

(*"Omne ignotum pro morifico."*)

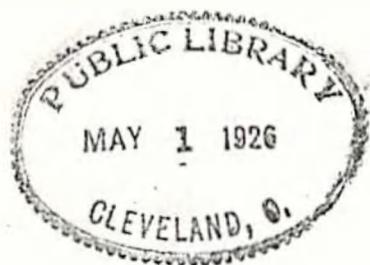
SUPERNATURAL GENERATION.

Genesis vi., 2.

PRIVATELY PRINTED FOR THE EDITOR.

Thomas Inman

1896.



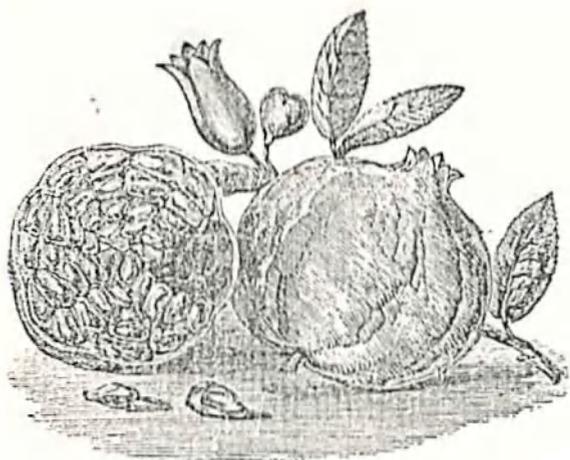
SUPERNATURAL GENERATION.

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No. 22

SYNOPSIS.

Supernatural generation. What is meant by the term. Examples. Children given by the gods. Anecdote. Frequency of god-begotten children in Ancient Greece. Their general fate. The stories not credited by the grandfathers of children, nor apparently by the mothers. The babies, how treated. Foundlings and Hospitals. Antiope. Leucothœ. Divinely conceived persons not necessarily great or good. Babylonian idea that a god came down to enjoy human women. Tale from Herodotus. Jehovah as a man. Grecian idea attached to the expression Son of God. Homer. Hebrew ideas. Roman notions. Romulus, son of Mars and a Vestal. Augustus, son of Apollo. Modern ideas respecting Incubi. Prevalence of the belief. Its suppression. Causes of its origin. Bible made to pander to priestly lust. Dictionnaire Infernal. History of incubi therefrom. Stories. Strange idea that the Gods who made men out of nothing cannot as easily make babies. Divine Androgynes. Strange stories of single gods having offspring. Narayana and the Spirit of God of Genesis. Chaos. Hindoo mythos of Brahma. Birth from churning a dead man's left arm, and again his right. Ayonijesvara, his strange history. Similar ones referred to. History of Carticeya. Christian parallels. Immaculate conception a Hindoo myth. The dove in India and Christendom. Agni and cloven fiery tongues. Penance and its powers. Miraculous conception by means of a dove. Other myths from various sources.



POMEGRANATE.

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EDITOR'S NOTE.

As intimated in the Preliminary Circular announcing its publication, the following chapter is compiled from the Work of that learned Writer and Scholar, the late Dr. Thomas Inman, M.D., a work of prodigious labour and of vast importance, dealing with a mass of facts hitherto almost entirely ignored by English Writers, and those few who have treated on them have imparted their views only to a select private circle, and solves many problems in the realm of esoteric physiology, also forming a valuable Commentary (for the observant) to several Rosicrucian works, amongst such being that singular and startling production (erroneously cited in the Bath Book Scandal, 1889), "The Count of Gabalis,"* first brought to public notice by Hargrave Jennings in his "Rosicrucians, their Rites and Mysteries," Ed. 1879; and in which notable volume the last chapter will also be noticed copious and exhaustive—prudently—untranslated extracts on the same subject, in which will be found plausible theories—nay, cogent arguments, scarcely to be refuted, the perusal of which is indispensable for a complete presentation of the per contra side of this tabooed subject—not only as to the possible (and likely) incorporation of spirits; but as to the difference of sexes among them, with natural incidents, and apparently extraordinary results from their semi-spiritual, semi-bodily Rosicrucian conditions.

* Now being translated and edited in three separate parts, each complete in itself, with elaborate Introductions by John Yarker Esq., F.S.S., &c., &c., and in opening says, "The late Mr. Hargrave Jennings had the very highest opinion of this Work written, as it is, with a double meaning, and thus writes upon the subject in his "Letters" recently published, "I think you know what extraordinary occult value I place upon this mysterious book."

These Works were considered—although written from the questioning and cautiously satirical point of view—as unwelcome, and even obnoxious; even among those who freely commented on religion, nevertheless, they provoked (and still provoke) extraordinary curiosity. Curious readers should consult the Original Edition of the Work referred to above.†

Sat sap.

INVICTUS.

† DEMONIALITY, or Incubi and Succubi. A Treatise wherein is shown that there are in existence on earth rational creatures besides man, endowed like him with a body and a soul, that are born and die like him, redeemed by our Lord Jesus Christ, and capable of receiving salvation or damnation. By the Rev. Father Sinistrari of Ameno (17th century). Published from the original Latin manuscript discovered in London in the year 1872, and translated into French by Isidore Liseux. Now first translated into English, with the Latin text.

ADVERTISEMENT.

By permission of the Editor, in the interests of the work, I avail myself of the opportunity to add (to what he has already so discriminately given) the following bibliographical extracts from Mr. Yarker's Preface:—

“The modern publisher of this remarkable book, has deserved well of such of the public as take an interest in this species of literature, and some years ago (1886) he issued a most desirable edition of the First part of the “Comte de Gabalis,” and announced at the same time the continuation of the Second part to follow at once, but, from various causes, the same has been delayed. I was so much impressed with the high opinion which the late Mr. Hargrave Jennings expressed of this work, in his “Letters” recently published, that I resolved to translate the Second Part, never hitherto printed in English, for my own amusement. I have, accordingly, done so, and now offer it to the present Publisher, Mr. Robt. H. Fryar, of Bath, to aid in completing his admirable edition, and through him I give it to the reader.

“It is always a difficult task to give the spirit of an author in translation, but the following will be found a faithful version of the original Work, to which a facsimile title page is added. It is a difficult work, and I have desired only to be literal.

“I am informed by the Publisher that the demand for this species of literature is so small that the results barely cover cost, and as I translate this *con amore*, I shall not be misunderstood in expressing a hope that the antiquarian reader will assist the sale for him. In this case it will be followed shortly by the Third part, which is a still more interesting volume, as it overruns the literature of 2,500 years, to find alleged facts for that which the Moderns term extatic vision, premonitions, healing, clairvoyance, spiritualism, occultism, &c., and giving the views of the Ancients as to the cause of the visions and intuitions.”

* * * * *

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of that unique Work the "Scented Garden," or, The Arab Art of Love; and when it is understood that it is identical with that of the Arabian Erotology of the Cheikh Nefzaoui, regarded by Sir Richard Burton as his *magnum opus*, of which he said—"I am afraid it will make a great row in England, because the "Arabian Nights" was a baby-tale in comparison to this;" students will know what is meant.

The Digest will comprise the following permissible portions UNABRIDGED:—

On the 'Translator's Notes.

The Author's Introduction.

The Appendix to the Autograph Edition (1886).

An Additional Appendix, to the Recueil to date, containing Lady Burton's ever memorable Letter of 1891, with her account of Sir Richard's MS. Version of the above Work, its fate at her hands, Notes, &c., &c.

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BATH.

SUPERNATURAL GENERATION.



T is a question which should, in my opinion, be asked by every individual in a rational community, whether it is advisable to continue, as a matter of faith, a doctrine which must be repudiated, as a matter of fact. To this we may join, as a rider, can anyone who puts his credence in a legend because it is old, claim to be superior to those who originally invented the tale, in the darkness of antiquity? When moderns smile at the stories told by the classic Varro, how certain mares in Lusitania were impregnated by the wind on a certain mountain, without any access to a horse, and at the credence given to similar accounts by Virgil, Pliny, and even the Christian bishop Augustine; and by some old Scotch authority how a young woman became a mother through the intervention of the ashes of the dead: and when they pity the benighted Greeks, who gave to Hercules, Jupiter for a father; and to Mars, Juno for a mother, without intercourse with her celestial spouse, it behoves them to inquire whether each may not be addressed in the sentence, "*Mutato nomine, de te fabula narratur*"—*i.e.*, change but the name of the believers from Greeks and Romans to modern Christians, and it will be found that Popes, priests, and peoples believe as firmly now in supernatural generation as the most crass pagan of which history treats.

