Possibly the intercalary month was abnormal, the incidence of observances depending not on the day of the month in ordinary months but on the day of the week reckoned consecutively through the year. For it is obvious that if each 7th day during the year was observed as above, it would, like our Sunday or a Jewish Sabbath, fall on a different day of the month in different months. It is quite possible that *shabattum* and *nubattum* are from the same root and originally denoted much the same thing—a pause, abstention, from whatever cause or for ceremonial purposes. The intercalary month being purely arbitrary may exhibit a normal arrangement, supposing that the month and the week begin together.

There are traces of what may be called a “ five-day week, but also some traces of a period of seven days. The former would be an exact submultiple of the 3o-day month, but the exact relation of seven days to the month is not very clear. If the 15th always was full moon day, the 7th would coincide well with half moon, but the 21st and 28th would fall away considerably from the moon’s phases. The significance of seven throughout Babylonian literature is very marked, and most of the material has been collected by J. Hehn, *Siebenzahl und Sabbat* (1907). It is quite consistent with the evidence to suppose that a seven-day week was in use in Babylonia, but each item may be explained differently, and a definite proof does not exist. The enormous number of dated documents has induced some scholars to attempt a statistical research into the observance of the 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th and 19th days of the months as Sabbaths. This has not been carried out with sufficient caution. If the Sabbath involved abstention from all such business as recorded in dated documents and always fell on these days, then the 7th, &c., should show a marked falling off in the number of dated documents. This appears actually to be the case in the period of the First Dynasty of Babylon and also in the 7th century in Assyria, where early Babylonian customs were kept up conservatively. In other cases the inclusion of documents relating to the temple business, payments of tithes and other dues, salaries to temple officials, and such ceremonies as marriages, &c., which may have demanded the presence of the congregation and were at least partly religious in nature, have been allowed to complicate the matter. Such business as did not profane the Sabbath according to Babylonian ideas cannot be quoted against their observance of their Sabbath. Further, if the Sabbaths fell on each 7th day through the year, any indication by dated documents of a falling off in the number of transactions on the 7th day of the month must obviously be completely disguised. As most of the records appealed to are from temple archives, it may be expected that the Sabbath days would show an increased number of records.

For reasons «above indicated the whole subject is in its infancy. Even if it could be shown that the Pentateuchal regulations were universally observed in Israel from Mosaic times, it would not preclude a certain indebtedness to Babylonia for at least the germ of the institution. On the other hand, complete indentity of regu- lations and observance in Babylonia and lsrael at one period need not show more than development on the same lines. The evidence of Babylonian observance has not yet been exhaustively considered. Its most suggestive likenesses are indicated above, but further evidence may render the similarity less striking when the meaning of it is more fully understood. (C. H. W. J-)]

7. *Sabbatical Year.—*The Jews under the second temple observed every seventh year as a Sabbath according to the (post-exilic) law of Lev. xxv. 1-7. It was a year in which all agriculture was remitted, in which the fields lay unsown and the vines grew unpruned, only the spontaneous yield of the land might be gathered. That this law was not observed before the captivity we learn from Lev. xxvi. 34 seq. (cp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21); indeed, so long as the Hebrews were an agricultural people, in a land often ravaged by severe famines, the law of the Sabbatical year could not have been observed. Even in later times it was occasionally productive of great distress (1 Mac. vi. 49, 53; Jos. *Ant.* xiv. 16, 2). In the older legislation, however, we already meet with a seven years’ period in more than one connexion. The release of a Hebrew servant after six years’ labour (Exod. xxi. 2 seq.; Deut. xv. 12 seq.) has only a remote analogy to the Sabbatical year. But in Exod. xxiii. 10 seq. it is prescribed that the crop of every seventh year shall be left for the poor, and after them for the beasts. The difference between this and the later law is that the seventh year is not called a Sabbath, and that there is no indication that all land was to lie fallow on the same year. In this form a law prescribing one year’s fallow in seven may have been anciently observed, but it scarcely originated from the analogy of a seventh day of rest. It is extended in v 11 to the vineyard and the olive oil, but here the culture necessary to keep the vines and olive trees in order is not forbidden; the precept is only that the produce is to be left to the poor. In Deuteronomy this law is not repeated,

but a fixed seven years’ period is ordained for the benefit of poor debtors, apparently in the sense that in the seventh year no interest is to be exacted by the creditor from a Hebrew, or that no proceedings are to be taken against the debtor in that year (Deut. xv. 1 seq.). See the discussion by Driver, *Internal. Cril. Comm., ad. loc.,* and the commentaries on Neh. v. II.

