CHALDEA

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CHAPTER VI. MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

Chaldaea, unlike Egypt, has preserved to our day but few records of the private or domestic life of its inhabitants. Beyond the funereal customs, to which reference was made in the last chapter, we can obtain from the monuments but a very scanty account of their general mode of life, manners, and usages. Some attempt, however, must be made to throw together the few points of this nature on which we have obtained any light from recent researches in Mesopotamia.

The ordinary dress of the common people among the Chaldaeans seems to have consisted of a single garment, a short tunic, tied round the waist, and reaching thence to the knees, a costume very similar to that worn by the Madan Arabs at the present day. To this may sometimes have been added an _abba,_ or cloak, thrown over the shoulders, and falling below the tunic, about half-way down the calf of the leg. The material of the former we may perhaps presume to have been linen, which best suits the climate, and is a fabric found in the ancient tombs. The outer cloak was most likely of woollen, and served to protect hunters and others against the occasional inclemency of the air. The feet were unprotected by either shoes or sandals; on the head was worn a skull-cap, or else a band of camel's hairs--the germ of the turban which has now become universal throughout the East.

The costume of the richer class was more elaborate. A high mitre, of a very peculiar appearance, or else a low cap ornamented with two curved horns, covered the head. [PLATE XIX. Fig. 1.] The neck and arms were bare. The chief garment was a long gown or robe, extending from the neck to the feet, commonly either striped or flounced, or both; and sometimes also adorned with fringe. This robe, which was scanty according to modern notions, appears not to have been fastened by any girdle or cincture round the waist, but to have been kept in place by passing over one shoulder, a slit or hole being made for the arm on one side of the dress only. In some cases the upper part of the dress seems to have been detached from the lower, and to have formed a sort of jacket, which reached about to the hips.

The beard was commonly worn straight and long, not in crisp curls, as by the Assyrians. [PLATE XIX., Fig. 2.] The hair was also worn long, either gathered together into a club behind the head, or depending in long spiral curls on either side the face and down the back. Ornaments were much affected, especially by the women. Bronze and iron bangles and armlets, and bracelets of rings or beads, ear-rings, and rings for the toes, are common in the tombs, and few female skeletons are without them. The material of the ornaments is generally of small value. Many of the rings are formed by grinding down a small kind of shell; the others are of bronze or iron. Agate beads, however, are not uncommon, and gold beads have been found in a few tombs, as well as some other small ornaments in the same material. The men seem to have carried generally an engraved cylinder in agate or other hard stone, which was used as a seal or signet, and was probably worn round the wrist. Sometimes rings, and even bracelets, formed also a part of their adornment. The latter were occasionally in gold--they consisted of bands or fillets of the pure beaten metal, and were as much as an inch in breadth.

The food of the early Chaldaeans consisted probably of the various esculents which have already been mentioned as products of the territory. The chief support, however, of the mass of the population was, beyond a doubt, the dates, which still form the main sustenance of those who inhabit the country. It is clear that in Babylonia, as in Scythia, the practice existed of burying with a man a quantity of the food to which he had been accustomed during life. In the Chaldaean sepulchres a number of dishes are always ranged round the skeleton, containing the viaticum of the deceased person, and in these dishes are almost invariably found a number of date-stones. They are most commonly unaccompanied by any traces of other kinds of food; occasionally, however, besides date-stones, the bones of fish and of chickens have been discovered, from which we may conclude that those animals were eaten, at any rate by the upper classes. Herodotus tells us that in his day three tribes of Babylonians subsisted on fish alone; and the present inhabitants of Lower Mesopotamia make it a principal article of their diet. The rivers and the marshes produce it in great abundance, while the sea is also at hand, if the fresh-water supply should fail. Carp and barbel are the principal fresh-water sorts, and of these the former grows to a very great size in the Euphrates. An early tablet, now in the British Museum, represents a man carrying a large fish by the head, which may be a carp, though the species can scarcely be identified. There is evidence that the wild-boar was also eaten by the primitive people; for Mr. Loftus found a jaw of this animal, with the tusk still remaining, lying in a shallow clay dish in one of the tombs. Perhaps we may be justified in concluding, from the comparative rarity of any remains of animal food in the early sepulchres, that the primitive Chaldaeans subsisted chiefly on vegetable productions. The variety and excellence of such esculents are prominently put forward by Berosus in his account of the original condition of the country; and they still form the principal support of those who now inhabit it.

We are told that Nimrod was "a mighty hunter before the Lord;" and it is evident, from the account already given of the animals indigenous in Lower Mesopotainia, that there was abundant room for the display of a sportsman's skill and daring when men first settled in that region. The Senkareh tablets show the boldness and voracity of the Chaldaean lion, which not only levied contributions on the settlers' cattle, but occasionally ventured to attack man himself. We have not as yet any hunting scenes belonging to these early times; but there can be little doubt that the bow was the chief weapon used against the king of beasts, whose assailants commonly prefer remaining at a respectful distance from him. The wild-boar may have been hunted in the same way, or he may have been attacked with a spear--a weapon equally well known with the bow to the early settlers. Fish were certainly taken with the hook; for fish-hooks have been found in the tombs; but probably they were also captured in nets, which are among the earliest of human inventions.

A considerable portion of the primitive population must have been engaged in maritime pursuits. In the earliest inscriptions we find constant mention of the "ships of Ur," which appear to have traded with Ethiopia --a country whence may have been derived the gold, which--as has been already shown--was so largely used by the Chaldaeans in ornamentation. It would be interesting could we regard it as proved that they traded also with the Indian peninsula; but the "rough logs of wood, apparently teak," which Mr. Taylor discovered in the great temple at Mugheir, belong more probably to the time of its repair by Nabonidus than to that of its original construction by a Chaldaean monarch. The Sea-God was one of the chief objects of veneration at Ur and elsewhere; and Berosus appears to have preserved an authentic tradition, where he makes the primitive

people of the country derive their arts and civilization from "the Red Sea." Even if their commercial dealings did not bring them into contact with any more advanced people, they must have increased the intelligence, as well as the material resources, of those employed in them, and so have advanced their civilization.

Such are the few conclusions concerning the manners of the Chaldaeans which alone we seem to have any right to form with our present means of information.

CHAPTER VII. RELIGION.

The religion of the Chaldaeans, from the very earliest times to which the monuments carry us back, was, in its outward aspect, a polytheism of a very elaborate character. It is quite possible that there may have been esoteric explanations, known to the priests and the more learned, which, resolving the personages of the Pantheon into the powers of nature, reconciled the apparent multiplicity of gods with monotheism, or even with atheism. So far, however, as outward appearances were concerned, the worship was grossly polytheistic. Various deities, whom it was not considered at all necessary to trace to a single stock, divided the allegiance of the people, and even of the kings, who regarded with equal respect, and glorified with equally exalted epithets, some fifteen or sixteen personages. Next to these principal gods were a far more numerous assemblage of inferior or secondary divinities, less often mentioned, and regarded as less worthy of honor, but still recognized generally through the country. Finally, the Pantheon contained a host of mere local gods or genii, every town and almost every village in Babylonia being under the protection of its own particular divinity.

It will be impossible to give a complete account of this vast and complicated system. The subject is still but partially worked out by cuneiform scholars; the difficulties in the way of understanding it are great; and in many portions to which special attention has been paid it is strangely perplexing and bewildering. All that will be attempted in the present place is to convey an idea of the general character of the Chaldaean religion, and to give some information with regard to the principal deities.