Our classical reading tells us abundance of marvellous stories—how Jupiter seduced Danæe in the form of a golden shower, and yet had a common son by her, who was not an aureous coin; how Leda received Zeus as a swan, and bore therefrom a couple of eggs; how Europa was tempted

by him as a bull, and yet did not bear a calf; and how Callisto, a maiden of Diana, was debauched by the same god under the guise of her mistress, and yet that from two maidens a boy was formed.

Of the amours of Apollo with a dozen and a half damsels, and of the very numerous disguises which he assumed, we find abundant details in our classical dictionaries. Mars, though not so frequently adopted by human females as a lover, had many children of whom he was the putative father.

Jupiter had Bacchus and Minerva without Juno's aid, and Juno retaliated by bearing Ares without conversation with her consort. We deride these tales, and yet think that because we laugh at a hundred such we shall be pardoned for believing one. How little we are justified in acting thus a few philosophical considerations will demonstrate.

There are few things in mythology that are more curious than the subject of the miraculous formation of certain individuals. Some of these have been regarded as the offspring of a celestial father and a mother of earthly mould; others again, as for example Æneas, were said to be the result of a union between a heavenly mother and a terrestrial father—*e.g.*, Æneas was the son of Anchises, a handsome man, and Venus, goddess of beauty and love. Some, though these are few, are said to be children of a virgin or deserted wife, who has produced them without any extraneous assistance,* and others are declared to be descended

* The following is a good case in corroboration of what is said in the text. In the *Dictionnaire Infernal*, to which more particular reference will be made shortly, there is, *s. v. Fécondité*, a report of a trial before the Parliament of Grenoble, in which the question was, whether a certain infant could be declared legitimate which was born after the husband had been absent from his wife four full years. The wife asserted that the baby was the offspring of a dream, in which she had a vivid idea that her wandering spouse had returned to love and duty. Midwives and physicians were consulted, and reported on the subject. As a result, the Parliament ordained that the infant should be adjudged legitimate, and that its mother should be regarded as a true and honourable wife. The judgment bears date 13th February 1537.

from a father whom no consort could ever claim. One individual, indeed, called Orion, is represented as having been wholly independent of both father and mother, and the result of a strange form of development, the like of which Darwin never dreamed of, as he came from a bladder into which three gods had micturated. His name, we are gravely assured, came *ab urina*.

The quaint ideas associated in mythology with the supernatural generation here referred to have been various. In some instances they have been wholly poetical, as when we are told that "the Supreme" by his union with law and order (Themis) produced "Justice," "the Hours," "Good Laws," and "Peace" (Hesiod *Theogony*, 900), and as when Europa is said to have tempted Jupiter to leave Phœnicia, and travel westward to Crete as the first step towards the colonization of an unknown continent. In other instances, the ideas have been framed upon the very natural belief that anyone—whether existent in story only, or in reality,—who has greatly surpassed his fellows, must have had a large element of the Deity in his constitution. In other instances, the notion has been associated with the once prevalent belief, that the Creator had a sex, to which we shall refer by and by; and in other cases, the fancy has clearly been mingled with the fact, that many an unmarried woman has attributed to some god, a pregnancy, or baby, which has been due, in reality, to a very mortal man. Here we may notice that the fecundity which damsels of old were wont to refer to a god or some inferior, but yet beneficent, deity, more modern christian girls have associated with a demon. Jupiter and Apollo being replaced by a special class of imps who were named "incubi," and of the particulars of whose embraces the strangest stories are told. This small truth seems to be sufficient to demonstrate that the Greeks were not familiar with the being to whom we give the name of "Satan" and

the "Devil," and that their belief coincided in one respect with that of the older Jews, who considered that whatever occurrence happened in the world, whether apparently for good or evil, was done by Jehovah, or as the Hellenic damsels reported by Jupiter, Apollo, or Mars.

Here, too, I may be permitted to introduce a remark suggested by a narrative, told to me by a lady of high British rank. She had been brought up in a foreign country under the eye of a sensible and pious, we may add prudish, mother, who endeavoured to shield her daughter from all contact with external vicious influences, and to prevent her ears or her mind from ever coming to the knowledge of those matters which are associated with love, marriage and offspring. When the young lady naturally enquired of mamma where the infants sprang from which came into the world and grew up around her, she was told "from God," and she was referred to Psalm cxxvii. 3, which declares that "children are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward." After having attained adult age, and being wholly imbued with this belief, she, on one occasion, expressed her opinion that Mademoiselle—who had recently been confined—must have been a peculiarly virtuous maiden, to have received so great a present as a baby from the beneficent Creator. This speech fell like a bombshell amongst a mixed company, but she knew not why. It was not until her marriage some time subsequently, that she learned that infants were said to come from God or the Devil according to circumstances, but that in reality they were always due to men and women.

The anecdote given above, naturally enables us to call attention to the remarkable fact that though the Grecian poets repeatedly spoke of maidens being fertilized by a divinity, yet Greek fathers never paid any heed to the power of that god, whom their daughters asserted to have operated upon their femininity; but always treated the earthly love of

the alleged celestial spouse, as if the latter was wholly powerless to punish the hard-hearted parent, who had no scruples to turn his daughter from his door, so that she might hide her shame in distant lands. In those classic times, procreation by a god upon a human being was the attempted cover for bastardy. Moreover, even the woman herself, to whom Jupiter or Apollo was alleged to have descended from heaven to honour, felt herself so much injured by the visit, that she either tried to destroy the resulting offspring with her own hands, or exposed it upon a mountain to the tender mercies of dogs and vultures. Much in the same way many a modern maiden places her shame-covered infant in the turn-table of a foundling institution. Antiope, for example, the daughter of a king of Thebes, was, according to her version, beloved by Jupiter, who visited her in the form of a satyr and implanted twins. When she discovered the coming event, which casts its shadow before, she left the paternal mansion, to avoid her father's anger, and fled to a mountain, on which she left her hapless offspring. They were found by shepherds and brought up.

The story of fair Leucothöe is still more to the point. She was sufficiently beautiful to attract Apollo, who seduced her under the form of her own mother—not a very likely story it is true, but the two lived happily together until a rival told the loved one's father of the amour. The incensed paterfamilias ordered his daughter to be buried alive, and yet the god who could change her body after death into the frankincense tree, and himself into a matronly looking woman and yet retain his sex, could not prevent his earthly spouse from dying a cruel death. In other words, Orchamus, the parent of the damsel, wholly disbelieved in the existence of a divine "spark," and felt assured that his daughter had disgraced herself with a man far below her in earthly rank.

From these, and a number of other Grecian anecdotes, we can draw no other conclusions than that the sires in those days were as jealous of the honour of their daughters as we are of our own now; that when that honour was in danger of being tarnished, a god was alleged by the damsel to be the offender; that the story was not believed; and that the daughter fled, was punished, or was pardoned, according to the sternness or credulity of the parents. The idea that individuals who were the sons or daughters of a god, must necessarily be great and good, does not appear to have prevailed amongst the ancient Greeks. Nay, we may even doubt whether any of them really believed that Jupiter, Apollo, or Neptune, could, or had ever become incarnate, for the sole purpose of impregnating a human female. That such an idea, however, prevailed amongst the Babylonians we learn from Herodotus, who informs us, book i. c. 181, that Belus comes into a chamber at the summit of a sacred tower to meet therein a native woman, chosen by the god from the whole nation; and in the succeeding chapter he indicates that a similar occurrence takes place in Egyptian Thebes, and in Lycian Patara. Yet even whilst writing the tales, the historian expresses his own incredulity of their value, and we may well suppose that the thoughtful generally, would only give such credence to the statements of the temple priests, as was given to certain Christian stories by a philosopher, who said he believed them because they were impossible. Even if the common people credited the assertion that "The Supreme" did elect a woman with whom to converse, we must not despise them too lightly, for we are distinctly told in our own scriptures that Jehovah appeared as a man, and as such, ate, drank, and talked with Abraham (Gen. ch. xviii.); that Elohim was in the habit of conversing face to face with Moses (Exod. xxxiii. 11); and that the same God wrestled with Jacob as a man, and could not prevail against the

patriarch until he had lamed him. We must also notice that myriads of Christians have believed, and many still do so, that He in a certain form had commerce with a Hebrew maiden (Luke i. 34, 35), and had by her a begotten son.

