

# THE UNION SEMINARY MAGAZINE

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NO. 4—MARCH-APRIL, 1894.

## I. LITERARY.

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UNION SEMINARY has been called again to mourn the loss of one of her able and accomplished teachers. On the 2nd of October, 1893, Dr. Thomas Ephraim Peck, Professor of Systematic theology, passed into the everlasting peace, after months of suffering from Bright's disease of the kidneys and an attendant failure of the functions of the heart.

Dr. Peck was born in Columbia, South Carolina, on the 29th of January, 1822. He was the son of Ephraim Peck, a native of Connecticut, and Sarah Bannister Parke, daughter of Thomas Parke, LL. D., Professor of the classic languages in the College of South Carolina. His father, a man of delicate constitution, had come south for his health, and opened a small mercantile establishment in Columbia. After a few years residence he united with the First Presbyterian Church, and developed a strongly marked and active Christian character. On the 4th of January, 1821, he intermarried with a daughter of Professor Parke, and after a married life of somewhat over eleven years, died leaving four living children, two sons and two daughters. Thomas, the oldest child was ten years old at the time, and William, the youngest just two months old. The daughters Mary, Susan and Ann Catharine grew to womanhood and married, the first Rev. Samuel H. Hay, the second Rev. Lucius Simonton. After the death of her husband Mrs. Peck lived with her father until his death in 1840. She opened a school for small children and soon her school-room was full. For many years she pursued this business for the support of her children. Mrs. Peck was a remarkable

## THE CHALDEAN STORY OF THE FLOOD.

PROF. W. W. MOORE.

In 1872, when George Smith was engaged in sorting the thousands of fragments of cuneiform tablets with which the floor of the British Museum was littered, he found half of a whitish-yellow clay tablet, which had apparently contained six columns of writing. In the third column his eye fell on these words: "*On the mount Nizir the ship stood still . . . Then I took a dove and let her fly. The dove flew hither and thither, but finding no resting place, returned to the ship.*" Smith saw at once that he had discovered a portion of the cuneiform account of the Deluge, and, on reading through the fragment, found that it was in the form of a speech by the hero of the Flood to a person whose name appeared to be Izdubar.\*

Then the indefatigable archaeologist set to work to search the thousands of fragments for other portions of the narrative—an appalling task, tedious and toilsome to the last degree. His labor however was eventually crowned with success. He did not indeed find the missing parts of the tablet first discovered. But he found fragments of two other copies of the same tablet, and, by combining all three, he recovered a considerable portion of the original narrative. One of these duplicate tablets, which was restored by joining together sixteen little bits, shows us that the Assyrians were as careful to write their names in their books as we are, for it contains the usual inscription at the bottom: "The property of Assurbanipal, King of the land of Asshur." This same duplicate gave Smith a still more important piece of information, viz: that the tablet containing the story of the Deluge was the eleventh in a series of twelve, other fragments of which he had already found. Putting all these together with wonderful patience and skill, he found at last, in spite of many tantalizing *lacunae*, that the story of the Flood was only an episode in a great

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\*Thus the name was provisionally rendered by Smith, who however calls this a mere "makeshift name," as there were difficulties about the pronunciation which could not be overcome until the name should be found phonetically written. It has been found thus written quite recently and it is now known that the true name of this legendary hero was Gilgames.