In the first place, it must be noticed that the religion was to a certain extent astral. The heaven itself, the sun, the moon, and the five planets, have each their representative in the Chaldaean Pantheon among the chief objects of worship. At the same time it is to be observed that the astral element is not universal, but partial; and that, even where it has place, it is but one aspect of the mythology, not by any means its full and complete exposition. The Chaldaean religion even here is far from being mere Sabaeanism--the simple worship of the "host of heaven." The aether, the sun, the moon, and still more the five planetary gods, are something above and beyond those parts of nature. Like the classical Apollo and Diana, Mars and Venus, they are real persons, with a life and a history, a power and an influence, which no ingenuity can translate into a metaphorical representation of phenomena attaching to the air and to the heavenly bodies. It is doubtful, indeed, whether the gods of this class are really of astronomical origin, and not rather primitive deities, whose character and attributes were, to a great extent, fixed and settled before the notion arose of connecting them with certain parts of nature. Occasionally they seem to represent heroes rather than celestial bodies; and they have all attributes quite distinct from their physical or astronomical character.

Secondly, the striking resemblance of the Chaldaean system to that of the Classical Mythology seems worthy of particular attention. This resemblance is too general, and too close in some respects, to allow of the supposition that mere accident has produced the coincidence. In the Pantheons of Greece and Rome, and in that of Chaldaea, the same general grouping is to be recognized; the

same genealogical succession is not unfrequently to be traced; and in some cases even the familiar names and titles of classical divinities admit of the most curious illustration and explanation from Chaldaean sources. We can scarcely doubt but that, in some way or other, there was a communication of beliefs--a passage in very early times, from the shores of the Persian Gulf to the lands washed by the Mediterranean, of mythological notions and ideas. It is a probable conjecture that among the primitive tribes who dwelt on the Tigris and Euphrates, when the cuneiform alphabet was invented and when such writing was first applied to the purposes of religion, a Scythic or Scytho-Arian race existed, who subsequently migrated to Europe, and brought with them those mythical traditions which, as objects of popular belief, had been mixed up in the nascent literature of their native country, and that these traditions were passed on to the classical nations, who were in part descended from this Scythic or Scytho-Arian people.

The grouping of the principal Chalda an deities is as follows. At the head of the Pantheon stands a god, Il or Ra, of whom but little is known. Next to him is a Triad, _Ana, Bil_ or _Belus,_ and _Hea_ or _Hoa,_ who correspond closely to the classical Pluto, Jupiter, and Neptune. Each of these is accompanied by a female principle or wife, _Ana_ by _Anat, Bil_ (or Bel) by _Mulita_ or _Beltis,_ and _Hea_ (or _Hoa_) by _Davkina_. Then follows a further Triad, consisting of _Sin_ or _Hurki,_ the Moon-god; _San_ or _Sansi,_ the Sun; and _Vul_ the god of the atmosphere. The members of this Triad are again accompanied by female powers or wives,--_Vul_ by a goddess called _Shala_ or _Tala, San_ (the Sun) by _Gula_ or _Anunit,_ and _Hurki_ (the Moon) by a goddess whose name is wholly uncertain, but whose common title is "the great lady."

Such are the gods at the head of the Pantheon. Next in order to them we find a group of five minor deities, the representatives of the five planets,--Nin or Ninip (Saturn), Merodach (Jupiter), Nergal (Mars), Ishtar (Venus), and Nebo (Mercury). These together constitute what we have called the _principal_ gods; after them are to be placed the numerous divinities of the second and third order.

These principal gods do not appear to have been connected, like the Egyptian and the classical divinities, into a single genealogical scheme: yet still a certain amount of relationship was considered to exist among them. Ana and Bel, for instance, were brothers, the sons of Il or Ra; Vul was son of Ana; Hurki, the Moon-god, of Bel; Nebo and Merodach were sons of Hea or Hoa. Many deities, however, are without parentage, as not only Il or Ra, but Hea, San (the Sun), Ishtar, and Nergal. Sometimes the relationship alleged is confused, and even contradictory, as in the case of Nin or Ninip, who is at one time the son, at another the father of Bel, and who is at once the son and the husband of Beltis. It is evident that the genealogical aspect is not that upon which much stress is intended to be laid, or which is looked upon as having much reality. The great gods are viewed habitually rather as a hierarchy of coequal powers, than as united by ties implying on the one hand pre-eminence and on the other subordination.

We may now consider briefly the characters and attributes of the several deities so far as they can be made out, either from the native records, or from classical tradition. And, first, concerning the god who stands in some sense at the head of the Chaldaean Pantheon.

IL, or RA.

The form Ra represents probably the native Chaldaean name of this deity, while _Il_ is the Semitic equivalent. _Il,_ of course, is but a variant of _El,_ the root of the well-known Biblical _Elohim_ as well as of the Arabic _Allah_. It is this name which Diodorus represents under the form of Elms ('H??oc), 7 and Sanchoniathon, or rather Philo-Byblius, under that of _Elus_ or _Ilus_. The meaning of

the word is simply "God," or perhaps "the god" emphatically. _Ra,_ the Cushite equivalent, must be considered to have had the same force originally, though in Egypt it received a special application to the sun, and became the proper name of that particular deity. The word is lost in the modern Ethiopic. It formed an element in the native name of Babylon, which was _Ka-ra,_ the Cushite equivalent of the Semitic _Bab-il,_ an expression signifying "the gate of God."

Ra is a god with few peculiar attributes. He is a sort of fount and origin of deity, too remote from man to be much worshipped or to excite any warm interest. There is no evidence of his having had any temple in Chaldaea during the early times. A belief in his existence is implied rather than expressed in inscriptions of the primitive kings, where the Moon-god is said to be "brother's son of Ana, and eldest son of Bil, or Belus." We gather from this that Bel and Ana were considered to have a common father; and later documents sufficiently indicate that that common father was Il or Ra. We must conclude from the name _Babil,_ that Babylon was originally under his protection, though the god specially worshipped in the great temple there seems to have been in early times Bel, and in later times Merodach. The identification of the Chaldaean, Il or Ra with Saturn, which Diodorus makes, and which may seem to derive some confirmation from Philo-Byblius, is certainly incorrect, so far as the planet Saturn, which Diodorus especially mentions, is concerned; but it may be regarded as having a basis of truth, inasmuch as Saturn was in one sense the chief of the gods, and was the father of Jupiter and Pluto, as Ra was of Bil and Ana.

ANA.

Ana, like Il and Ra, is thought to have been a word originally signifying "God," in the highest sense. The root occurs probably in the Annedotus and Oannes of Berosus, as well as in Philo-Byblius's Anobret. In its origin it is probably Cushite: but it was adopted by the Assyrians, who inflected the word which was indeclinable in the Chaldaean tongue, making the nominative Anu, the genitive Ani, and the accusative Ana.