When civilization spread over Greece, there seems to have been a change of expression—which being at the first wholly metaphorical, subsequently became realistic. Thus, any man peculiarly characteristic amongst his fellows for strength, knowledge, or power, was designated “a son of God.” Thus, as Grote remarks (12 vol. edition), vol. ii. p. 132, note 1. “Even Aristotle ascribed to Homer a divine parentage; a damsel of the isle of Ios, pregnant by some god, was carried off by pirates to Smyrna at the time of the Ionic emigration, and there gave birth to the poet” (Aristotle ap. Plutarch Vit. Homer, p. 1059). Plato, also by some, called “the divine,” was said by Speusippus to be a son of Apollo (*Smith's Dictionary s. v.*) The Hebrews had a similar metaphorical expression, and gave to everything supereminently good, an epithet which we may paraphrase as “divine.” Some few writers used the title, “sons of God,” as for example Job i. 6, and xxxviii., 7, and Hosea i. 10; an epithet adopted by John i. 12, Rom. viii. 14, 19, Phil. ii. 15, 1 John iii. 1, 2, as if the same were applicable to all who are virtuous and good to an especial degree. The Hebrews even seem to have adopted the belief that Elohim, like the Grecian Zeus, had many children, could, and did really, associate with human beings, for we can in no other way reasonably interpret the strange narrative in Genesis vi., wherein we are told that the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, who became the sires of mighty men of great renown.

Amongst the Romans, similar ideas to those which we find amongst the Greeks prevailed. For example, Romulus was said to be the son of Mars and a Vestal virgin; but so

little did her relatives believe in the possibility of the occurrence, or the divine nature of the maiden's offspring, that the mother was buried alive, and the twins which she bore were exposed, much in the same way as modern "foundlings" are. In this case, as in many others, it is probable that little notice would have been taken of such supernatural generation had the mother been of low origin—but when a god inveigles a king's daughter from her duty, both the one and the other must be punished; the one in her person, the other in his child. Yet these very writers who told of the punishment of the Vestal Ilia for her intrigue with Mars, took advantage of the story, and spread a report that Romulus the offspring of the two, was, after his death taken up to heaven to dwell there as a god. At a subsequent period, Augustus Cæsar announced, on his mother's authority, that he was the son of Apollo, and claimed to be treated as a veritable scion of that venerable deity.

The account of the conception and birth of Servius Tullius is curious from its circumstantiality. Ovid tells us, *Fæsti*, vi., 625-659, Bohn's translation: "Vulcan was the father of Tullius; Ocrisia was his mother, a woman of Corniculum, remarkable for her beauty. Her, Tanaquil, having duly performed the sacred rites, ordered, in company with herself, to pour some wine on the decorated altar. Here amongst the ashes, either was or seemed to be, a form of obscene shape; but such it really was. Being ordered to do so, the captive (Ocrisia was a slave), submits to its embraces; conceived by her, Servius had the origin of his birth from heaven. His father afforded a proof, at the time when he touched his head with the gleaming fire, and a flame rising to a point, blazed upon his locks." In some earlier lines, the poet tells us that the goddess, Fortune, was enamoured of this same Roman king, and visited him nightly—much as Venus came to converse with Anchises.

In this story, we have an unusual ingredient, inasmuch as there is a witness to that which we may call the immaculate conception, and after birth, a proof of the child's divine origin! Of course there are many irreverent people who declare that the story is untrue—that it is far more likely that the real father was Tarquin, who, finding his consort's beautiful servant to be with child, contrived a plan by which she would escape the vindictiveness of the mistress—one which, if devotionally inclined, she was bound to give credence to. Nor can devout Christians altogether range themselves amongst the unbelievers in the miracle, for the founder of their religion was borne by a woman of low condition, and is said to have been begotten by an overshadowing spirit. He assumed to be a king; but the son of Ocrisia became one in reality, and instituted games in honour of his divine progenitor.

For some more modern poetical fictions of the same nature, we may refer our readers to Scott's *Lady of the Lake*, where, in the account of the Highland seer, Brian, they will find a parallel to the story promulgated by Alexander the false prophet, respecting his birth, described by Lucian.

The same ideas, with which we are all of us so familiar in Christendom, that they form a portion of the creeds which the orthodox weekly rehearse, have obtained in far Ceylon. Thus, for example, we read in a Buddhistic legend (*Kusa Iatakaya*, translated by T. Steele, Trübner, London, 1871, small 8vo., pp. 260):—

"As Sakra* with his thousand eyes gazed over every land,
The hapless queen, with heart distraught, he saw dejected stand;
His godlike eye revealed to him that to her blessed womb
Two radiant gods illustrious from Heaven's high town should come.
Then entering first the Bodisat's blest skyey palace fair,
And next unto another god's, did Sakra straight repair:
Benign he said:—Go to the world of men, that distant scene,
And there be born from out the womb of yon delightful queen.

* *Indra*, "The Supreme."

The saying of the king of gods, unto their hearts they took ;
 Then bathed they in his feet's bright rays that shone as shines a brook :
 ' *Let us be so conceived,*' they said, when they the order heard,
 ' *Within the womb of yander queen, even as the Lord declared.*'"

—Stanzas 129-131.

But the two children do not appear as twins, like Romulus and Remus, for we find in stanza 155—

"Now when the darling little child, the wisdom-gifted one,
 Began to lift his tiny foot, and learn to walk alone,
 Another god from Heaven's high town flashed down the sky serene,
 And was conceived within the womb of that delightful queen."

I may notice in passing, that the lady was married, but had always been barren with her husband.

In the instances to which we have referred above, there has been no very marked departure from the ordinary course of nature. In all, an union between a father and mother has occurred—in all, the relation between each to the offspring has been maintained, and the ordinary progress of gestation observed. The main discrepancies which are to be noticed are, that a divine is substituted for a human father, or, as in the case of Æneas, the sire has been a man, and the mother a "celestial." But after birth, instead of the child being cared for by its parents, it very frequently happens that a goat, wolf, or other animal, performs the mother's duty as a nurse.

The reader whose antiquarian lore is considerable, will probably remember that Christians in Italy, France, and I dare not say in how many other Catholic countries, were implicit believers in the idea that spirits from the invisible world could assume a human form, and under that, have intercourse with youths of either sex. The literature upon this subject was at one time very great, but such pains have been taken to destroy it, in order that so great a blot upon the infallibility of Papal rulers should no longer be found, that there are few books to which I can refer inquirers. The first time I met with the subject was in a Latin treatise by

Cardan, A.D. 1444-1524,* being commentaries upon Hippocrates. In this, many chapters are devoted to the possibility of intercourse between women and embodied spirits. The Mediæval virgins, unlike the Greeks, always attributed their pregnancy to demons and not to gods, although on some occasions maidens were foolish enough, like those of ancient Babylon, to believe that they were embraced by a divine being or angel. Into this matter the Italian doctor enters fully, and endeavours to establish some distinction how a woman could distinguish an "incubus" from a human being, and if she became pregnant and brought forth, how the devil's offspring could be told from an ordinary baby. The particulars which are given to the learned in Latin, will not bear to be reproduced in the vernacular, suffice it to say, that they are such as would be given by silly women more or less conscious of having been guilty of impropriety, and who were goaded by sanctimonious but ribald divines to enter into every detail of the devil's doings and the females' sensations.

Before saying more of the "incubi," we may bestow a passing glance upon the foundation of the idea of their existence. In mediæval times, a large portion of the New Testament was taken to be literally true, and the people were instructed to believe that the devil went about like a roaring lion seeking whom he could devour. The papal priests encouraged the idea, for by frightening the ignorant, they induced them to purchase sacerdotal insurance by paying for masses to protect themselves from the snares of Satan. For hierarchs who were obliged to live without wives, it was easy in the first place to imbue the mind of a superstitious maiden with a horror of Apollyon's power, and then to take advantage of her fears by personifying the

*It is more than thirty years since I read the book in question, and I have long ago parted with it. As I am unable now to lay my hands upon a copy I am not sure whether the author was Facio Cardan, who flourished at the period given in the text, or the more celebrated Jerome Cardan who lived A. D. 1501-1575.

fiend. In this manner the bible suggested the sin to the priest and made the maiden passive.