heroic poem, of twelve books, which celebrated the deeds of an ancient King of Erech, a semi-mythical hero whom, as we have seen, Smith called provisionally *Izdubar*, but whom we shall henceforth refer to as *Gilgames*. Smith's publication of these facts, together with the expression of his belief that the cuneiform inscriptions contained various other similar stories bearing upon the Book of Genesis, which would prove of the highest interest, created a great sensation. Mr. (now Sir) Edwin Arnold, of the London *Daily Telegraph*, came forward at once with a proposition from the proprietors of that paper to advance \$5,000 for the purpose of reopening the mounds of Nineveh, under Smith's personal direction, with a view to recovering more of these ancient documents with their startling and puzzling parallels to the Scriptural narratives. This offer was accepted, and the young archaeologist set out immediately for Assyria. Reopening the mound of Koyunjik, where Layard and Rassam had discovered the library of Assurbanipal, twenty years before, he soon brought to light other fragments of the clay books, and among them he had the astonishing good fortune to find some of the very pieces which were missing from the series he so much wished to complete, as well as portions of another series relating to the creation of the world. As soon as the proprietors of the *Daily Telegraph* learned that a fragment had been found which filled the only serious gap in the deluge texts already in the British Museum, they considered their object accomplished and declined to prosecute the excavations further. Smith accordingly returned to England (July, 1873); but in November of the same year he was sent out to Assyria again, the trustees of the British Museum having made an appropriation of \$5,000 for the completion of the excavations already begun. The two expeditions resulted in the recovery of over 3000 inscriptions and fragments of inscriptions, besides many other objects of interest and value. In 1876 he set forth on a third expedition, but fell a victim to disease at Aleppo. In his death archaeological science sustained a sore loss. But his work was taken up and carried to completion by other hands. His precious tablets have been sorted, pieced, and in many cases reproduced by the aid of the photographer and the engraver, and their inscriptions copied and translated. In the present paper we shall confine our attention to the series which he first discovered—the twelve tablets constituting the epic of

Gilgames. These twelve books or cantos are arranged on an astronomical principle, the subject matter of each tablet being made to correspond to one of the signs of the Zodiac, *e. g.* the Fifth Book to *Leo*; the Sixth to *Virgo*; and the Eleventh to *Aquarius*, this being the one in which the story of the Flood occurs. The reason for this arrangement was that Gilgames was a *solar* hero, his twelve adventures (like the twelve labors of Hercules, which are simply the Greek modification of the Mesopotamian myth) answering to the twelve months of the year through which the sun moves.

The reader will please bear in mind the fact already stated, that all the tablets are in fragments, not one of them being complete, and some being so mutilated as to cause serious breaks in the narrative, while the first has not yet been found at all. Fortunately, however, the Eleventh Tablet, which describes the Deluge, is the best preserved of all. But now to our story.

The historical ground-work of the poem has been so overlaid with the myths and legends which the author has embodied in his story and which all cluster around the name of Gilgames, that it is not easy to make out the exact situation, especially as the first tablet and part of the second, which contained the opening and would give us the true starting point, are missing. But from the portion of the second tablet which remains we learn that Erech, the capital of Shumir, or lower Chaldea, had fallen under the power of Elamite conquerors, and that the subjugated people are struggling to free themselves from their oppressors. It seems that Erech had been governed by Dumuzi, or Tammuz, the Babylonian Adonis, the husband of the goddess Ishtar, or Astarte, the Babylonian Venus, who at his death succeeded to the throne. Gilgames, a mighty hunter, whom Smith identified with Nimrod, then dwelt at Erech, where he had a strange and terrifying dream. He thought he saw the stars of heaven fall to the ground, and in their descent they struck upon his back. Then he saw standing over him a dreadful being with a fierce countenance, and with claws like a lion's. Deeply impressed with this apparently portentous dream, Gilgames sent forth to all the wise men, offering great rewards to any one who could interpret it. But no one was equal to the task. At length he heard of a hermit named Eabani, a strange being, of wonderful wisdom, who dwelt in a cave among the beasts of the forest, and who seems