Ana is the head of the first Triad, which follows immediately after the obscure god Ra. His position is well marked by Damascius, who gives the three gods, Anus, Illinus, and Aus, as next in succession to the primeval pair, Assorus and Missara. He corresponds in many respects to the classical Hades or Pluto, who, like him, heads the triad to which he belongs. His epithets are chiefly such as mark priority and antiquity. He is called "the old Ana," "the original chief," perhaps in one place "the father of the gods," and also "the Lord of spirits and demons." Again, he bears a number of titles which serve to connect him with the infernal regions. He is "the king of the lower world," the "Lord of darkness" or "death," "the ruler of the far-off city," and the like. The chief seat of his worship is Huruk or Erech--the modern Warka--which becomes the favorite Chaldaean burying city, as being under his protection. There are some grounds for thinking that one of his names was _Dis._ If this was indeed so, it would seem to follow, almost beyond a doubt, that _Dis,_ the lord of Orcus in Roman mythology, must have been a reminiscence brought from the East--a lingering recollection of _Dis_ or Ana, patron god of Erech (_Opex_ of the LXX), the great city of the dead, the necropolis of Lower Babylonia. Further, curiously enough, we have, in connection with this god, an illustration of the classical confusion between Pluto and Plutus; for Ana is "the layer-up of treasures"--the "lord of the earth" and of the "mountains," whence the precious metals are derived.

The worship of Ana by the kings of the Chaldaean series is certain. Not only did Shanias-vul, the son of Ismi-dagon, raise a temple to the honor of Ana and his son Vul at Kileh-Shergat (or Asshur) about B.C. 1830--whence that city appears in later times to have borne the name of Telane, or "the

mound of Ana"--but Urukh himself mentions him as a god in an inscription quoted above; and there is reason to believe that from at least as early a date he was recognized as the presiding deity at Erech or Warka. This is evident from the fact, that though the worship of Beltis superseded that of Ana in the great temple at that place from a very remote epoch, yet the temple itself always retained the title of Bit-Ana (or Beth-Ana), "the house of Ana;" and Beltis herself was known commonly as "the lady of Bit-Ana," from the previous dedication to this god of the shrine in question. Ana must also have been worshipped tolerably early at Nipur (Rifer), or that city could scarcely have acquired, by the time of Moses, the appellation of Calneh in the Septuagint translation, which is clearly Kal Ana, "the fort of Ana."

Ana was supposed to have a wife, Anata, of whom a few words will be said below. She bore her husband a numerous progeny. One tablet shows a list of nine of their children, among which, however, no name occurs of any celebrity. But there are two sons of Ana mentioned elsewhere, who seem entitled to notice. One is the god of the atmosphere, Vul (?), of whom a full account will be hereafter given. The other bears the name of Martu, and may be identified with the _Brathy_ of Sanchoniathon. He represents "Darkness," or "the West," corresponding to the Erebus of the Greeks.

ANATA.

Anat or Anata has no peculiar characteristics. As her name is nothing but the feminine form of the masculine Ana, so she herself is a mere reflection of her husband. All his epithets are applied to her, with a simple difference of gender. She has really no personality separate from his, resembling Amente in Egyptian mythology, who is a mere feminine Ammon. She is rarely, if ever, mentioned in the historical and geographical inscriptions.

BIL, or ENU.

Bil or Enu is the second god of the first Triad. He is, probably, the Illinus (_Il-Enu_ or "God Enu ") of Damascius. His name, which seems to mean merely "lord," is usually followed by a qualificative adjunct, possessing great interest. It is proposed to read this term as _Nipru,_ or in the feminine _Niprut,_ a word which cannot fail to recall the Scriptural Nimrod, who is in the Septuagint Nebroth. The term nipru seems to be formed from the root napar, which is in Syriac to "pursue," to "make to flee," and which has in Assyrian nearly the same meaning. Thus Bil-Nipru would be aptly translated as "the Hunter Lord," or "the god presiding over the chase," while, at the same time, it might combine the meaning of "the Conquering Lord" or "the Great Conqueror."

On these grounds it is reasonable to conclude that we have, in this instance, an admixture of hero-worship in the Chaldaean religion. Bil-Nipru is probably the Biblical Nimrod, the original founder of the monarchy, the "mighty hunter" and conqueror. At the same time, however, that he is this hero deified, he represents also, as the second god of the first Triad, the classical Jupiter. He is "the supreme," "the father of the gods," "the procreator," "the Lord," _par excellence,_ "the king of all the spirits," "the lord of the world," and again, "the lord of all the countries." There is some question whether he is altogether to be identified with the Belus of the Greek writers, who in certain respects rather corresponds to Merodach. When Belus, however, is called the first king, the founder of the empire, or the builder of Babylon, it seems necessary to understand Bil-Nipru or Bel-Nimrod. Nimrod, we know, built Babylon; and Babylon was called in Assyrian times "the city of Bil-Nipru," while its famous defences--the outer and the inner wall--were known, even under Nebuchadnezzar, by the name of the same god.--Nimrod, again, was certainly the founder of the kingdom; and, therefore, if Bil-Nipru is his representative, he would be Belus under that point of view.

The chief seat of Bel-Nimrod's worship was undoubtedly Nipur (Niffer) or Calneh. Not only was this city designated by the very same name as the god, and specially dedicated to him and to his wife Beltis, but Bel-Nimrod is called "Lord of Nipra," and his wife "Lady of Nipra," in evident allusion to this city or the tract wherein it was placed. Various traditions, as will be hereafter shown, connect Nimrod with Niffer, which may fairly be regarded as his principal capital. Here then he would be naturally first worshipped upon his decease; and here seems to have been situated his famous temple called Kharris-Nipra, so noted for its wealth, splendor, and antiquity, which was an object of intense veneration to the Assyrian kings. Besides this celebrated shrine, he does not appear to have possessed many others. He is sometimes said to have had four "arks" or "tabernacles;" but the only places besides Niffer, where we know that he had buildings dedicated to him, are Calah (Nimrud) and Dur-Kurri-galzu (Akkerkuf). At the same time he is a god almost universally acknowledged in the invocations of the Babylonian and Assyrian kings, in which he has a most conspicuous place. In Assyria he seems to be inferior only to Asshur; in Chaldaea to Ra and Ana.

Of Beltis, the wife of Bel-Nimrod, a full account will be given presently. Nin or Ninip--the Assyrian Hercules--was universally regarded as their son; and he is frequently joined with Bel-Nimrod in the invocations. Another famous deity, the Moon-god, Sin or Hurki, is also declared to be Bel-Nimrod's son in some inscriptions. Indeed, as "the father of the gods," Bel-Nimrod might evidently claim an almost infinite paternity.

The worship of Bel-Nimrod in Chaldaea extends through the whole time of the monarchy. It has been shown that he was probably the deified Nimrod, whose apotheosis would take place shortly after his decease. Urukh, the earliest monumental king, built him a temple at Niffer; and Kurri-galzu, one of the latest, paid him the same honor at Akkerkuf. Urukh also frequently mentions him in his inscriptions in connection with Hurki, the Moon-god, whom he calls his "eldest son."

BELTIS.

Beltis, the wife of Bel-Nimrod, presents a strong contrast to Anata, the wife of Ana. She is far more than the mere female power of Bel-Nimrod, being in fact a separate and very important deity. Her common title is "the Great Goddess." In Chaldaea her name was Mulita or Enuta--both words signifying "the Lady;" in Assyria she was Bilta or Bilta-Nipruta, the feminine forms of Bil and Bilu-Nipru. Her favorite title was "the Mother of the Gods," or "the Mother of the Great Gods:" whence it is tolerably clear that she was the "Dea Syria" worshipped at Hierapolis under the Arian appellation of Mabog. Though commonly represented as the wife of Bel-Nimrod, and mother of his son Nin or Ninip, she is also called "the wife of Nin," and in one place "the wife of Asshur." Her other titles are "the lady of Bit-Ana," "the lady of Nipur," "the Queen of the land" or "of the lands," "the great lady," "the goddess of war and battle," and the "queen of fecundity." She seems thus to have united the attributes of the Juno, the Ceres or Demeter, the Bellona, and even the Diana of the classical nations: for she was at once the queen of heaven, the goddess who makes the earth fertile, the goddess of war and battle, and the goddess of hunting. In these latter capacities she appears, however, to have been gradually superseded by Ishtar, who sometimes even appropriates her higher and more distinctive appellations.