It would not be profitable to write a catalogue in detail of the authorities upon which I found these statements. I will rather give a short resumé of an article upon "Incubi," which is to be found in a most curious book entitled *Dictionnaire Infernal ou Bibliothèque universelle sur les etres, les personnages, les livres, les faits et les choses qui tiennent aux apparitions, à la magie, au commerce de l'enfer, aux divinations, aux sciences, secrètes, . . . aux erreurs et aux préjugés, . . . généralement à toutes les croyances merveilleuses, surprenantes mystérieuses et surnaturelles*—Par M. Colin de Plancy. *Deuxième édition entièrement révisée*; Paris, 1826. The book is rare, but most interesting to the philosopher who concerns himself about matters of "faith," for it shows, clearly, that there is no depth of human degradation into which people who are guided by blind trust in some fellow mortal, unchecked by the exercise of reason, will not enter, and there reside permanently, until stirred up by those whom they assert on the first blush to be "infidels."

After a few preliminary remarks, we are told that the French incubi did not attack virgins, but in the next paragraph is an account of a maiden who was seduced by a demon in the form of her betrothed. This was in Sardinia. An English fiend acted in a similar way, and from the congress followed a frightful disease of which the poor girl died in three days. This story is told by Thomas Walsingham, b. A.D. 1410. A Scotch lass is the next victim reported, and to her the unclean spirit came nightly under the guise of a fine young man. She became pregnant, and avowed all. The parents then kept watch, and saw the devil near her in a monstrous unhuman form. He would not go away till a priest came, then the incubus made a frightful noise, burned the furniture, and went off upwards, carrying the roof with

him. Three days after a queer form was born, more horrible than had ever been seen, so bad indeed, that the midwives strangled it. For the credulous, what fact could be more strongly attested than this? The reporter is Hector Boetius, b. 1470.

The next tale, having a locale in Bonn, occurred at a time when priests married and had a family. The daughter of one who was closely watched and locked up when left by herself, was found out by a demon, who took upon him the form of a fine young man. Such an occurrence was thought nothing uncommon then, inasmuch as Paul had told the Corinthians that Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light (2 Cor. xi. 14). The poor victim became enceinte and confessed the whole to her father, who, fearing the devil, and anxious not to make a scandal, sent the daughter away from home. The impudent fiend came to remonstrate, and killed the wretched sire with a blow of his fist.—Quoted from *Cæsarii Heisterb mirac.*, lib. iii., c. 8. The next case occurs at Schinin, wherein we are told (*Hauppius Biblioth portat. pract.*, p. 454) that a woman produced a baby without head or feet, with a mouth in the chest near to the left shoulder, and an ear near the right one; instead of fingers it had webs like frog's feet, it was liver coloured, and shaky as jelly, it cried when the mother wanted to wash it, but somebody stifled and then buried it. The mother, however, wanted it to be exhumed and burned, for it was the offspring of a fiend who had counterfeited her husband. The thing was taken up and given to the hangman for cremation, but he could neither burn it nor the rags which enwrapped it until the day after the feast of Ascension.

The following story is laid near Nantes:—Therein a young girl baulked of her lover, mutters something like a modern order to him to go to the foul fiend, and remarks to herself that a demon would be a better friend. She is

betrayed in the usual manner, and finds, when too late, that she is embracing a hairy incubus which has a long tail. She exclaims fearfully. The "affreet" blows in her face and leaves her. She is found frightfully disfigured, and is brought to bed seven days after of a black cat. The remaining histories are of a similar nature, all alike showing how completely the so-called Christian people of Modern Europe believed that disembodied spirits could assume human form with such completeness as to be the father of offspring. We may fairly compare these tales with that told by heathen Greeks about Jupiter and Alcmena, but when we place them side by side, the ancients show a far superior fancy in their fables than do the comparative moderns. I find from *Réville's History of the Devil*, p. 54 (London: Williams and Norgate, 1871), that so late as A.D. 1756, at Landshut, in Bavaria, a young girl of thirteen years of age, was convicted of impure intercourse with the devil, and put to death. It is a pity that no account of the trial is appended.

Talboys Wheeler, in his *History of India*, vol. II., p. 515, indicates that there is to this day, in India, a belief in *incubi*. Speaking of Paisacha marriages, in which a woman is united to a man without her knowledge or consent, he remarks:—"The origin of the name is somewhat curious. The Paisachas were evil spirits or ghosts (see "*Lilith*" and "*Satyr*," *Ancient Faiths*, vol. ii.) who were supposed to haunt the earth. . . . If, therefore, a damsel found herself likely to become a mother without her being able to furnish a satisfactory reason for her maternity, she would naturally plead that she had been victimized by a Paisach. . . . In modern times, however, the belief is still very general through the rural districts of India, that wives as well as maidens, may be occasionally victimized by such ghostly admirers."

Every mythologist who has invented such stories as

that of Jupiter and Alcmena, and every woman who has ever attributed her pregnancy to a divine being, call him what she may, seems completely to ignore the idea that a god who deserves the name, does not require human aid to produce a man or woman. Surely every profound thinker would say to himself, The Supreme, who could by a word create full-grown creatures "in the beginning," has not lost the power now; surely He, who could make Adam out of dust, and Eve out of a bone of man, can produce in later days similar images of the godhead, as we are told in Genesis i. 26, without accoupling with a descendant of the rib. The mythological idea, therefore, of a divine child coming from a celestial father and a terrestrial mother, has nothing profound therein, for it is essentially a bungling contrivance of some stupid man. On the other hand, such a notion could only be entertained where a grovelling or anthropomorphic idea has prevailed, or is cherished amongst a credulous people. To put the subject into the fewest words possible, a god has never—so far as thoughtful men can judge—been said to be the father in the flesh of a human being, except by frail women, or vain, foolish, or designing men.

We are fortified in this conclusion by the method in which nations or sects who have each their own favourite "son of God," treat each other. None endeavour to prove that the mother of their own hero had no commerce with man, for that is impossible—all, on the other hand, ridicule the idea of there being a child without a human father, and insist that no woman's word countervails the laws of nature. But this argument is only used against opposing religionists—it has no weight against their own divine leader. The cases which we have described are wholly different from those mythological stories, in which the union of the sexes is absolutely or relatively ignored. They differ also from those in which the Creator is represented as androgynous, or being

originally without sex, becomes, by an effort of will, a bisexual being, so as to bring about the creation of man and of the world. For example, when we find in the Orphic Hymns (Cory's *Ancient Fragments*, pp. 290, *seq.*), "Zeus is male, Immortal Zeus is female," it is clear that there was in the writer an idea of an union of the sexes being necessary to creation. But when we find Chaos alone being the progenitor of Erebus and Black Night, from which again were born Ether and Day, and Earth the parent of Heaven and the Sea (*Hesiod, Theogony*, 116-130), there is a total absence of a sexual notion. This idea, however, appears in the subsequent lines which represent Earth wedding with Heaven. The same sexual notion, appears in another fragment from *Aristophanes*, (Cory, A. F., p. 293), which tells us that "Night with the black wings first produced an aerial egg, which in its time gave rise to love, whence sprung all creation." Yet the egg necessarily presupposes a being which formed it, and another that fructified it, so that the mythos is not wholly free from the intermixture of the sexual element.

When mythologists have been peculiarly anxious to shake off the somewhat grotesque doctrine that the celestial Creator must be independent of any other power, in the genesis of the world and heaven, there has been a great variety of attempts to show how this has been brought about. In one curious Hindoo legend, Vishnu is represented sleeping on the bosom of Devi, at the bottom of the ocean which covered the world. Suddenly a lotus sprang from his navel, and grew till it reached the surface of the flood. From this wonderful flower Brahma sprang, and, seeing nothing but water, imagined himself the first-born of all creatures. But ere he felt sure, he descended the stalk, and found Vishnu at its root; and then the two contested their respective claims, but Mahadeva interposed, and, by a curious

contrivance, stopped the quarrel, demonstrating that before either came into existence there reigned an everlasting lingam.

Another myth closely resembles one which is indicated in the Hebrew Scriptures, viz., that Narayana, or the spirit of God, a self-existent entity, moved over the waters, and made them bring forth all things living. This Narayana is identical with *yomer elohim*—"The spirit of God" of the Hebrew Genesis i. 2; the *πνεῦμα θεοῦ* or *τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον*, *pneuma theou*, or *to pneuma to hagion*—the spirit of God, or Holy Ghost of the Greeks. It is the same as the breezes of thick air which hovered over chaos in the legend assigned to Sanchoniathon (Cory's *Fragments*, p. 1), and produced the slimy matter from which all beings sprang. Narayana is again the same as the night of the Orphic fragment which hovered with her black wings over immensity—the same as the *chakemah*, or "wisdom," of Proverbs viii.; the Greek *σοφία*, *sophia*, and the *λόγος*, *logos*—"the word" of John i. 1. The Buddha—or Brahma of the Hindoo. From this mysterious source matter was formed into shape and all creatures sprang into life.