Literature.—In addition to the references already made, see the articles in *Ency. Bib.* and Hastings’ *Dict. Bible* (with references); Fr. Bohn, *Sabbat im Alten Testament u. altjüdisch relig, Aberglauben* (Gütersloh, 1903: an interesting list of unlucky days from an old Egyptian calendar on p. 57 seq.); and for post-Biblical literature, F. Weber’s *Jüdische Theologie* (Index), by Franz Delitzsch and Schnedermann (1897). (W. R. S.; S. A. C.)

SABBATION, or Sambatyon, a river (real or imaginary) in Media—named in some old authorities (Palestinian Talmud, and Midrash Gen. Rabba, lxxiii.)—the site of the exile of the Ten Tribes. But Josephus *(War,* vii. v. 1) has this curious passage, from which, no doubt, many of the subsequent legends were derived:—

“ Now Titus Caesar tarried some time at Berytus (Beirut) and then removed thence and gave magnificent shows in all the cities of Syria through which he went, and exhibited the captive Jews as proof of the destruction of that nation. He saw on his march a river (identified by Sir C. W. Wilson with ' the stream running from the intermittent spring *Fauwār ed-Deir* in the Lebanon ’) of such a nature as deserves to be recorded in history. It runs between Arcaea (’Arka), which is part of Agrippa’s kingdom, and Rapharaea (Rafanïveh, at north end of the Lebanon), and has something very wonderful and peculiar in it. For when it runs, its current is strong, and has plenty of water ; after which its springs fail for six days together, and leave its channel dry, as any one may see. After this it runs on the seventh day as it did before, and as though it had undergone no change at all, and it has been observed to keep this order perpetually and exactly : *whence they call it the Sabbatic river,* so naming it from the sacred Sabbath of the Jews.”

Whiston, in his notes to Josephus, already points out that Pliny describes the same river *(Hist. Nat.* xxxi. 11), but accord­ing to his account the river ran for six days and rested on the seventh. This is the favourite form of the legend, for though there are intermittent streams in various parts of Asia, none has yet been found to correspond to the fixed regularity posited in the tradition. Various medieval travellers reported such rivers, *e.g.* Petahiah of Regenshurg, who states that such a stream may be found near Jabneh, but his assertion is unfounded. Mahommedans still assert that Josephus’s statement is true of the *Νahr-al-Arus* in the neighbourhood in which he locates his Sabbatic river, but modern travellers report that this stream runs every third day. Such facts would, however, be sufficient to explain the origin of the legend. The accounts of Josephus and Pliny do not assert that the intermittence of the current had any connexion with Saturday. Aqïba *(q.υ.*) in the early part of the 2nd century a.d., however, assumes this connexion *(Sanhedrin* 65 *b*), and a confusion between the Sambatyon of the Lost Tribes and the Sabbatical river of Syria begins to manifest itself. It is owing to the narrative of Eldad the Danite *(q.υ.*) that the Sambatyon river rose into wide fame in the 9th century. His diary became the *Arabian Nights* not only of the Jews but also of many medieval Christians and Moslems. Eldad describes the *Children of Moses,* a powerful and Utopian race, whose territory is surrounded by a wonderful river. He describes it in these terms:—

“ The river Sambatyon is 200 yds. broad, about as far as a bow- shot. It is full of sand and stones, but without water; the stones make a great noise like the waves of the sea and a stormy wind, so that in the night the noise is heard at a distance of half a day’s journey. There are sources of water which collect themselves in one pool, out of which they water the fields. There are fish in it, and all kinds of clean birds fly round it. And this river of stone and sand rolls during the six working days and rests on the Sabbath day. As soon as the Sabbath begins, fire surrounds the river, and the flames remain until the next evening, when the Sabbath ends.”

Nöldeke *(Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alexanderromans,* 48) has shown that the Sambatyon appears in one version of the Alexander Legend. Kaswini, the author of the Arab *Cosmography,* also refers to the Sambatyon. So does Prester John in his letter addressed to the emperor Frederick; in his account it is the violence of the current of sand and stone that prevents the Lost Tribes from rèuniting. It is unnecessary to summarize