The worship of Beltis was wide-spread, and her temples were very numerous. At Erech (Warka) she was worshipped on the same platform, if not even in the same building with Ana. At Calneh or Nipur (Niffer), she shared fully in her husband's honors. She had a shrine at Ur (Mugheir), another at Rubesi, and another outside the walls of Babylon. Some of these temples were very ancient,

those at Warka and Niffer being built by Urukh, while that at Mugheir was either built or repaired by Ismi-dagon.

According to one record, Beltis was a daughter of Ana. It was especially as "Queen of Nipur" that she was the wife of her son Nin. Perhaps this idea grew up out of the fact that at Nipur the two were associated together in a common worship. It appears to have given rise to some of the Greek traditions with respect to Semiramis, who was made to contract an incestuous marriage with her own son Ninyas, although no explanation can at present be given of the application to Beltis of that name.

HEA, or HOA.

The third god of the first Triad was Hea, or Hoa, probably the Aus of Damascus. His appellation is perhaps best rendered into Greek by the [--] of Helladius--the name given to the mystic animal, half man, half fish, which came up from the Persian Gulf to teach astronomy and letters to the first settlers on the Euphrates and Tigris. It is perhaps contained also in the word by which Berosus designates this same creature--Oannes--which may be explained as _Hoa-ana,_ or "the god Hoa." There are no means of strictly determining the precise meaning of the word in Babylonian; but it is perhaps allowable to connect it, provisionally, with the Arabic Hiya, which is at once life and "a serpent," since, according to the best authority, there are very strong grounds for connecting Hea or Hoa with the serpent of Scripture and the Paradisaical traditions of the tree of knowledge and the tree of life.

Hoa occupies, in the first Triad, the position which in the classical mythology is filled by Poseidon or Neptune, and in some respects he corresponds to him. He is "the lord of the earth," just as Neptune is [Greek]; he is "the king of rivers;" and he comes from the sea to teach the Babylonians; but he is never called "the lord of the sea." That title belongs to Nin or Ninip. Hoa is "the lord of the abyss," or of "the great deep," which does not seem to be the sea, but something distinct from it. His most important titles are those which invest him with the character, so prominently brought out in Oe and Oannes, of the god of science and knowledge. He is "the intelligent guide," or, according to another interpretation, "the intelligent fish," "the teacher of mankind," "the lord of understanding." One of his emblems is the "wedge" or "arrowhead," the essential element of cuneiform writing, which seems to be assigned to him as the inventor, or at least the patron of the Chaldaean alphabet. Another is the serpent which occupies so conspicuous a place among the symbols of the gods on the black stones recording benefactions, and which sometimes appears upon the cylinders. [PLATE XIX., Fig. 3.] This symbol, here as elsewhere, is emblematic of superhuman knowledge--a record of the primeval belief that the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field. The stellar name of Hoa was Kimmut; and it is suspected that in this aspect he was identified with the constellation Draco, which is perhaps the Kimah of Scripture. Besides his chief character of "god of knowledge," Hoa is also "god of life," a capacity in which the serpent would again fitly symbolize him. He was likewise "god of glory," and "god of giving," being, as Berosus said, the great giver of good gifts to man.

The monuments do not contain much evidence of the early worship of Hoa. His name appears on a very ancient stone tablet brought from Mugheir (Ur); but otherwise his claim to be accounted one of the primeval gods must rest on the testimony of Berosus and Helladius, who represent him as known to the first settlers. He seems to have been the tutelary god of Is or Hit, which Isidore of Charax calls Aeipolis, or "Hea's city;" but there is no evidence that this was a very ancient place. The Assyrian kings built him temples at Asshur and Calah.

Hoa had a wife Dav-Kina, of whom a few words will be said presently. Their most

celebrated son was Merodach or Bel-Merodach, the Belus of Babylonian times. As Kimmut, Hoa was also the father of Nebo, whose functions bear a general resemblance to his own.

DAV-KINA.

Dav-Kina, the wife of Hoa, is clearly the Dauke or Davke of Damascius who was the wife of Ails and mother of Belus (Bel-Merodach). Her name is thought to signify "the chief lady." She has no distinctive titles or important position in the Pantheon, but, like Anata, takes her husband's epithets with a mere distinction of gender.

SIN, or HURKI.

The first god of the second Triad is Sin, or Hurki, the moon-deity. It is in condescension to Greek notions that Berosus inverts the true Chaldaean order, and places the sun before the moon in his enumeration of the heavenly bodies. Chaldaean mythology gives a very decided preference to the lesser luminary, perhaps because the nights are more pleasant than the days in hot countries. With respect to the names of the god, we may observe that Sin, the Assyrian or Semitic term, is a word of quite uncertain etymology, which, however, is found applied to the moon in many Semitic languages; while Hurki, which is the Chaldaean or Hamitic name, is probably from a root cognate to the Hebrew _Ur_, "vigilare," whence is derived the term sometimes used to signify "an angel" _Ir,_ "a watcher."

The titles of Hurki are usually somewhat vague. He is "the chief," "the powerful," "the lord of the spirits," "he who dwells in the great heavens;" or, hyperbolically, "the chief of the gods of heaven and earth," "the king of the gods," and even "the god of the gods." Sometimes, however, his titles are more definite and particular: as, firstly, when they belong to him in respect of his being the celestial luminary--e.g., "the bright," "the shining," "the lord of the month;" and, secondly, when they represent him as presiding over buildings and architecture, which the Chaldaeans appear to have placed under his special superintendence. In this connection he is called "the supporting architect," "the strengthener of fortifications," and, more generally, "the lord of building" (Bel-zuna). Bricks, the Chaldaean building material, were of course under his protection; and the sign which designates them is also the sign of the month over which he was considered to exert particular care. His ordinary symbol is the crescent or new moon, which is commonly represented as large, but of extreme thinness: though not without a certain variety in the forms.

The most curious and the most purely conventional representations are a linear semicircle, and an imitation of this semicircle formed by three straight lines. The illuminated part of the moon's disk is always turned directly towards the horizon, a position but rarely seen in nature.

The chief Chaldaean temple to the moon-god was at Ur or Hur (Mugheir), a city which probably derived its name from him, and which was under his special protection. He had also shrines at Babylon and Borsippa, and likewise at Calah and Dur-Sargina (Khorsabad). Few deities appear to have been worshipped with such constancy by the Chaldaean kings. His great temple at Ur was begun by Urukh, and finished by his son Ilgi--the two most ancient of all the monarchs. Later in the series we find him in such honor that every king's name during some centuries comprise the name of the moon-god in it. On the restoration of the Chaldaean power he is again in high repute. Nebuchadnezzar mentions him with respect; and Nabonidus, the last native monarch, restores his shrine at Ur, and accumulates upon him the most high-sounding titles.

