sometime die, and the family drifts out on the great ocean of life, without chart or compass, or the least knowledge of the science of navigation. In such emergencies the woman trained to self-protection, self-independence, and self-support holds

the vantage ground against all theories on the home sphere.

The first mention we have of an aristocratic class of Kings and Dukes, is in the line of Cain's descendants.

Genesis xxxvi.

18 And these are the sons of Aholibamah, Esau's wife: duke Jeush, duke Jaalam, duke Korah: these

were the dukes that came of Aholibamah the daughter of Anah Esau's wife.

The name Aholibamah has a suggestion of high descent, but the historian tells us nothing of the virtues or idiosyncrasies of character, such a high-sounding name suggests, but simply that she was the daughter of Anah, and the wife of Esau, and that she was blessed with children, all interesting facts, which might have been intensified with a knowledge of some of her characteristics, what she thought, said and did, her theories of life in general. One longs all through Genesis to know what the women thought of a strictly masculine dynasty.

Some writers claim that these gross records of primitive races, have a deep spiritual meaning, that they are symbolical of the struggles of an individual soul from animalism to the highest, purest development of all the Godlike in man.

Some on the Revising Committee take this view, and will give us from time to time more exalted interpretations than the account in plain English conveys to the ordinary mind.

In my exegesis thus far, not being versed in scriptural metaphors and symbols, I have attempted no scientific interpretation of the simple narration, merely commenting on the supposed facts as stated. As the Bible is placed in the hands of children and uneducated men and women to point them the way of salvation, the letter should have no doubtful meaning. What should we think of guide posts on our highways, if we needed a symbolical interpreter at every point to tell us which way to go? the significance of the letters? and the point of compass indicated by the digital finger? Learned men have revised the Scriptures times without number, and I do not propose to go back of the latest Revision.

E. C. S.

CHAPTER XII.

Genesis xxxix.

1 And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the Ishmaelites, which had brought him down thither.

2 And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian.

4 And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house and all that he had he put into his hand.

7 ¶ And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she solicited him.

8 But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what *is* with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand.

9 How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?

10 And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, and she caught him by his garment, and he left his garment in her hand and fled.

13 And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and was fled forth,

14 That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath

brought in a Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me, and I cried with a loud voice:

15 And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled.

16 And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home.

17 And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me:

18 And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out.

19 And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, that his wrath was kindled.

20 And Joseph's master took him; and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners *were* bound: and he was there in the prison.

21 ¶ But the Lord was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that *were* in the prison; and whatever they did there, he was the doer *of it*.

POTIPHAR'S wife surpasses all the women yet mentioned in perfidy and dishonor.

Joseph's virtues, his dignity, his honor, go far to redeem the reputation of his ancestors, and the customs of his times. It would have been generous, at least, if the editor of these pages could have given us one woman the counterpart of Joseph, a noble, high-minded, virtuous type. Thus far those of all the different nationalities have been of an ordinary low type. Historians usually dwell on the virtues of the people, the heroism of their deeds, the wisdom of their words, but the sacred fabulist dwells on the most questionable behavior of the Jewish race.

and much in character and language that we can neither print nor answer.

Indeed the Pentateuch is a long painful record of war, corruption, rapine, and lust. Why Christians who wished to convert the heathen to our religion should send them these books, passes all understanding. It is most demoralizing reading for children and the unthinking masses, giving all alike the lowest possible idea of womanhood, having no hope nor ambition beyond conjugal unions with men they scarcely knew, for whom they could not have had the slightest sentiment of friendship, to say nothing of affection. There is no mention of women except when the advent of sons is announced. When the Children of Israel go down into Egypt we are told that the wives of Jacob's sons were taken too, but we hear nothing of Jacob's wives or concubines, until the death and burial of Leah is incidentally mentioned. Throughout the book of Genesis the leading men declare from time to time that the Lord comes to them and promises great fruitfulness. A strange promise in that it could only be fulfilled in questionable relations. To begin with Abraham, and go through to Joseph, leaving out all conjugal irregularities, we find Abraham and Sarah had Isaac, Isaac and Rebekah had Jacob and Esau. Jacob and Rachel (for she alone was his true wife), had Joseph and Benjamin. Joseph and Asenath had Manassah and Ephraim. Thus giving the Patriarchs just seven legitimate descendants in the first generation. If it had not been for polygamy and concubinage, the great harvest so recklessly promised would have been meagre indeed.

Genesis xli.

45 ¶ And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potar-pherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.

46 ¶ And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt.

50 And unto Joseph were born two sons, before the years of the famine came: which Asen-

ath the daughter of Poti-pherah priest of On bare unto him.

51 And Joseph called the name of the first-born Manassah: For God, *said he*, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house.

52 And the name of the second called he Ephraim: For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.

This is all we ever hear of Asenath, that she was a good woman,

probably worthy of Joseph, it is fair to infer, for had she been otherwise her evil deeds would have been recorded. A few passing remarks where ever we find the mention of woman is about all we can vouchsafe. The writer probably took the same view of the virtuous woman as the great Roman General who said "the highest praise for Cæsar's wife is that she should never be mentioned at all."

The texts on Lot's daughters and Tamar we omit altogether, as unworthy a place in the "Woman's Bible." In the remaining chapters of Genesis, the brethren of Joseph take leave of each other; the fathers bless their sons and grandsons, and also take leave of each other, some to go to remote parts of the country, some to die at a ripe old age. As nothing is said of their wives and daughters, the historian probably knew nothing of their occupations nor environments. Joseph was a hundred and ten years old when he died. They embalmed him according to the custom in Egypt, and put him in a coffin, and buried him in the land of his fathers, where his brethren had promised to take his bones after death to rest with his kindred at last.

E. C. S.

The literal translation of the first verse of chapter xxxix of Genesis is as follows:

"And Joseph was brought down to Egypt, and Potiphar, Pharaoh's eunuch, chief of the cooks, an Egyptian bought him of the Ishmaelites who brought him down."

These facts which are given in Julia Smith's translation of the Bible throw a new light on the story of Joseph and the woman who was Potiphar's wife only in name. L. D. B.