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THE ARENA.

Libel of Jonah.

Tried in the Court of Public Opinion.

JUDGE FRANCIS J. LAMB, PRESIDING.

Conducted by the Editor.

The Book of Jonah contains only one experience of the prophet. It is a historical record of his evangelistic mission to Nineveh. It is difficult to be courteous to scholars who treat it merely as an incredible fish story. The story is a succession of striking wonders; the storm that arose because a ship had a runaway prophet aboard; when even the mariners were afraid, Jonah slept; when lots were cast to find the guilty person responsible for the storm, the lot fell on Jonah; when Jonah was cast forth into the sea, "the sea ceased from her raging"; when a preacher preached a sermon of but eight words, repeated over and over again, the inhabitants of a city of 600,000, from the king on the throne to the meanest slave, confessed their sin and plead for mercy; the Lord in a night made a gourd grow up to cover Jonah from the heat of the sun; "God prepared a worm and it smote the gourd that it withered"; God prepared a "vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished himself to die"; "God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? and he replied I do well to be angry even unto death"; God, instead of smiting him dead, tenderly rebuked him by showing how much more deserving of pity than the gourd was Nineveh with its sixscore thousand infants. A wonder rarely referred to is as great as any of these; that a prophet with the experience of Jonah resulting from such a marvelous career as adviser of king Jeroboam, should try to run away from God.

Why do the critics select the Fish Story as the point of attack? It is the only inci-

dent in that book that can be used to excite a laugh. The proverb that "all fishermen are liars" when they count or weigh their fish is universally accepted; every fisherman notices in the face of his most intimate friend a gentle smile of incredulity when an extraordinary catch is reported. A fisherman aggrieved because his friend's face evidenced doubt of his story, with much feeling asked, "Do you not believe me?" The friend quickly and emphatically answered: "Of course I believe you!" and took out of his pocket a card and handed it to his fellow fisherman. It had only one sentence printed upon it: "I am a liar myself." Both fishermen laughed. They knew how difficult it was either to tell the exact truth or make any one believe it, if it was about "a fisherman's luck." The critics are shrewd enough to take advantage of the popular incredulity about any fish story to try to discredit the whale's catch of Jonah.

This indictment is for all Counterfeit Critics who without evidence or reason impeach the integrity of the Book of Jonah and the historical character of its author, the prophet Jonah. We have selected two Scholars, one from America and one from England, who may be accepted as representative of their School. As both of them in their testimony quote from Prof. Driver, one of the acknowledged leaders of the destructive critics it is fair to presume that their attitude is that of all of their school. As the report of this case is confined exclusively to the evidence for the prosecution, we introduce the evidence of the critics who assail the historical and prophetic character of Jonah, at the be-

Critical Theories Discredited by Archaeology.

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Many theories proposing to take Scripture at other than its face value, have been utterly discredited by archaeological evidence and in some cases have been abandoned by those who held them.

1. The ignorance of the Patriarchal age, was once a frontier fortress in criticism which frightened away all literary pretensions beyond that limit. This theory of ignorance in the patriarchal age was not held by all critics, but by some and at one time was quite the vogue. There are a good many to-day who seem to wish that time to be forgotten. The interests of truth, however, sometimes require unpleasant things to be remembered and unpleasant facts to be recited. This is one such case, for there are those among the humble followers of the more expert critics who still assert with vehemence that no such time ever was.

Dillman said: "The legal portion of the Pentateuch cannot be from Moses, neither written by him nor delivered orally and written down by another. So extended a literary production at the very rise of the people of Israel is not believable and points to a time when the arts of writing and reading were widely diffused."

Driver said: "It is not denied that the patriarchs possessed the art of writing, but the possession of a literature by Israel is a mere hypothesis, for the truth of which no positive ground can be alleged."