to have been a kind of satyr or faun, as he is always represented with the feet and tail of an ox and with horns on his head. But Eabani refused to come to Erech, even though the sun-god, Shamash, himself "opened his lips and spoke to him from heaven," urging him to accept the invitation of Gilgames. Then Zaidu, a huntsman, was sent to bring him, but was overcome with fear, and returned. At last, however, Gilgames sent out Ishtar's handmaidens, *Shamhatu* (Grace) and *Harimtu* (Persuasion). When Harimtu spoke to Eabani, "before her words the wisdom of his heart fled and vanished." He answered, "I will go to Erech, to the temple, the seat of Anu and Ishtar, to the palace of Gilgames, the man of might, who towers amidst the leaders like a bull. I will meet him and see his might. But I shall bring to Erech a lion—let Gilgames destroy him if he can. He is bred in the wilderness and of great strength." So the seer comes to Erech, leading his lion. In the fight which follows, the lion is slain by Gilgames, after which he and Eabani make a covenant of friendship, and become inseparable companions. The third tablet is very much mutilated, so that we do not know what interpretation Eabani gave of the hero's dream. The fourth and fifth also are badly shattered. From the fragments that remain we can only gather that the two friends make an expedition against the Elamite tyrant, Humbaba, who had fixed his residence in a gloomy forest, and forcing their way into his palace, slay him, thus freeing Babylonia from the yoke of foreign dominion. After this exploit Gilgames is proclaimed King in Erech, and his power and glory are such that even the goddess Ishtar seeks to win his love. The sixth tablet, which describes the wooing of Gilgames by the goddess, is very well preserved, and gives Ishtar's enticing proposal in full. But her love is rejected, with insulting reminders of her former amours. "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned." In great wrath she ascends to heaven, and telling her father, Anu, that Gilgames had spurned her love, requests him to create a monstrous bull to be sent against the city of Erech. This is done, but the bull is slain by Gilgames and Eabani. Then the vengeance of Ishtar falls upon them in a more direct and personal way. Eabani is smitten with sudden death, and Gilgames with a terrible disease, apparently a kind of leprosy. Bereft of his friend, deprived of his strength, his body racked with intolerable pains, his mind filled with horrible visions, Gilgames at length de-

cides to go and consult his ancestor, Hasisadra (the Babylonian Noah, called also Sit-napishtim), who was immortal, and who dwelt in "the distant land by the mouth of the rivers," and to inquire of him how he might regain his health and strength. Among the strange regions through which he passed was a country where he met certain gigantic monsters, half men, half scorpions, whose feet were below the earth, while their heads touched the gates of heaven. These were the warders of the sun, who kept watch over its rising and setting. When they saw Gilgames they said, "Who is this that comes to us with the mark of the divine wrath on his body?" Gilgames made known his errand, whereupon they gave him directions as to the remainder of his journey, telling him however that the way was long and hard. So he found it. Over vast deserts he toiled, but at last, after various adventures which we cannot now relate, he came to a body of water across which he was conveyed by the ferryman Ameli-Ea (or Urubel). After sailing towards the waters of Death for one month and fifteen days, they reached the land of the blessed at the mouth of the rivers, and Gilgames met his great ancestor face to face, and heard from his lips the story of the Deluge. Thus Hasisadra spoke:

I will tell thee, Gilgames, how I was saved from the flood, and I will make known to thee the decree of the gods. Thou knowest the city of Surippak, which lies on the bank of the Euphrates. This city was already very old when the gods were moved in their hearts to bring on a great deluge,—all the great gods, their father Anu, their counsellor the warlike Bel, their throne-bearer Adar, their guide Ennugi.

The Lord of inscrutable wisdom, the god Ea, was with them, however, and imparted to me their decision. "Man of Surippak, son of Ubaratutu," said he, "leave thy house, and build a ship, and save all the living things thou canst find. They intend to destroy the seeds of life; therefore, do thou preserve alive seeds of life of every sort, and bring them up into the ship. The ship which thou shalt build, let it be ..... cubits in length, and ..... cubits in breadth and height,\* and cover it also with a deck." When I heard this I said to Ea, my lord: "If I construct the ship as thou commandest me, O lord, the people and their elders will laugh at me." But Ea opened his mouth once more and spoke to me, his servant: "Men have rebelled against me, and I will do judgment on them, high and low. But do thou close the door of the ship when the time comes and I tell thee of it. Then enter the ship and bring into it thy store of grain, all thy property, thy family, thy men-servants and thy women-servants, and also thy nearest friends. The cattle of the fields, the wild beasts of the fields, I shall send to thee myself, that they may be

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\*The numbers are obliterated.

safe behind thy door." Then I built the ship and provided it with stores of food and drink ; I divided the interior into ..... compartments. I looked after the chinks and filled them ; I poured bitumen over its outer side and over its inner side. All that I possessed I brought together and stowed it in the ship ; all that I had of gold, of silver, of the seed of life of every kind ; all my men-servants and my women-servants, the cattle of the field, the wild beasts of the field, and also my nearest friends. Then, when Shamash (the sun god) brought round the appointed time, a voice spoke to me : "This evening the heavens will rain destruction, wherefore go thou into the ship and close thy door. The appointed time has come," said the voice, "this evening the heavens will rain destruction." And greatly I feared the sunset of that day, the day on which I was to begin my voyage. I was sore afraid, but I entered the ship and closed the door behind me to shut up the ship. And I entrusted the mighty structure with all its load to the pilot, Puzur-Bel.\*