The moon-god is called, in more than one inscription, the eldest son of Bel-Ninnod. He had a wife (the moon-goddess) whose title was "the great lady," and who is frequently associated with him in the lists. She and her husband were conjointly the tutelary deities of Ur or Hur; and a particular portion of the

great temple there was dedicated to her honor especially.--Her "ark" or "tabernacle," which was separate from that of her husband was probably, as well as his, deposited in this sanctuary. It bore the title of "the lesser light," while his was called, emphatically, "the light."

SAN, or SANSI.

San, or Sansi, the sun-god, was the second member of the second Triad. The main element of this name is probably connected with the root _shani_ which is in Arabic, and perhaps in Hebrew, "bright." Hence we may perhaps compare our own word "sun" with the Chaldaean "San;" for "sun" is most likely connected etymologically with "sheen" and "shine." Shamas or Shemesh, the Semitic title of the god, is altogether separate and distinct, signifying as it does, the Ministering office of the sun, and not the brilliancy of his light. A trace of the Hamitic name appears in the well-known city Bethsain, whose appellation is declared by Eugesippus to signify "domus Solis," "the house of the sun."

The titles applied to the sun-god have not often much direct reference to his physical powers or attributes. He is called indeed, in some places, "the lord of fire," "the light of the gods," "the ruler of the day," and "he who illumines the expanse of heaven and earth." But commonly he is either spoken of in a more general way, as "the regent of all things," "the establisher of heaven and earth;" or, if special functions are assigned to him, they are connected with his supposed "motive" power, as inspiring warlike thoughts in the minds of the kings, directing and favorably influencing their expeditions; or again, as helping them to discharge any of the other active duties of royalty. San is "the supreme ruler who casts a favorable eye on expeditions," "the vanquisher of the king's enemies," "the breaker-up of opposition." He "casts his motive influence" over the monarchs, and causes them to "assemble their chariots and warriors"--he goes forth with their armies, and enables them to extend their dominions--he chases their enemies before them, causes opposition to cease, and brings them back with victory to their own countries. Besides this, he helps them to sway the sceptre of power, and to rule over their subjects with authority. It seems that, from observing the manifest agency of the material sun in stimulating all the functions of nature, the Chaldaeans came to the conclusion that the sun-god exerted a similar influence on the minds of men, and was the great motive agent in human history.

The chief seats of the sun-god's worship in Chaldaea appear to have been the two famous cities of Larsa (Ellasar?) and Sippara. The great temple of the Sun, called Bit-Parra, at the former place, was erected by Urukh, repaired by more than one of the later Chaldaean monarchs, and completely restored by Nebuchadnezzar. At Sippara, the worship of the sun-god was so predominant, that Abydenus, probably following Berosus, calls the town Heliopolis. There can be little doubt that the Adrammelech, or "Fire-king," whose worship the Sepharvites (or people of Sippara) introduced into Samaria, was this deity. Sippara is called Tsipar sha Shamas, "Sippara of the Sun," in various inscriptions, and possessed a temple of the god which was repaired and adorned by many of the ancient Chaldaean kings, as well as by Nebuchadnezzar and Nabonidus.

The general prevalence of San's worship is indicated most clearly by the cylinders. Few comparatively of those which have any divine symbol upon them are without his. The symbol is either a simple circle, a quartered disk a four-rayed orb of a more elaborate character.

San or Sansi had a wife, Ai, Gula, or Anunit, of whom it now follows to speak.

Al, GULA, or ANUNIT.

Ai, Gula, or Anunit, was the female power of the sun, and was commonly associated with San in temples and invocations. Her names are of uncertain signification, except the second, Gula, which undoubtedly means "great," being so translated in the

vocabularies. It is suspected that the three terms may have been attached respectively to the "rising," the "culminating," and the "setting sun," since they do not appear to interchange; while the name Gula is distinctly stated in one inscription to belong to the "great" goddess, "the wife of the meridian Sun." It is perhaps an objection to this view, that the male Sun, who is decidedly the superior deity, does not appear to be manifested in Chaldaea under any such threefold representation.

As a substantive deity, distinct from her husband, Gula's characteristics are that she presides over life and over fecundity. It is not quite clear whether these offices belong to her alone, or whether she is associated in each of them with a sister goddess. There is a "Mistress of Life," who must be regarded as the special dispenser of that blessing; and there is a "Mistress of the Gods," who is expressly said to "preside over births." Concerning these two personages we cannot at present determine whether they are really distinct deities, or whether they are not rather aspects of Gula, sufficiently marked to be represented in the temples by distinct idols.

Gula was worshipped in close combination with her husband, both at Larsa and Sippara. Her name appears in the inscriptions connected with both places; and she is probably the "Anammelech," whom the Sepharvites honored in conjunction with Adrammelech, the "Fire-King." In later times she had also temples independent of her husband, at Babylon and Borsippa, as well as at Calah Asshur.

The emblem now commonly regarded as symbolizing Gula is the eight-rayed disk or orb, which frequently accompanies the orb with four rays in the Babylonian representations. In lieu of a disk, we have sometimes an eight-rayed star and even occasionally a star with six rays only. It is curious that the eight-rayed star became at an early period the universal emblem of divinity: but perhaps we can only conclude from this the stellar origin of the worship generally, and not any special pre-eminence or priority of Anunit over other deities.

VUL, OR IVA

The third member of the second Triad is the god of the atmosphere, whose name it has been proposed to render phonetically in a great variety of ways. Until a general agreement shall be established, it is thought best to retain a name with which readers are familiar; and the form Vul will therefore be used in these volumes. Were Iva the correct articulation, we might regard the term as simply the old Hamitic name for "the air," and illustrate it by the Arabic _heva,_ which has still that meaning.

The importance of Vul in the Chaldaean mythology, and his strong positive character, contrast remarkably with the weak and shadowy features of Uranus, or AEther, in the classical system. Vul indeed corresponds in great measure with the classical Zeus or Jupiter, being, like him, the real "Prince of the power of the air," the lord of the whirlwind and the tempest, and the wielder of the thunderbolt. His standard titles are "the minister of heaven and earth," "the Lord of the air," "he who makes the tempest to rage." He is regarded as the destroyer of crops, the rooter-up of trees, the scatterer of the harvest. Famine, scarcity, and even their consequence, pestilence, are assigned to him. He is said to have in his hand a "flaming sword," with which he effects his works of destruction; and this "flaming sword," which probably represents lightning, becomes his emblem upon the tablets and cylinders, where it is figured as a double or triple bolt. [PLATE XIX., Fig. 4.] Vul again, as the god of the atmosphere, gives the rain; and hence he is "the careful and beneficent chief," "the giver of abundance," "the lord of fecundity." In this capacity he is naturally chosen to preside over canals, the great fertilizers of Babylonia; and we find among his titles "the

lord of canals," and "the establisher of works of irrigation."

There is not much evidence of the worship of Vul in Chaldaea during the early times. That he must have been known appears from the fact of his name forming an element in the name of Shamas-Vul, son of Ismi-dagon, who ruled over Chaldaea about B.C. 1850. It is also certain that this Shamas-Vul set up his worship at Asshur (Kileh-Sherghat) in Assyria, associating him there with his father Ana, and building to them conjointly a great temple. Further than this we have no proof that he was an object of worship in the time of the first monarchy; though in the time of Assyrian preponderance, as well as in that of the later Babylonian Empire, there were few gods more venerated.