Another Indian mythos (Moor's *Hindoo Pantheon*, p. 78), attributes even more than this to Brahma. He is said to have produced four beings who proved refractory, and grieved their maker. To comfort him, Siva issued from a fold in his forehead—then strengthened by Siva, he produced Bhriгу and the seven Rishis, and after that, Narada, from his thigh, Kardama from his Shadow, and Dacsha from the forefinger of his right hand. He had, apparently, without a consort, sixty daughters, and from these last proceeded all things divine, human, animal, vegetable, and mineral.

This is not altogether dissimilar from the Hebrew idea of Jehovah creating all things except woman from the

dust,* and forming her mysteriously from a rib of the only existing man. We may also compare it with the birth of Minerva from Jupiter's brain, and Bacchus from his thigh. But the Greek myth differs from the Hindoo, inasmuch as the deities referred to were originally conceived by human women, and did not grow from The Thunderer's body like branches from a tree.

There is amongst the Hindoos a goddess called Prit'hvi, who is said to personify the Earth; she had many names which we need not describe, and she was also furnished with a consort, whose birth is thus described (Moor, H. P., p. 111.)—"Vena being an impious and tyrannical prince, was cursed by the Brahmans, and in consequence, died without issue. To remedy this, his left arm was opened, and churned with a stick till it produced a son, who, proving as wicked as his father, was set aside; and the right arm† was in like manner churned, which also produced a boy, who proved to be a form of Vishnu, under the name of Prit'hu." We may add that Prit'hvi treated him badly, and he had to beat and tear her before she would be comfortable with him. Hence the necessity for ploughing and digging before crops of cereals, &c., will abound. We can understand the last part of the legend better than the first. In the Vedic Mythology,

* In Mythology, things ever repeat themselves, with very little alteration. For example, Mahadeva is represented as fighting with Dacsha, and producing heroes from the dust by striking the ground with his hair. (See Moor's H. P., p. 107.)

† As these legends generally are based upon something which Europeans would designate a vile pun, I turned to the Sanscrit Lexicon (Monier Williams), first to ascertain the names of "the arm;" and, secondly, if there were any words allied to it, however remotely, which had a certain meaning. Amongst others, I find that *buja* signifies "at arm," and *bhaga* is a name of Siva—one of whose epithets, *bhagan-dara*. *Dasha* also means "the arm" and "night." Another word having the same meaning, is *praveshta*, and this not only signifies the arm, but one "who covers over." We can then, I think, see why the device of the churning is referred to in the text. The legend is a clumsy one, but not more so than that in Exodus xxxiii. 23, wherein we are told that Jehovah showed to Moses "His back parts,"—Vulgate, *posteriora mea*—inasmuch as no one could see His face and live!!!

we may say generally, that the means of producing offspring are curiously numerous; for example, we find in Goldstücker's *Sanskrit and English Dictionary*, page 20, under the word *angiras*—a statement that an individual bearing this cognomen, is named "in the Vaidik legends, as one of the 'Prajápatís,' or progenitors of mankind, engendered according, to some, by Manu; according to others, by Brahma himself, either with the female half of his body, or from his mouth, or from the space between his eyebrows."

A still more curious story is related in the same dictionary, p. 451, under the word *ayonijeswara*. This appellative is one belonging to a sacred place of pilgrimage sacred to *Ayonija*, whose miraculous birth was thus brought about. A very learned Muni, though making a commendable use of the proper nasal way of reading sacred scripture in his own person, yet associated with individuals who did not give the orthodox twang.* The good man remained, in consequence of this, in a sonless condition, but the legend does not condescend to explain why toleration of tones in religious ceremony should make a husband infertile and his wife barren. At any rate, the Muni, named Vidyananda, feeling the punishment a great one, travelled, apparently alone, from one holy place to another without being nearer paternity. At length he met with a *yogin* or male anchorite, hermit, devotee, or saint, corresponding to the *yoginis*, who are represented by Moor (H. P., p. 235) as being sometimes very lovely and alluring; and he, taking pity upon the Muni, gave him a wonderful fruit, which, he informed him, if eaten by his wife, would have the effect of procuring for Vidyananda the birth of a son. But the Muni, like many

* This reminds me of an anecdote which I once read of a devout Scotch mother, who, on hearing her son read the Bible in an ordinary tone of voice, cuffed him violently because he presumed to read that Holy Book without the customary religious drawl.

another character in mythological and fairy tales, seems suddenly to have lost his sense of hope deferred and a certain prospect of relief, for instead of hurrying home he sought repose under a tree on a river's brink, and whilst there ate the fruit himself. He at once became pregnant. When the new state of things was evident, he confessed all that had happened to the Yogin, and the latter, by means of his supernatural power, introduced a stick into the body of Yidyánanda, and relieved him of the infant. The creature was a beautiful boy, radiant like the disc of the sun, and endowed with divine lustre, and on account of the mode in which he was born his father called him *AYONIJA*, which signifies, "not born from the womb." The account then goes on to state that this miraculous infant became a wonderfully good, learned, pious, religious, and fanatic man; that the god, delighted with his piety, gave him sons and grandsons, and after his death received him into his heaven. Any persons coming now to bask at the spot where these favours from Siva were granted, and duly performing the various duties of a pious pilgrim, are rewarded, according to their piety, &c, with progeny, worldly happiness, freedom from transmigration, and eternal bliss.

Under the word *Ayonija*, Goldstücker gives the following examples of individuals "not born from the *yoni*," viz:— "*Drona*, the son of Bharadwaja, who was born in a bucket." "*Suyya*, whose origin was unknown." "*Draupadi*, who at a sacrifice of her father Drupada, arose out of the sacrificial ground." "*Sitá*, who sprang into existence in the same manner as Draupadi." The same is also an epithet of Vishnu or Krishna.

These stories pale in interest before that of the origin of Carticeya (see Moor's H. P., p. 51, 89), and I give an account of this legend, foolish though many conceive it to be, for everything which is connected with a Hindoo mythos

is remarkable, whenever it is found to be antecedently parallel with Christian surroundings of a somewhat similar narrative. We notice, for example, in the following tale, that the Indian idea of the power of "penance" and "asceticism," is, that these doings or actions are so great, that by their means alone man may compel the Creator to do things against His design, whilst in the Papal tales of certain monks and nuns, we find the doctrine asserted that by preëminent fastings, scourgings and prayers, people have acquired the power to sell salvation to their fellow men, in a manner different to that which is appointed. Again, the god when forced to obey the power of the devotee, is represented as inventing a method by which he could, as it were, cheat himself, just as Jehovah or Elohim is said to have contrived a plan by which He could circumvent Himself for the vow which He had made to destroy all the men upon the earth by a flood of water. Again, as the arrogance of the ascetic threatened to destroy the world and the heaven, a deliverer or a saviour was promised, who should be begotten by an incarnate god upon a goddess equally incarnate, and save mankind from a terrible devil. This is a counterpart of the Papal theory, which makes it appear that a portion of the godhead became incorporated with a dove, and had union with a woman, herself an immaculate manifestation of another portion of "The Supreme." Yet still more striking than this, is the part which the dove plays in the Indian mythos of the birth of the Hindoo Saviour. In almost every mediæval painting or etching of the miraculous conception of the Virgin Mary, the dove takes the position of the divine father of Jesus. Nay, so distinct is the idea intended to be conveyed in one instance, that a dove, surrounded by a galaxy of angelic heads, darts a ray from his body on high, into the very part of the virgin, proper to receive it. The design of the artist is still farther

heightened by the *vesica piscis*, the emblem of woman being marked upon the appropriate part of the dress, and a figure of an infant within it, points unmistakably to the belief that the Holy Ghost, like a dove, absolutely begot the Jewish saviour as he did the Hindoo deliverer of gods and men. (See *Ancient Faiths*, vol. II., p. 648, fig. 48).