Then rose from the horizon of heaven a great black cloud (mu-seri-inamari) in the midst of which the storm god Rimmon made his thunder crash, while Nebo and the wind god rush forward. The throne-bearers stride over mountain and plain ; the mighty god of Pestilence lets loose the whirlwinds ; the god Adar causes the canals continually to overflow ; the gods of the great subterranean water bring up mighty floods and shake the earth with their violence ; the storm god's sea of waves mounts up to heaven ; light is changed into darkness. Confusion and devastation fill the earth. Brother cares no more for brother ; men no more have thought for one another. In the heavens the gods themselves are afraid of the deluge ; they flee up to the highest heaven of Anu ; the gods crouch down by the railing of heaven, cowering like a dog in his kennel. Ishtar laments like a mother, the majestic goddess cries with a loud voice : "Behold, all is turned into mud, as I predicted to the gods. I foretold this disaster and the extermination of my creatures—men. But I did not give them birth that they might fill the sea like the spawn of fishes." Then the gods wept with her and sat lamenting on one spot. For six days and nights wind, flood and storm maintained their mastery ; but at dawn of the seventh day the tempest subsided, the waters which had fought against men like a mighty army became quiet. The sea retired, and wind and flood ceased. I looked over the sea, loudly lamenting that men had been turned back into clay. The corpses floated about like reeds. I opened the window and the light fell upon my face ; I shivered and sat down and wept, my tears flowed over my face. I looked upon sea in every direction, no land in any quarter. The ship drove towards the region of Nizir. On the mount Nizir the ship stood still, and was not able to pass over it. The first day, the second day, the mount Nizir held the ship fast. The third day, the fourth day, the mount Nizir held the ship fast. The fifth day, the sixth day, the mount Nizir held the ship fast. When the seventh day came, then I took a dove and let her fly.† The dove flew hither and thither, but finding no resting place returned to the ship. Then I took a

\*Haupt renders this name as *Buzurkurga!* ; Sayce gives it as *Buzur-sadi-rabi*.

†This is the part of the story which was first recognized by Smith.

swallow and let her fly. The swallow flew hither and thither, but, finding no resting place, returned to the ship. Then I took a raven and let him fly. The raven went and saw the carrion on the water, and it ate, it swam, it wandered away; it did not return.

Then I let out all the animals to the four winds, and offered a sacrifice. I built an altar on the summit of the mountain. I set the sacred vessels on it seven by seven. Underneath them I spread reeds, pine wood, and spices. The gods smelt the savour; the gods smelt the sweet savour; the gods swarmed like flies over the sacrifice. And when the majestic goddess (Ishtar) came, she lighted up the rainbow which Anu had created according to his glory. 'Evermore will I remember these days,' said she, 'never will I forget them. May all the gods come to the altar; Bel only shall not come, because he controlled not his wrath, and brought on the deluge, and gave up my men to destruction.'

When, after that, Bel drew near and saw the ship, Bel stopped—his heart was filled with anger against the gods and against the spirits of heaven. "Not a soul shall escape," he cried. "not a man shall remain alive from the destruction."

Then the god Adar opened his mouth and spake, addressing the warrior Bel: "Who but Ea has contrived this? Ea knew (our determination) and has told him all."

Then the god Ea opened his mouth and spake, addressing the warrior Bel: "Thou art the warrior prince of the gods, but why, why hast thou acted so recklessly and brought on this deluge? Let the sinner suffer for his sins and the evil doer for his misdeeds; but let not the just be cut off, let not the faithful be destroyed. Instead of causing a flood, let hyaenas increase, that men may be diminished; instead of causing a flood, let a famine come, that men may be diminished; instead of causing a flood, let pestilence increase, that men may be diminished. I did not reveal the determination of the great gods. To Hasisadra alone a dream I sent, and he understood the determination of the gods."