Vul is sometimes associated with a goddess, Shala or Tala, who is probably the Salambo or Salambas of the lexicographers. The meaning of her name is uncertain; and her epithets are for the most part obscure. Her ordinary title is sacrat or sharrat, "queen," the feminine of the common word sar, which means "Chief," "King," or "Sovereign."

BAR, NIN, or NINIP.

If we are right in regarding the five gods who stand next to the Triad formed of the Moon, the Sun, and the Atmosphere, as representatives of the five planets visible to the naked eye, the god Nin, or Ninip, should be Saturn. His names, Bar and Nin, are respectively a Semitic and a Hamitic term signifying "lord" or "master." Nin-ip, his full Hamitic appellation, signifies "Nin, by name," or "he whose name is Nin;" and similarly, his full Semitic appellation seems to have been Barshem, "Bar, by name," or "he whose name is Bar"--a term which is not indeed found in the inscriptions, but which appears to have been well known to the early Syrians and Armenians, and which was probably the origin of the title Barsemii, borne by the kings of Hatra (Hadhr near Kileh-Sherghat) in Roman times.

In character and attributes the classical god whom Nin most closely resembles is, however, not Saturn, but Hercules. An indication of this connection is perhaps contained in the Herodotean genealogy, which makes Hercules an ancestor of Ninus. Many classical traditions, we must remember, identified Hercules with Saturn; and it seems certain that in the East at any rate this identification was common. So Nin, in the inscriptions, is the god of strength and courage. He is "the lord of the brave," "the champion," "the warrior who subdues foes," "he who strengthens the heart of his followers;" and again, "the destroyer of enemies," "the reducer of the disobedient," "the exterminator of rebels," "he whose sword is good." In many respects he bears a close resemblance to Nergal or Mars. Like him, he is a god of battle and of the chase, presiding over the king's expeditions, whether for war or hunting, and giving success in both alike. At the same time he has qualities which seem wholly unconnected with any that have been hitherto mentioned. He is the true "Fish-God" of Berosus, and is fig ured as such in the sculptures. [PLATE XIX., Fig. 5.] In this point of view he is called "the god of the sea," "he who dwells in the sea," and again, somewhat curiously, "the opener of aqueducts." Besides these epithets, he has many of a more general character, as "the powerful chief," "the supreme," "the first of the gods," "the favorite of the gods," "the chief of the spirits," and the like. Again, he has a set of epithets which seem to point to his stellar character, very difficult to reconcile with the notion that, as a celestial luminary, he was Saturn. We find him called "the light of heaven and earth," "he who, like the sun, the light of the gods, irradiates the nations." These phrases appear to point to the Moon, or to some very brilliant star, and are scarcely reconcilable with the notion that he was the dark and distant Saturn.

Nin's emblem in Assyria is the Man-bull, the impersonation of strength and power. [PLATE XIX., Fig. 6.] He guards the palaces of

the Assyrian kings, who reckon him their tutelary god, and give his name to their capital city. We may conjecture that in Babylonia his emblem was the sacred fish, which is often seen under different forms upon the cylinders. [PLATE XIX., Fig. 7.]

The monuments furnish no evidence of the early worship of Nin in Chaldaea. We may perhaps gather the fact from Berosus' account of the Fish-God as an early object of veneration in that region, as well as from the Hamitic etymology of the name by which he was ordinarily known even in Assyria. There he was always one of the most important deities. His temple at Nineveh was very famous, and is noticed by Tacitus in his "Annals;" and he had likewise two temples at Calah (Nimrud), both of them buildings of some pretension.

It has been already mentioned that Nin was the son of Bel-Nimrod, and that Beltis was both his wife and his mother. These relationships are well established, since they are repeatedly asserted. One tablet, however, inverts the genealogy, and makes Bel-Nimrod the son of Nin, instead of his father. The contradiction perhaps springs from the double character of this divinity, who, as Saturn, is the father, but, as Hercules, the son of Jupiter.

BEL-MERODACH.

Bel-Merodach is, beyond all doubt, the planet Jupiter, which is still called Bel by the Mendaeans. The name Merodach is of uncertain etymology and meaning. It has been compared with the Persian _Mardak,_ the diminutive of _mard,_ "a man," and with the Arabic _Mirrich,_ which is the name of the planet Mars. But, as there is every reason to believe that the term belongs to the Hamitic Babylonian, it is in vain to have recourse to Arian or Semitic tongues for its derivation. Most likely the word is a descriptive epithet, originally attached to the name Bel, in the same way as _Nipru,_ but ultimately usurping its place and coming to be regarded as the proper name of the deity. It is doubtful whether any phonetic representative of Merodach has been found on the monuments; if so, the pronunciation should, apparently, be _Amardak,_ whence we might derive the Amordacia of Ptolemy.

The titles and attributes of Merodach are of more than usual vagueness. In the most ancient monuments which mention him, he seems to be called "the old man of the gods," and "the judge;" he also certainly has the gates, which in early times were the seats of justice, under his special protection. Thus he would seem to be the god of justice and judgment--an idea which may have given rise to the Hebrew name of the planet Jupiter, viz. _sedek,_ "justitia." Bel-Merodach was worshipped in the early Chaldaean kingdom, as appears from the Tel-Sifr tablets. He was probably from a very remote time the tutelary god of the city of Babylon; and hence, as that city grew into importance, the worship of Merodach became more prominent. The Assyrian monarchs always especially associate Babylon with this god; and in the later Babylonian empire he becomes by far the chief object of worship. It is his temple which Herodotus describes so elaborately, and his image, which, according to the Apocryphal Daniel, the Babylonians worshipped with so much devotion. Nebuchadnezzar calls him "the king of the heavens and the earth," "the great lord," "the senior of the gods," "the most ancient," "the supporter of sovereignty," "the layer-up of treasures," etc., and ascribes to him all his glory and success.

We have no means of determining which among the emblems of the gods is to be assigned to Bel-Merodach; nor is there any sculptured form which can be certainly attached to him. According to Diodorus, the great statue of Bel-Merodach at Babylon was a figure "standing and walking." Such a form appears more often than any other upon the cylinders of the Babylonians; and it is perhaps allowable to conjecture that it may represent this favorite deity. [PLATE XIX., Fig. 8.]

ZIR-BANIT.

Bel-Merodach has a wife, with whom he is commonly associated, called Zir-banit. She had a temple at Babylon, probably attached to her husband's, and is perhaps the Babylonian Juno (Hera) of Diodorus. The essential element of her name seems to be Zir, which is an old Hamitic root of uncertain meaning, while the accompanying _banit_ is a descriptive epithet, which may be rendered by "genetrix." Zir-banit was probably the goddess whose worship the Babylonian settlers carried to Samaria, and who is called Succoth-benoth in Scripture.

NERGAL.

Nergal, the planet Mars, whose name was continued to a late date, under the form of Nerig in the astronomical system of the Mendaeans, is a god whose character and attributes are tolerably clear and definite. His name is evidently compounded of the two Hamitic roots _nir,_ "a man," and _gala,_ "great;" so that he is "the great man," or "the great hero." He is the special god of war and of hunting, more particularly of the latter. His titles are "the king of battle," "the champion of the gods," "the storm ruler," "the strong begetter," "the tutelar god of Babylonia," and "the god of the chase." He is usually coupled with Nin, who likewise presides over battles and over hunting; but while Nin is at least his equal in the former sphere, Nergal has a decided pre-eminence in the latter.