But the parallel may even be carried farther, for in the Indian history it is Agni, the embodiment of fire or the fire or sun god, who becomes the dove; whilst in the Christian history, fire is one of the manifestations of the Holy Ghost (Acts ii. 3). We conclude this from the fact, that all devout churchmen believe that the Holy Ghost descended upon the day of Pentecost with the sound of a rushing mighty wind, as a multitude of cloven fiery tongues, which again suggests to the recollection of those familiar with the Vedic story, that the Maruts—rushing, mighty, stormy winds—were frequent attendants upon Agni. For example, in one of the Hymns (p. 39) of the Rig Veda Sanhita (translated by Max Müller), the burden or chorus of every verse is, “with the Maruts come hither, O Agni.” Here, however, the parallel between the two myths ceases, for in the Indian tale the saviour has no earthly mother. We may really affirm that he has no mother at all, being the offspring of the father alone, whilst in the Christian history, the deliverer is represented as having no human sire. This one story is just as likely to be true as the other, or just as unlikely. As a reasonable being I cannot believe the one without crediting the other, or reject only one of the two.

With this preface, we may proceed to relate the legend as recorded by Moor. A certain devil or Daitya—for it must be remarked that the Hindoos regard the devil as being composed of many individualities, much in the same way as Christians do—was extremely ambitious and

oppressive, as Satan is said to have been in heaven.* To force Brahma to promise him any boon he should require, the ascetic went through the following penances, persisting in each for a hundred years. (1) He stood on one foot, holding the other, and both hands upwards, and fixed his eyes on the sun. (2) He stood on one great toe. (3) He lived upon water alone. (4) He lived on air. (5) He immersed himself in water. (6) He buried himself in the earth, and yet continued as before in incessant adoration. (7) He then did the same in fire. (8) Then he stood upon his head with his feet upwards. (9) He then stood upon one hand. (10) He hung by his hands from a tree. (11) He hung on a tree with his head downwards.

The effect of these austerities alarmed all the gods, and they went to Brahma for consolation. He answered that though he was bound to grant the boon desired by a man who became powerful by his austerities, he would devise a method of rendering it inoffensive to the heavenly host. Tarika, the name borne by the Diatya, asked for the gift of unrivalled strength, and that no hand should slay him except a son of Mahadeva. This being acquired, he plundered all the minor gods—the sun, dreading him, gave no heat; and the moon, in terror, remained always at the full—in short, the devil, Tarika, usurped the entire management of the universe. Nareda—the personification of Reason—Wisdom, the Logos, or “word,” now prophesied that the destined deliverer, or saviour of the world, would come from the union of Mahadeva and Parvati. But the first was indisposed to marry, and only consented to do so

* I call attention to these parallels, for they compel us either to accept the Hindoo stories as true, because they coincide with that which Christians regard as “revealed truth,” or they oblige us to distrust our current ideas as to the inspired verity of some biblical stories, founded as they are upon the same, or a similar, basis to those of the Brahmins. The Hindoo tale being founded in the *Sin purana*, there can be no reasonable doubt that its fabrication preceded that of the Hebrew or Christian mythos.

after being mollified by ardent devotions and great austerities enacted by the second. To the horror, however, of the discomfited world, Parvati was barren; and the gods deputed Agni to try to produce the son whom all so earnestly desired. He took the form of "a dove," and arrived in the presence of Mahadeva just as he had risen from the arms of Parvati, and received from him, in a manner not easy or necessary to describe minutely, the germ of Carticeya; but, unable to retain it, the bird let it fall from his bill into the Ganges. On the banks of this river arose, therefrom, a boy, beautiful as the moon, and bright as the sun. This was "The Saviour" promised by the prophet. When he attained to manhood, he fought the devil in a terrific combat which lasted ten whole days; but Carticeya came off the conqueror, and delivered the world. I may notice in passing that as Carticeya is represented to be the son of his father, Mahadeva alone—so Ganesa, who was born after the marriage above referred to, is said to be solely the son of his mother, Parvati; Mahadeva not having anything to do with him. It is still farther stated in the *Sin purana* that the husband was jealous, and displeased at this assumption of independent power by his spouse, punished her in the person of this mysterious son (Moor, H. P., page 171-2).

There is another Hindoo story in which a father alone becomes the progenitor of twins—and it is remarkable, not only for this, but for the dread which a deity is said to feel from the austerities of a man. Wheeler (*History of India*, vol. i., p. 78; Williams' *Sanscrit Lexicon*, s.v. *Kripa*), regards this tale as Brahmanical, and, accepting his authority, we can see that the asceticism which is introduced into the story is intended to exalt the claims of that section of the priesthood who torture themselves. It runs thus:—Saradvat, by the magnitnde of his penances, frightened Indra, who sent a celestial nymph to tempt him. He resisted all her wiles,

and refused all commerce with her; but his excited imagination produced one of its common effects, and from that which was "spilled upon the ground" a boy and girl arose, Drona and Kripa. In Wheeler's sketch of the story, two such miraculous events occur, for a precisely similar occurrence took place with a certain Raja—and the males sprung from this supernatural form of generation, Drona and Dropada, became cronies, and were educated together. In Wheeler's account Kripa becomes the wife of Drona, and not his twin sister. She is represented to have been born from a Brahmin named Gautama, in the same fashion as Drona was. Certes, the scribes who wrote the gospels, and doubled wonders to make them more miraculous, are far behind the Hindoos in the unblushing effrontery of their conceptions.

A story somewhat analogous to that of the origin of Carticeya—Drona and Drupada, is to be found in Grecian mythology. Therein we read (see Lempriere's *Classical Dictionary*, s.v., MINERVA), that Jupiter promised to his daughter, Minerva, that she should never be married—since that was her special desire. But unfortunately, the Thunderer had not a good memory, and was unable to foresee the future; he therefore promised to Vulcan that he would—in return for a perfect suit of armour—give him whatsoever boon he asked. The distorted God, being a great admirer of the personification of wisdom, demanded Minerva in marriage. Zeus then granted his petition and gave Minerva to him for a bride, so that "arts and arms" should henceforth be wedded together. But the goddess disliked Vulcan, just as much as science and philosophy shun war and physical weapons. Jupiter then privately counselled his daughter to submit, apparently, but to contend, actually, whenever her husband should endeavour to caress her. This advice the goddess very artfully and determinately carried out. But Vulcan's impetuosity was extreme, and the contest between the spouses was prolonged.

Though the promised wife was in the end victorious, and retained her virginity, the scene of the strife, like many another battle field, required cleansing. The material employed by the goddess in the process was thrown down to earth, and from this stuff sprang Erichthonius, as the son of Vulcan alone, who, on attaining man's estate, became the fourth king of Athens.

A somewhat similar story is told of Jupiter (Arnobius, *adv. Gentes*, B. v.), who is represented as enamoured of Themis, who, when lying on the rock Agdus, in Phrygia, and there surprised by the god, resisted his desires, as Minerva had done those of Vulcan, and with a somewhat similar result. But in this instance, that which the author calls in another passage of his work, the *vis Lucilii*, fell upon the hard rock. This conceived, and, after ten months, the stony soil brought forth a son, called, from his maternal parent, Agdistis. His character, and even his appearance, were frightful and rugged in the extreme. His strength, recklessness, and audacity frightened all the gods. In their dilemma, Bacchus offered to give his aid, and proceeded first to make the man drunk by substituting wine for the water of the fountain from which he habitually drank. Then, by a curious contrivance, he made the fierce hunter emasculate himself. The earth swallows up the sanguinary ruins of his manhood, and in their place comes up a pomegranate tree in full bearing. This being seen by Nana, a king's daughter, she plucks some of the fruit, and lays it in her bosom. By this she becomes pregnant, and, her story being disbelieved, her father attempts to starve her. But the mother of the gods sustains her with apples (see *Canticles* ii. 5), and berries, or other food. Her baby, when born, is exposed as being illegitimate, but found by a goatherd and brought up—becoming the all but deified Atys.