Then Bel came to his senses. He entered the ship, took hold of my hand and lifted me up; he lifted up my wife also and laid her hand in mine. Then he turned towards us and joined himself to us in covenant; he blessed us, saying: "Hitherto Hasisadra has been a mortal man, but now Hasisadra, together with his wife, shall be raised to be like the gods; yea, Hasisadra shall dwell in the distant land, at the mouth of the rivers." Then they took me and made me dwell in the distant land, at the mouth of the rivers.

After this recital, Hasisadra proceeds to inform his descendant how he could be freed from the curse laid on him by the gods, saying to the ferryman:

"Urubel, the man whom thou hast brought hither, behold, disease has covered his body, sickness has destroyed the strength of his limbs. Take him with thee, Urubel, and purify him in the waters, that his disease may be changed into beauty, that he may throw off his sickness and the waters carry it away, that health may cover his skin, and the hair of his head be restored and descend in flowing locks down to his garment, that he may go his way and return to his own country."



When all had been done as directed, Gilgames, restored to health, returned to Erech. But as he approaches the city, his heart aches and his tears flow as he remembers his lost friend. He laments and cries to the gods, and does not cease till Ea hears his prayer and sends his son to bring Eabani's spirit out of the dark world of shades into the land of the blessed.

Such is the Chaldean Epic, the oldest epic in the world. Its chief interest for us, of course, lies in its extraordinary parallel to the Biblical narrative of the Flood. But before we proceed to the important question as to the relation between these two accounts of the Deluge, let us notice again the significance of the astronomical arrangement of the twelve books or tablets, for it is here that we find a partial explanation of the extravagant and apparently impossible stories with which the small nucleus of historical fact has been so rankly overgrown. The poem is a kind of allegory, or, as Ragozin calls it, a *mythical* Epos. "The story is one far older than that of any mere human hero and relates to one far mightier: it is the story of the Sun in his progress through the year, retracing his career of increasing splendor as the spring advances to midsummer, the height of his power when he reaches the month represented in the Zodiac by the sign of the Lion, then the decay of his strength as he pales and sickens in the autumn, and at last his restoration to youth and vigor after he has passed the waters of death—winter, the death of the year, the season of nature's death-like torpor, out of which the sun has not strength sufficient to rouse her, until spring comes back and the circle begins again." The Babylonian year began with the spring, about the middle of our month of March. Now let us glance at the twelve tablets of the poem in the order of the twelve months of the Accadian year and of the twelve corresponding signs of the Zodiac, which, as already stated, were invented by the Accadians, or early Babylonians.

1. March-April, *Aries*, (Tablet missing).
2. April-May, *Taurus*, Eabani, the seer, half *bull*, half man, appears.
3. May-June, *Gemini*, the Twins, - the covenant of friendship between the two heroes, Gilgames and Eabani, who are thereafter inseparable.
4. June-July, *Cancer*, the backward motion of the crab, symbolizing the recession of the sun from the sum-

- mer solstice, when the sun begins to decline and the days to shorten.
5. July-Aug., *Leo*, the *heat* of "the month of fire" being symbolized throughout the East by the Lion. The time of the sun's greatest power, Gilgames king.
  6. Aug.-Sept., *Virgo*, the sign of this month being a woman, and its name, among the Babylonians, "the month of the message of Ishtar." The sixth tablet accordingly contains, as we have seen, the wooing of Gilgames by the goddess Ishtar.
  7. Sept.-Oct., *Libra*, Sickness of Gilgames, the Sun becoming less powerful.
  8. Oct.-Nov., *Scorpio*, corresponding to the tablet which gives the account of the gigantic scorpion men who kept watch over the rising and setting of the sun.
  9. Nov.-Dec., *Sagittarius*, (In the present mutilated condition of the tablets it is impossible to make out the connection between the ninth and twelfth signs and the subject matter of the corresponding tablets).
  10. Dec.-Jan., *Capricornus*, winter solstice, shortest days. The Babylonians called this "the month of the Setting Sun." Accordingly Gilgames reaches the end of his journey, the land of the illustrious dead.
  11. Jan.-Feb., *Aquarius*, the sign corresponds to the Babylonian name of this month—"the month of the curse of Rain"—and to the contents of the eleventh tablet, viz: the account of the Flood.
  12. Feb.-March, *Pisces*. "The 'Fishes of Ea' accompany the sun in the twelfth month, the last of the dark season, as he emerges, purified and invigorated, to resume his triumphant career with the beginning of the new year."