We have no distinct evidence that Nergal was worshipped in the primitive times. He is first mentioned by some of the early Assyrian kings, who regard him as their ancestor. It has, however, been conjectured that, like Bil-Nipru, he represented the deified hero, Nimrod, who may have been worshipped in different parts of Chaldaea under different titles.

The city peculiarly dedicated to Nergal was Cutha or Tiggaba, which is constantly called his city in the inscriptions. He was worshipped also at Tarbisa, near Nineveh, but in Tiggaba he was said to "live," and his shrine there was one of great celebrity. Hence "the men of Cuth," when transported to Samaria by the Assyrians, naturally enough "made Nergal their god," carrying his worship with them into their new country.

It is probable that Nergal's symbol was the Man Lion. [PLATE XX.] Nir is sometimes used in the inscriptions in the meaning of "lion;" and the Semitic name for the god himself is "Aria"--the ordinary term for the king of beasts both in Hebrew and in Syriac. Perhaps we have here the true derivation of the Greek name for the god of war, _Ares,_ which has long puzzled classical scholars. The lion would symbolize both the fighting and the hunting propensities of the god, for he not only engages in combats upon occasions, but often chases his prey and runs it down like a hunter. Again, if Nergal is the Man-Lion, his association in the buildings with the Man-Bull would be exactly parallel with the conjunction, which we so constantly find, between him and Nin in the inscriptions.

Nergal had a wife, called Laz, of whom, however, nothing is known beyond her name. It is uncertain which among the emblems of the gods appertains to him.

ISHTAR, or NANA.

Ishtar, or Nana, is the planetary Venus, and in general features corresponds with the classical goddess. Her name Ishtar is that by which she was known in Assyria; and the same term prevailed with slight modifications among the Semitic races generally. The Phoenician form was Astarte, the Hebrew Ashtoreth; the later Mendaean form was Ashtar. In Babylonia the goddess was known as Nana, which seems to be the Naneea of the second book of Maccabees, and the Nani of the modern Syrians. No satisfactory account can at present be given of the etymology of either name; for the proposal to connect Ishtar with the Greek (Zend _starann,_ Sanscrit _tara,_ English _star,_ Latin _stella_), though it has great names in its favor, is not worthy of much attention.

Ishtar's aphrodisiac character, though it can scarcely be doubted, does not appear very clearly in the inscriptions. She is "the goddess who rejoices mankind," and her most common epithet is "Asurah," "the fortunate," or "the happy." But otherwise her epithets are vague and general, insomuch that she is often scarcely distinguishable from Beltis. She is called "the mistress of heaven and earth," "the great goddess," "the queen of all the gods," and again "the goddess of war and battle," "the queen of victory," "she who arranges battles," and "she who defends from attacks." She is also represented in the inscriptions of one king as the goddess of the chase.

The worship of Ishtar was wide-spread, and her shrines were numerous. She is often called "the queen of Babylon," and must certainly have had a temple in that city. She had also temples at Asshur (Kileh-Sherghat), at Arbela, and at Nineveh. It may be suspected that her symbol was the naked female form, which is not uncommon upon the cylinders. [PLATE XXI., Figs. 1, 2.] She may also be represented by the rude images in baked clay so common throughout the Mesopotamian ruins, which are generally regarded as images of Mylitta. Ishtar is sometimes coupled with Nebo in such a way as to suggest the notion that she was his wife. This, however, can hardly have been her real position in the mythology, since Nebo had, as will presently appear, another wife, Varamit, whom there is no reason to believe identical with Ishtar. It is most probable that the conjunction is casual and accidental, being due to special and temporary causes.

NEBO.

The last of the five planetary gods is Nebo, who undoubtedly represents the planet Mercury. [PLATE XXI., Fig. 3.] His name is the same, or nearly so, both in Babylonian and Assyrian; and we may perhaps assign it a Semitic derivation, from the root _nibbah,_ "to prophesy." It is his special function to preside over knowledge and learning. He is called "the god who possesses intelligence," "he who hears from afar," "he who teaches," or "he who teaches and instructs." In this point of view, he of course approximates to Hoa, whose son he is called in some inscriptions, and to whom he bears a general resemblance. Like Hoa, he is symbolized by the simple wedge or "arrowhead," the primary and essential element of cuneiform writing, to mark his joint presidency with that God over writing and literature. At the same time Nebo has, like so many of the Chaldaean gods, a number of general titles, implying divine power, which, if they had belonged to him only, would have seemed to prove him the supreme deity. He is "the Lord of lords, who has no equal in power," "the supreme chief," "the sustainer," "the supporter," "the ever ready," "the guardian over the heavens and the earth," "the lord of the constellations," "the holder of the sceptre of power," "he who grants to kings the sceptre of royalty for the governance of their people." It is chiefly by his omission from many lists, and his humble place when he is mentioned together with the really great gods, that we know he was mythologically a deity of no very great eminence.

There is nothing to prove the early--worship of Nebo. His name does not appear as an element in any royal appellation belonging to the Chaldaean series. Nor is there any reference to him in the records of the primeval times. Still, as he is probably of Babylonian rather than Assyrian origin, and as an Assyrian king is named after him in the twelfth century B.C., we may assume that he was not unknown to the primitive people of Chaldaea, though at present their remains have furnished us with no mention of him. In later ages the chief seat of his worship was Borsippa, where the great and famous temple, known at present as the Birs-Nimrud, was dedicated to his honor. He had also a shrine at Calah (Nimrud), whence were procured the statues representing him which are now in the British Museum. He was in special favor with the kings of the great Babylonian

empire, who were mostly named after him, and viewed him as presiding over their house. His symbol has not yet been recognized.

The wife of Nebo, as already observed, was Varamit or Urmit--a word which perhaps means "exalted," from the root on, "to be lifted up." No special attributes are ascribed to this goddess, who merely accompanies her husband in most of the places where he is mentioned by name.

Such, then, seem to have been the chief gods worshipped by the early Chaldaeans. It would be an endless as well as an unprofitable task to give an account of the inferior deities. Their name is "Legion;" and they are, for the most part, too vague and shadowy for effective description. A vast number are merely local; and it may be suspected that where this is the case the great gods of the Pantheon come before us repeatedly, disguised under rustic titles. We have, moreover, no clue at present to this labyrinth, on which, even with greater knowledge, it would perhaps be best for us to forbear to enter; since there is no reason to expect that we should obtain any really valuable results from its exploration.

A few words, however, may be added upon the subject of the Chaldaean cosmogony. Although the only knowledge that we possess on this point is derived from Berosus, and therefore we cannot be sure that we have really the belief of the ancient people, yet, judging from internal evidence of character, we may safely pronounce Berosus' account not only archaic, but in its groundwork and essence a primeval tradition, more ancient probably than most of the gods whom we have been considering.