In this legend, we see one son born without a human

mother, and a second without any other father than Rimmon, or a pomegranate.*

* **AGDUS, AGDISTIS, &c.**—I am frequently tempted, after reading a story like the preceding, to search in the Sanscrit lexicon to ascertain if there can be any esoteric signification in the legend that can be explained by that ancient language. Arnobius opens the story with a statement of the remote antiquity of the tale, and how it is connected with the Great Mother. He then tells of a wild district in Phrygia, called Agdus. Stones taken from it, as Themis had enjoined, were used by Deucalion and Pyrrha to repeople the world which had been destroyed by a flood. The great mother was fashioned amongst the rest, and animated by the deity; then follows the story given in the text. Now, in the Sanscrit, *Agudha* signifies a "hole or chasm," and such things have from the earliest times typified the Celestial Mother. Agdistis I take to be a Greek form of *Agast*—son both of Mitra and Varuna by Urvasi, said to have been born in a water-jar, to have swallowed the ocean, and compelled the Vindhya mountains to prostrate themselves before him, &c. (Monier Williams' *Sanskrit English Lexicon*, pp. 4, 5). Themis may be a corruption of *Dhanas*—the moon, an epithet of Vishnu, Yama, and Brahma; also the Supreme Spirit (M. W. op. cit., p. 448). Deucalion seems readily to be resolved into the *dyu* or *div*—holy, and *Kalum* (M. W., p. 211). Pyrrha may apparently be derived from *hāra*—an opening or aperture (M. W.); also *bhāra*—bearing, carrying, cherishing, supporting (M. W., p. 700). Atys, described as of surpassing beauty, may fairly be associated with *atish* and *atishya*—to surpass, excel, exceed; and pre-eminence, superiority (M. W., op. cit., p. 15). *Liber*, again, who is clever enough to outwit and conquer Agdistis, may, without too strong a stretch of imagination, come from *lābha*—obtaining, gaining, getting; capture, conquest; the rootword is *labh*—to seize, to take hold of, gain, recover, regain, &c. (M. W., p. 801, 2). Nana, the mother of Atys the beautiful, has probably come from *nanda*—happiness, pleasure, joy, fecility, delight (M. W., op. cit. p. 467). In the previous volumes I have referred to the pomegranate—Hebrew, Rimmon—as an emblem. In the legend which makes Nana conceive by eating this fruit, there are, I fancy, two ideas—one, that the pomegranate* is filled with seeds and pulp of a red colour; the other, that in the Greek its name is *roia*, or *rea*, which has a close resemblance in sound with *reo*—to flow or gush. Of the word Midas—the name of him who sought to bring about the union of the opposite sexes by marrying his daughter Nana to Attis or Atys, the most appropriate etymon which I can find in the Sanscrit is in the root *math*, which signifies to strike fire by rubbing wood together, to churn or produce by churning.

If we allow that there is truth in these derivations, we can then see how completely Arnobius has been deceived by taking the legend *au pied de la lettre*. He sees nothing but the exoteric side of the fable; the more instructed philosopher sees in it nothing beyond an attempt to weave a story to account for ordinary men and women existing. The Earth, from her deep womb produces stones which become male and female (compare Psalm cxxxix, 15—"When I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth"). But mythologists were not always content with giving precedence in creation to the "Great Mother," consequently the "Father of all" comes upon the scene from no one knows where. Refusing to share with him her supremacy, he, like the Hindoo Mahadeva, becomes a father in spite of her. Like his parent, the son becomes raging mad, like an elephant or a horse in spring. He is tamed by castration, but the parts he loses still bear a fructifying power, and once more, a maiden—type of the celestial virgin, has offspring. Without going further into the tale, the story teller endeavours again to introduce marriage, but on the threshold arrests himself, apparently under the idea that the wedded state takes away the pleasure of freedom from fine young men. Beyond this point it would be unprofitable to go, since few of us can realize Greek ideas on certain matters.

* See Frontispiece.

The origin of Venus is told by Hesiod in such a manner as to lead his readers to believe that, not only was she the daughter of a father alone, but of that particular part of his body which has been deified as a Trinity. After speaking (*Theogony*, 170-200), of the cruelty of Ouranos, and how his wife inspirited Cronos to punish his father by means of a sickle made of white iron extracted from her body (*i.e.*, the earth), we read—"Then came vast Heaven, Ouranos, bringing Night with him, and eager for love, brooded around Earth (*Ge*), and lay stretched, I wot, on all sides; but his son from out his ambush grasped at him with his left hand, whilst in his right he took the huge sickle, long and jagged-toothed, and hastily mowed off the genitals of his sire, and threw them, to be carried away, behind him. These fell into the sea, and kept drifting a long time up and down the deep, and all around kept rising a white foam from the immortal flesh; and in it a maiden was nourished. First, she drew nigh divine Cythera, and thence came next to wave-washed Cyprus. Then forth stepped an awful, beauteous goddess; and beneath her delicate feet the verdure throve around; her, gods and men name Aphrodite the foam-sprung goddess," &c. (Bohn's Translation, p. 11, 12).

Still further, we find in the Grecian mythology that Minerva was the offspring of Jupiter without a mother being in the case—unless we put faith in the tale, that the god impregnated Metis, or wisdom, and afterwards ate her up. In this case the goddess ought, however, to have emerged from the abdomen, and not from the head of her father. Vulcan, moreover, is said to have been the son of Juno alone, "who in this wished to imitate Jupiter, who had produced Minerva from his brains"—a mythos which does not tally with the statement that Zeus ordered Vulcan to cleave his head open, not the part corresponding to the yoni. The tales certainly lack that evidence which the philosopher is bound to seek

for ; but for those orthodox believers who are bound to credit every extraordinary event which is recorded in the books of the faithful, no testimony is required. Those who feel assured that a serpent, ox, donkey, tree, bush, and other things have spoken rationally, can readily extend their trust, and assure themselves that a female has had a child without a male, and *vice versa*—especially when the individuals were divine.

As we have before remarked, there is nothing in the mythological stories which we have just recounted that is either more or less miraculous than conception, &c., by a virgin without the intervention of a human spouse. There is, whenever a miraculous agency is presumed, no greater difficulty in believing that children may be produced without mothers, than that they should be formed without the intervention of a father. Ere a tree can rise in the soil of a field, a germ, seed, or cutting is as necessary as the existence of a moist mould, or other ground. There being then no greater probability that a crop will spring from a moist plain without seed, than that an abundant harvest will come from dry seed alone, we are necessarily thrown back upon testimony, when we are asked to believe in the paternity of man and the maternity of woman without any association of the one with the other.

The mythologists who conceived, or who recorded the fabulous history of Orion, evidently had some idea in their minds of the necessity of two elements in the formation and growth of a child, when they told the tale of the generation of that giant; and the myth connected with this individual is so curiously like one recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures, that it deserves full notice. In Genesis the narrative informs us that there was an old couple, both beyond the age at which there is any probability of either party performing the part necessary for the production of offspring (Gen. xviii. 12),

both were desirous of having at least one son, but though they had been long united in marriage, their aspirations had been vain. To this couple, or rather to the husband, Jehovah is said to have appeared with two companions (Gen. xviii. 1, 2), and as the man was hospitably disposed, he ordered his wife to make some cakes, whilst he went to fetch and kill a calf for his servant to dress and cook. The visitors then partook, alone, of the good cheer, and when they had made the repast they promised the husband that his long cherished desire should be fulfilled, and that he should have a son. There does not, however, appear to be anything supernatural in the generation of the infant, except the mere facts that the father had been effete for some time, and the mother had always been barren even when young so that conception was more surely miraculous by reason of her advanced age. The probability of pregnancy at Sarah's time of life was certainly small, but she was reminded that nothing was too hard for Jehovah to effect. Had not He already made man out of dust and woman out of man? and surely after that it was easy to cause a man and woman to act their respective parts. The reader must specially bear in mind this observation of the Lord's when he reads the Greek story following. (See Ovid's *Fæsti*, book 5).

“Jupiter, his brother Neptune, and Mercury, were on their travels; the day was far spent and evening approached. They were spied by a venerable man, an humble farmer, who stood in the doorway of his small abode. He accosts them with the words, ‘long is the road and but little of the day remains, my door too is ever open to the stranger,’ and so earnest is his look of entreaty, that the gods accept his invitation. Jupiter and the others, however, conceal their divine nature, and eat and drink like common men. But after a draught of wine, Neptune inadvertantly names Jupiter, and the poor man who has thus entertained angels unawares,

is frightened at their presence. After a few moments of natural embarrassment, he goes to his field and kills his only ox—the drawer of his plough—then he cuts up the animal, roasts it well, produces his best wine, and lays the feast, when ready, before his august guests. Then Jove, delighted with his hospitality and piety, says to the farmer, ‘If thy inclination leads thee to desire anything, wish for it, and thou shalt receive it.’ To which the old man answers, ‘I once had a dear wife, known as the choice of my early youth, yet she is now gone from me and an urn contains her ashes. To her I vowed, calling upon you my lord gods as witnesses to the oath, that I would never wed me more. I swore and will keep my word. She and I longed for a son, yet none came to bless our declining years. I yearn for one now, but will not endeavour to procure one, I wish to be a father, yet refuse to be a husband or enact his part.’ To deities like Jupiter, such a request was by no means a difficult one to grant, the gods could as readily form a boy as they could fabricate Pandora—a lovely woman—and send her to Prometheus, with all the ills which flesh is heir to, confined in an ark, chest, or coffer. Yet the process of what may be designated conception was a strange one. The three simply relieved themselves of the wine which they had drunk, using the skin of the slaughtered ox instead of a more commodious vessel. The man was then ordered to bury the whole in the ground, and wait according to the time of life. The gestation of the earth was completed in ten months, and at the end of that period the venerable farmer possessed a fine lad who grew up and became famous. If, now, we substitute for the Grecian name, Hyrieus, the Hebrew title Abraham; if for Jupiter, Neptune, and Mercury, we read, Jehovah and two angels; if for the phrase, “they were on their travels,” we read, “they were going down to Sodom to see if it was as bad a place as it was reported to be” (see Gen. xviii. 21); if for the ox which