We have thus given the Chaldean account of the Flood in its connection, as a part of this remarkable epopee, in order that the reader might receive the full impression both of the striking external resemblances and of the measureless internal differences between this and the Biblical account—the foolish,

fanciful, and monstrous features of the one, and the sobriety, dignity and truth of the other. It has long been known, from certain fragments of a history written by the Babylonian priest, Berosus (B. C. 250), that the Chaldeans, like all other nations, had such a tradition of the Flood, but not until Smith's discovery of the cuneiform record of it could we appreciate aright the suggestive resemblance in form and the immense difference in spirit between that and the Hebrew narrative, since the fragments of Berosus did not give us the whole of the Chaldean version, did not show us its strange setting as an episode in a mythical epos, and did not fully reveal the grotesque, petty and unworthy conceptions with which the story is overlaid and which now stand out in such sharp contrast with the simplicity, elevation, and spirituality of the record in Genesis. At some risk of needless repetition, we will venture at this point to state with some fullness our view of the nature and value of the argument for the historical truth and divine inspiration of the early narratives of scripture, which is afforded by these cuneiform parallels, so like in outward form, so unlike in spiritual essence. As just intimated, the argument is both positive and negative, based upon both the resemblances and differences of the two accounts.

(1) The argument drawn from *Resemblance*. There are indeed some differences of detail even in the external framework of the two accounts. For instance, the Babylonian tradition, being recorded by a people familiar with navigation, describes Hasisadra's (Noah's) structure as a real ship, with a pilot, whereas the Hebrew account never calls it a ship, but always an *ark*. There are differences also as to the number of persons saved, as to the duration of the Flood (the Biblical account making it about a year, the Babylonian only two weeks), as to the birds sent out (the Babylonian account mentioning a swallow, in addition to the dove and the raven), and as to the final fate of the protagonist—the Babylonian legend confounding two patriarchs, represents Hasisadra as translated to the land of the blessed without dying, whereas we know from the Biblical history that this was not Noah but Enoch. These differences of form, however, are comparatively insignificant. The formal resemblances are much more numerous and pronounced, e. g. the forewarning as to the Flood; the deity's command to build a vessel; pitching it inside and outside with bitumen; storing it with food; entrance of the hero,

his family, and the animals ; closing the door ; moral purpose of the Deluge, a divine punishment of men for their wickedness ; the complete destruction of the race except the individuals in the vessel ; the cessation of the storm and the subsidence of the waters ; the opening of the window ; the number seven ; the resting of the vessel on a mountain ; the sending out of birds, the dove finding no resting place, the raven not returning ; the determination not to destroy the world again by water ; the building of the altar and the offering of sacrifice ; the rainbow. These and other details are common to both accounts.

Now it is evident that such minute resemblances and such striking harmony in general cannot be accidental. It is equally evident that neither story is copied from the other, and will become still more evident when we come to consider the differences between them. What then is the relation between the Babylonian legend and the Hebrew history ? Are they not both derived from the same cycle of tradition ? And does not the tradition rest back upon a tremendous and solemn fact ? Let us widen the base of our argument. Every race of men has its story of the Flood. There is no part of the world in which this tradition is not found. How can we account for this except by the fact that there *was* a mighty catastrophe which involved the whole human family ? Even Lenormant says : "A tradition everywhere so exact and so concordant cannot possibly be referred to as an imaginary myth. No religious or cosmogonic myth possesses this character of universality. It must necessarily be the reminiscence of an actual and terrible event, which made so powerful an impression upon the imaginations of the first parents of our species that their descendants could never forget it."