That the theory of the ignorance of the patriarchal age has been absolutely abandoned by every one hardly needs to be stated. The belief in a literal history of Israel back to the days of the patriarch is fully sustained by archaeological research. Evidence has been found of the establishment of a postal system in Babylonia extending to its Palestine province about seventeen hundred and fifty years before the time of Abraham. But a postal system implies many things. That it requires the art of writing is self-evident, and a very little thought will make it equally certain to any one that it calls for a wide diffusion of the art. The neces-

sity for a few government messages and the sending of an occasional manuscript from one learned author to another will hardly account for the establishment of a general postal system. It is only some four centuries since the demands of the modern world brought about the establishment of such a postal system. Even modern literary history existed among English speaking people well nigh a century before the establishment of a general postal system.

It is known also, that many of the patriarchal customs conformed strictly to written law. Palestine in the Abrahamic age was still dominated by Babylonian literary influence and in some good measure was under Babylonian political control. The Code of Hammurabi exactly provides for much of the conduct of the people which is recorded of those days.

The discovery of the Tel Amara tablets in 1887 turned the full light of day upon this subject. These tablets reveal the literary conditions in Palestine about midway between Abraham and Moses. The widest diffusion of letters is indicated. All sorts of people are found writing letters; governors and court officers, petty officials, private citizens, ladies and servants. When there is added to all this the overwhelming evidence from recent excavations, of the general culture and refinement of Patriarchal Palestine, the case for the theory of patriarchal ignorance becomes ridiculous. No wonder some people desire to forget it and to have everybody else forget that it ever was a theory.

2. The theory of the nomadic, semi-barbarous condition of Palestine and the impossibility of high moral and religious ideas among the Patriarchs before the Exodus, though most closely connected with the theory of the ignorance of the patriarchal times, demands separate notice because of its bearing upon the evolutionary view of Israel's history and religion. This theory is essential to that view. The

theory is now completely gone by the board.

There has been in the last few years a revolution in the mind of archaeologists concerning the civilization of Palestine in the patriarchal age. In the words of one scholar, one of the most acute and candid of archaeological thinkers, "Obviously, we are far from the centuries of barbarism, and thus the discovery impinges upon those religious problems with which modern thinkers are occupied."

The rich booty described at Karnak in an account of a Palestine raid agrees exactly in its representation, of luxurious refinement with the evidence of the civilization of that age furnished by the examples of engineering skill. Chariots plated with gold or chased with silver, chairs of cedar and ebony inlaid or gilded with gold, a sword of bronze and a helmet of gold inlaid with lapis lazuli, and richly embroidered stuffs. These antiquities could not now be duplicated from all the museums in the world.

All of these things, in addition to the mass of evidence against the ignorance of the patriarchal age, i. e., refinement in things intellectual, overwhelmingly sustains the opinion of Prof. W. Max Muller that "the civilization of Palestine in the patriarchal age was fully equal to that of Egypt."

Such a civilization removes, as much as civilization can, the difficulties in the way of high moral and religious ideas. It does not provide for such ideas, but it is quite sufficient to discredit the evolutionary theory of Israel's history at this point. This part of the subject is of sufficient importance to receive here separate consideration.

3. The theory that Israel's religious history was evolved from a Palestine origin and environment has been discredited. The comparative study of religions is a very interesting and helpful auxiliary branch of theology. It is quite possible, indeed, to classify the religion of the Bible among other religions in such scientific study. But to conclude that all religions thus classifiable are alike in origin, in growth, and in authority is as unscientific as to conclude that all schools of painting are

alike in inception, attainment, and value, because their works can be systematically arranged in the same art gallery and classified in the same technical work on art, or to conclude that all birds—robins, blue jays, and buzzards—have equal claim upon our admiration, because they are arranged in orderly cages in the zoological garden and described systematically with beautiful illuminated plates in the same scientific work on ornithology.

What a mess a student of comparative religion in the year 4,000 A. D., by the method now used in the evolutionary theory of the development of Israel's religion, will make of the religious history of the Hawaiian Islands or of Madagascar or of Uganda in this year of our Lord, 1912, without knowledge of the work of Christian missionaries! So with the study of the religion of Israel. What if there has been some message from without, some divine missionary from above to this world of sin in the days of old. Is there anything under the guidance of evolution to discover it. At this point the comparative study of religions, as at present conducted, breaks down utterly.