"In the beginning," says this ancient legend, "all was darkness and water, and therein were generated monstrous animals of strange and peculiar forms. There were men with two wings, and some even with four, and with two faces; and others with two heads, a man's and a woman's on one body; and there were men with the heads and horns of goats, and men with hoofs like horses, and some with the upper parts of a man joined to the lower parts of a horse, like centaurs; and there were bulls with human heads, dogs with four bodies and with fishes' tails, men and horses with dogs' heads, creatures with the heads and bodies of horses, but with the tails of fish, and other animals mixing the forms of various beasts. Moreover there were monstrous fish and reptiles and serpents, and divers other creatures, which had borrowed something from each other's shapes; of all which the likenesses are still preserved in the temple of Belus. A woman ruleth them all, by name Omorka, which is in Chaldee Thalatth, and in Greek Thalassa (or "the sea"). Then Belus appeared, and split the woman in twain; and of the one half of her he made the heaven, and of the other half the earth; and the beasts that were in her he caused to perish. And he split the darkness, and divided the heaven and the earth asunder, and put the world in order; and the animals that could not bear the light perished. Belus, upon this, seeing that the earth was desolate, yet teeming with productive power, commanded one of the gods to cut off his head, and to mix the blood which flowed forth with earth, and form men therewith, and beasts that could bear the light. So man was made, and was intelligent, being a partaker of the divine wisdom. Likewise Belus made the stars, and the sun and moon, and the five planets."

It has been generally seen that this cosmogony bears a remarkable resemblance to the history of Creation contained in the opening chapters of the book of Genesis. Some have gone so far as to argue that the Mosaic account was derived from it. Others, who reject this notion, suggest that a certain "old Chaldee tradition" was "the basis of them both." If we drop out the word "Chaldee" from this statement, it may be regarded as fairly expressing the truth. The Babylonian legend embodies a primeval tradition, common to all mankind, of which an inspired author has given us the true groundwork in the first and second chapters of Genesis.

What is especially remarkable is the fidelity, comparatively speaking, with which the Babylonian legend reports the facts. While the whole tone and spirit of the two accounts, and even the point of view from which they are taken, differ, the general outline of the narrative in each is nearly the same. In both we have the earth at first "without form and void," and "darkness upon the face of the deep." In both the first step taken towards creation is the separation of the mixed mass, and the formation of the heavens and the earth as the consequence of such separation. In both we have light mentioned before the creation of the sun and moon; in both we have the existence of animals before man; and in both we have a divine element infused into man at his birth, and his formation "from the dust of the ground." The only points in which the narratives can be said to be at variance are points of order. The Babylonians apparently made the formation of man and of the animals which at present inhabit the earth simultaneous, and placed the creation of the sun, moon, and planets after, instead of before, that of men and animals. In other respects the Babylonian narrative either adds to the Mosaic account, as in its description of the monsters and their destruction, or clothes in mythic language, that could never have been understood literally, the truth which in Scripture is put forth with severe simplicity. The cleaving of the woman Thalatth in twain, and the beheading of Belus, are embellishments of this latter character; they are plainly and evidently mythological; nor can we suppose them to have been at any time regarded as facts. The existence of the monsters, on the other hand, may well have been an actual belief. All men are prone to believe in such marvels; and it is quite possible, as Niebuhr supposes, that some discoveries of the remains of mammoths and other monstrous forms embedded in the crust of the earth, may have given definiteness and prominency to the Chaldaean notions on this subject.

Besides their correct notions on the subject of creation, the primitive Chaldaeans seem also to have been aware of the general destruction of mankind, on account of their wickedness, by a Flood; and of the rebellious attempt which was made soon after the Flood to concentrate themselves in one place, instead of obeying the command to "replenish the earth" an attempt which was thwarted by means of the confusion of their speech. The Chaldaean legends embodying these primitive traditions were as follows:--

"God appeared to Xisuthrus (Noah) in a dream, and warned him that on the fifteenth day of the month Daesius, mankind would be destroyed by a deluge. He bade him bury in Sippara, the City of the Sun, the extant writings, first and last; and build a ship, and enter therein with his family and his close friends; and furnish it with meat and drink; and place on board winged fowl, and four-footed beasts of the earth; and when all was ready, set sail. Xisuthrus asked 'Whither he was to sail?' and was told, 'To the gods, with a prayer that it might fare well with mankind.' Then Xisuthrus was not disobedient to the vision, but built a ship five furlongs (3125 feet) in length, and two furlongs (1250 feet) in breadth; and collected all that had been commanded him, and put his wife and children and close friends on board. The flood came; and as soon as it ceased, Xisuthrus let loose some birds, which, finding neither food nor a place where they could rest, came back to the ark. After some days he again sent out the birds, which again returned to the ark, but with feet covered with mud. Sent out a third time, the birds returned no more, and Xisuthrus knew that land had reappeared: so he removed some of the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold! the vessel had grounded on a mountain. Then Xisuthrus went forth with his wife and his daughter, and his pilot, and fell down and worshipped the earth, and built an altar, and offered sacrifice to the gods; after which he disappeared from sight, together with those who had accompanied

him. They who had remained in the ark and not gone forth with Xisuthrus, now left it and searched for him, and shouted out his name; but Xisuthrus was not seen any more. Only his voice answered them out of the air, saying, 'Worship God; for because I worshipped God, am I gone to dwell with the gods; and they who were with me have shared the same honor.' And he bade them return to Babylon, and recover the writings buried at Sippara, and make them known among men; and he told them that the land in which they then were was Armenia. So they, when they had heard all, sacrificed to the gods and went their way on foot to Babylon, and, having reached it, recovered the buried writings from Sippara, and built many cities and temples, and restored Babylon. Some portion of the ark still continues in Armenia, in the Gordiaean (Kurdish) Mountains; and persons scrape off the bitumen from it to bring away, and this they use as a remedy to avert misfortunes."

Here again we have a harmony with Scripture of the most remarkable kind--a harmony not confined to the main facts, but reaching even to the minuter points, and one which is altogether most curious and interesting. The Babylonians have not only, in common with the great majority of nations, handed down from age to age the general tradition of the Flood, but they are acquainted with most of the particulars of the occurrence. They know of the divine warning to a single man, the direction to construct a huge ship or ark, the command to take into it a chosen few of mankind only, and to devote the chief space to "winged fowl and four-footed beasts of the earth." They are aware of the tentative sending out of birds from it, and of their returning twice, but when sent out a third time returning no more. They know of the egress from the ark by removal of some of its covering, and of the altar built and the sacrifice offered immediately afterwards. They know that the ark rested in Armenia; that those who escaped by means of it, or their descendants, journeyed towards Babylon; that there a tower was begun, but not, completed, the building being stopped by divine interposition and a miraculous confusion of tongues. As before, they are not content with the plain truth, but must amplify and embellish it. The size of the ark is exaggerated to an absurdity, and its proportions are misrepresented in such a way as to outrage all the principles of naval architecture. The translation of Xisuthrus, his wife, his daughter, and his pilot--a reminiscence possibly of the translation of Enoch--is unfitly as well as falsely introduced just after they have been miraculously saved from destruction. The story of the Tower is given with less departure from the actual truth. The building is, however, absurdly represented as an actual attempt to scale heaven; and a storm of wind is somewhat unnecessarily introduced to destroy the Tower, which from the Scripture narrative seems to have been left standing. It is also especially to be noticed that in the Chaldaean legends the whole interest is made narrow and local. The Flood appears as a circumstance in the history of Babylonia; and the priestly traditionists, who have put the legend into shape, are chiefly anxious to make the event redound to the glory of their sacred books, which they boast to have been the special objects of divine care, and represent as a legacy from the antediluvian ages. The general interests of mankind are nothing to the Chaldaean priests, who see in the story of the Tower simply a local etymology, and in the Deluge an event which made the Babylonians the sole possessors of primeval wisdom.