The story as found by Smith was copied by the scribes of Assurbanipal, at Nineveh in the seventh century B. C., from an older tablet belonging to one of the Babylonian libraries, which was itself a copy of a still more ancient document, so that the date of the original composition cannot be later than the time of Abraham, about 2000 B. C. This account and the Mosaic account resemble one another because they both refer to a real event and both record a trustworthy tradition. But, as to the manner in which they do it, the difference between them is world wide. The Chaldean author embodies the distorted legend into his poem with all its accumulated follies,

falsehoods and superstitions clinging to it. But at the touch of the Hebrew historian, who writes under the influence of God's spirit of truth, all these fall away, and the core of historic fact remains. In other words, the tradition of the Deluge, when recorded by an inspired writer and impressed with the seal of divine approval, is purged of its polytheism and freed from every other fungus of falsehood and folly. But this brings us to the other part of our argument :

(2) The argument drawn from *Difference*. The spirit of the two accounts and their religious conceptions differ by the diameter of the world. On the one hand, we have a pure and lofty monotheism—a supreme being whose attributes command the reverence and love of every rational creature. On the other, we have unmitigated polytheism, with the most unworthy and degrading views of the gods. They fly in terror before the roaring storm and raging waters. They “crouch down by the railing of heaven, cowering like a dog in his kennel.” They “swarm like flies over the sacrifice.” We cannot stain our pages with the indecencies which are charged upon them in other portions of the poem. Suffice it to say that the gods are not only contemptible, but corrupt and abhorrent. “Their rock is not as our rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.”

The point we would make has been so well stated by Prof. Brown (with special reference, however, to the parallel accounts of the creation, which we shall take up in our next paper) that, though there are some expressions in it to which we object, we beg leave to introduce the statement at this point.

“Whether there are agreements or disagreements in form between old Hebrew and old Babylonian documents, and what these agreements or disagreements signify, is a deeply interesting inquiry. But it is, after all, of secondary consequence. It is a great mistake to stop with these external relationships. The thing which every earnest Bible scholar is most concerned for is that root-element which *distinguishes* the Hebrew people from all other ancient peoples, and the Hebrew writings from all other ancient literatures. The one great distinctive feature of the literary monuments of the Hebrews is that they were informed by a spirit to which the inscriptions of Nineveh and Babylon are utter strangers. There is a truth of spiritual conception, a loftiness of spiritual tone, a conviction of unseen realities, a confident reliance upon an invisible but all-controlling power, a humble worship in the presence of the supreme majesty, a peace in union and communion with the one and only God, and the vigorous germs of an ethics reflecting his will, which make an

infinite gap between the Hebrew and his brother Shemite 'beyond the river,' that all likeness of literary form does not begin to span. . . . . Go back once more to the poems of creation, as the cuneiform tablet and the first chapter of Genesis present them; there are formal resemblances, but these cannot offset, for a moment, the fundamental difference. Compare the polytheism of the Babylonian myth, its inarticulate pantheism, its confounding of the gods with the world, its emanation—all things, gods included, born from the womb of Chaos—with the distinct, unhesitating, unobscured monotheism of Genesis, struck out sharply and unmistakably in the first majestic line, 'In the beginning of God's creating the heavens and the earth.' Men say, Oh, of course the Hebrews had a purer conception of God. But the point is that this is the essential matter; this is what we care about. No doubt it has been recognized and emphasized before, but we have never before had the opportunity of seeing so plainly what it would be to have this commanding and determining element left out—from even one page—of the Old Testament.

The formal, external resemblance—even the correspondence in subject matter—make this vital distinction so obvious as to insist on recognition. And I am persuaded that, at least as far as the early narratives of Genesis are concerned, Christian scholars will come more and more to the position that it is not the features of likeness to the Genesis tablets of Babylonia that support the unique character of the Bible so much as the absolute and appalling unlikeness in the spiritual conceptions and temper by which they are infused."

Now, how can this difference be accounted for? When we remember that the progenitor of the Hebrews came out of the very midst of this hot bed of polytheism and impurity from which the distorted and fantastic legends of the Babylonians sprang, is it not clear that in the Hebrew record of the traditions which were common to both peoples an unseen hand warded off the touch of pollution, and an invisible power cleansed them of already accumulated falsehood, suffused them with heavenly truth, and made them fit vehicles for Divine revelation? Further proof of the view that these Babylonian Traditions were fragments of a primeval revelation will be furnished in our next paper, which will deal with the cuneiform accounts of the Creation and the Sabbath.