Kuenen says: "To what one may call the universal, or at least the common theory, that religion begins with fetishism, then develops into polytheism, and then, but not before, ascends to monotheism—that is to say, if this highest stage be reached—to this rule the Semites are no exception."

The facts as brought to light by archaeological research are against this theory and method. One could as easily make the fetishism of East Africa cross over the line at the year 1890 and produce the Christianity of Uganda in this year of 1912 as make the revolting religion of Palestine pass the line of conquest period and produce the religious practices and religious spirit of the centuries following. From the nightmare of child sacrifice, probably the most degraded and degrading of all revolting worship in the world, we turn, as from darkness to dawn, toward the religious conditions and religious spirit following the conquest period. Did the darkness develop the dawn?

It was of these things that Prof. George

Adam Smith said: "Mr. M'Allister's researches are not **more** illustrative in anything than in the exhibition they afford of the primitive religious customs which Israel encountered upon their entry into Palestine and which persisted in the form of idolatry and the moral abominations that usually accompanied this up to the very end of the history of Israel upon the land. We realize then, through work like Mr. M'Allister's what the purer religion of Israel had to contend with—what it had to struggle against all that time. We have been told that monotheism was the natural off-spring of desert scenery and desert

life. But it was not in the desert that Israel's monotheism developed and grew strong and reached its pure forms. It was in this land of Palestine, with its many centuries, and its many forms of idolatry, of which Gezer, with its child sacrifices is so typical an instance. When we contemplate all these systems, we are surely the more amazed at the survival, under their pressure and against their cruelty, of so much higher and an ethical religion. Surely it is only a divine purpose, it is only the inspiration of the Most High which has been the cause."—Extract from *The Deciding Voice of the Monuments*.

The Public Standard of Honesty.

A clear and forcible putting of the universally accepted standards of honesty and righteousness has been written large recently. Municipal corruption and political dishonesty, which have put all honorable citizens to the blush have been the occasion. The New York Daily World, in an editorial on "Political Swindling" said:

"An individual, who obtains money under false pretenses is a swindler, and a political party that obtains power under false pretenses is likewise a swindler."

Both of these statements may be seen to have very practical application to a number of recent incidents. Mayor Gaynor of New York preached a sermon not long since in a published letter. A judge who asked his advice, declared his purpose to conduct his office as Jesus would. The Mayor's letter was a gem. We can only quote a few sentences:

"You seem to be a man who thinks himself wiser than the law and above the law. That kind of a man is the most dangerous man that can be put in office. If Jesus accepted the office, He would also accept the law as it is and administer it faithfully. If you do not like the laws as they are, you ought to get yourself elected to the legislature and then work hard to change them. But as a Judge you must abide by the law. Are you unconscious of the fact that by your oath of office you have sworn to do so? Suppose every Judge in this

country, from the highest to the lowest took it into his head to ignore the law, what a woeful condition that would very soon put us all in. And yet you, a little justice of the peace, out in Illinois want to act in that way."

Is not that the straight Gospel? Does not the common sense of the common man, the average man, say, "Amen?" We are informed by good legal authority that it is not only the Gospel, but it is the Law. Disobedience would surely result in removal from office.

The New York City press recently announced that four lawyers had been disbarred. The presiding Justice writing the opinion of the Court said of one of the lawyers:

"He suggested to his client that he would violate the law of the State, and he not only advised but actually attempted to participate in and obstruct the administration of justice. Such conduct is absolutely inconsistent with the duties assumed by a lawyer when he takes his office."

A Broker was expelled from an Exchange in New York City, a short time ago. The charge was "obvious fraud and pretense." The Exchange investigated his method of doing business and found it was not conducted on strict exchange lines. To protect their own good name they summoned him to appear and explain. He failed to put in an appearance and his expulsion was announced.