was roasted, we place, "a calf tender and good," we see a wonderful resemblance between the stories of the conception of Orion and Isaac. But there is this difference that in the Hebrew tale the divine gift is brought about by a transient restoration of power to Abraham and Sarah; whilst in the Grecian mythos, the old man is faithful to the memory of a beloved spouse, and refuses to renew with another the pleasure which he had in her company. We conceive that the exigency of the Jewish account, made it necessary that the son of Abraham should be of his father begotten, as well as a child of promise; whereas no one can call Orion the son of any one, although he was as surely a child of promise granted by the gods, as Isaac was, who was given by Elohim (or the gods) of the Hebrews.

We may enter now, for a short time, into a speculation whether the Grecian story was borrowed from the Hebrew or the contrary. We are disposed to believe that the tale was adopted by the Jews after they became acquainted with the Greeks. The following are our reasons:—The conception of a godhead composed of three persons, is foreign to the Hebrew thoughts of the Almighty. Still further was it from Jewish belief to think, that Jehovah would come down upon earth to acquire information, and when there, eat and drink and talk like any ordinary man. Amongst the Israelites it was generally held that no one could see the face of God and live. On the other hand, the Greeks were familiar with tales which told of gods coming down to earth in the guise of men. As an illustration of this, we may point to Acts xiv. 11-13, wherein we find that the people of Lycaonia imagined that the gods Jupiter and Mercurius had come down to them in the likeness of men, and prepared to sacrifice to them. Yet after all, Paul had simply cured a single paralytic. On the other hand, the Jews regard as rank blasphemy, and a crime worthy of death, that Jesus should

assert himself to be a son of God, even although the miracles alleged in support of the assertion were as stupendous as they were numerous.

Still, further, we cannot imagine that the degrading story of Jehovah's feasting with Abraham could have been composed, except when the Jews were no better than an untaught and grossly superstitious race. We have already, in *Ancient Faiths, &c.*, expressed our opinion that the Israelites were at the very lowest period of their history at the time when Isaiah began his exhortations. There had been a confederacy between the men of Edom, of Moab, Gebal, Ammon, Amalek, Tyre, Philistia, and Assyria, the Ismaelites and the Hagarenes, which had attacked Jerusalem and Judea, and captured all the inhabitants, many of whom they sold to the Grecians (see Joel iii. 5-7). At, and shortly after this time, the Jews were in a condition of abject misery (see Isaiah i. 4-9), and capable of believing any story told to them, and would just as easily credit the mythology which the Grecian captives told, or their Grecian masters taught, as their successors do those which at a subsequent period filled the Hebrew Scriptures.

Whilst then, on the one hand, there is a probability of the Hebrews having borrowed the fable from Hellenistic sources, there is, on the other, the strongest objection to the supposition that the Greeks should have borrowed from the Jews. Everything which the latter say of themselves, indicates that they were exclusive to an inordinate degree, refusing to have intercourse on equal terms with any of their neighbours, that they never sought to make their history, laws, and customs, known to Gentiles, and especially those outside of Judea, and that their writings never assumed a Grecian dress until the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, who ordered the Septuagint translation to be made about B.C. 285, with the direct view of making the Hebrew Scriptures known

to the Greeks.

Moreover, we know from everything which was said of the Jews by the Gentiles, that the latter treated the former with contempt and contumely, and would no more dream of imitating any of their writings, &c., than we should care to adopt the myths of Abyssinian negroes as an integral part of Christianity.

It will now be profitable if we examine the story of Sanchoniathon and the statements of the Orphic Hymns.

We have, in the course of this chapter and elsewhere, so often referred to the Grecian story of the Creation as given by Sanchoniathon and in the Orphic hymns, that I think my readers are entitled to receive some further account of them; so I reproduce passages which bear upon supernatural generation, and especially that of the world and its inhabitants—my main authority being *Ancient Fragments*, &c., by J. B. Cory (London, 1832).

Of Sanchoniathon we know little; our information may be summed up by saying that he is mentioned eulogistically by Eusebius (A.D. 270-338), an historian whose veracity cannot be entirely depended on. He says that Sanchoniathon had, ere his time, been translated by a certain writer called Philon Byblius, and it seems that Porphry is credited with having copied a great part of this translation into Greek from the Phœnician. Nothing, however, is actually known of the historian in question, except from Eusebius (*Smith's Dictionary*, p. 308, vol. III., s. v., Philon.) We may then assume, according to our inclination, either that the story is really a compendium of Tyrian legendary lore, or simply a representation of what the Greeks imagined. The way, however, in which the generation of beings is described, well deserves attention from its similarity, and its contrasts with the biblical story. First, there was a breeze of thick air and Chaos. These united

and produced Pothos. This again united with the wind, and Mot was the result, also called Ilus; from this sprung the seed of Creation. And there were certain animals without sensation, from which intelligent animals were produced.* After this follows a quantity of stuff that is traceable to Hesiod, and a part of which may be considered a paraphrase of Genesis. Then mention is made of Elioum, called Hypsistus (the most High), and his wife Beruth—as being the contemporaries of others; but no indication is given from whence they came. These produced Ouranos (Heaven) and Ge (Earth). Their father was killed by wild beasts! Then Ouranos married Ge, and had offspring by her. But he had other women, and Ge was jealous. Ouranos, however, came to her when he listed and attempted to kill her children. He had a son, Cronus, who drove him from his kingdom. This son turns out to be the original being called Ilus, and he contrived to emasculate his father, and from the blood which flowed sprang rivers and fountains. The remainder of this story scarcely deserves notice.

Ere we turn our attention to the compositions known as the Orphic Hymns, it will be interesting to inquire whether the preceding account of Creation had a Phœnician origin, or may more fairly be traced to an Indian source flowing through a Greek channel. After a diligent search in the Hebrew Lexicon—and it is to be noticed that the Hebrew is all but identical with the Tyrian and Carthaginian, I cannot find any words or roots from which the proper names in the opening paragraph of Sanchoniathon can by any ingenuity be derived. Nor can I discover in the Greek anything which explains the esoteric signification of the story.

But, on reference to the Sanscrit, there is a curious identity apparent between the second verse in Genesis and a

* The author of the tale evidently had something in common with our modern Darwin.

Hindoo idea. The former runs:—"The earth was without form and void (*tohu ve, bohu*), and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the spirit of God moved on the face of the waters." The Indian interpretation of the myth is this:—"Air in motion, *valu*, ruffled the inexplicable, or empty space, *ka, kas, or kha, kham*, a word also signifying 'nothing.' Thence proceeded the earth, *Ilu*, or *Mot* (Sans); *Math* (Sans) making fire by rubbing sticks (coitus?) *Mada, mada*, and *moda*, pleasure, delight, gladness=love, Eros." This is almost the same idea that Hesiod propounds.

In the Orphic Hymns we find much more clearly than in any other writing amongst the ancient Greeks the early Hellenic notion of the generation of the worlds and of mankind. Respecting the value of the fragments there may be some difference of opinion. The curious and doubtful may be referred to *Smith's Dictionary* (s.v. Orpheus); for me it will be sufficient to state that both Aristophanes and Plato refer to the presumed author as a religious teacher and a preacher against murder, and Euripides frequently mentions him. This will place Orpheus at least before B.C. 480. If, however, we consider him as identical with the oft-sung husband of Eurydice, we must place him B.C. 650 (Smith, s.v.).

In quoting from Cory's translation, I shall not scruple to make the sense of more importance than literality: "Zeus is the first—he, the thunderer, is the last; he is the head and the middle, he fabricated all things. Zeus is male; he, the immortal, is also female; he founded the earth and the starry heaven; he is the breath of all things, the rushing of indefatigable fire. Zeus is the root of the sea, the sun and moon, the king, the author of universal life; one power, one demon, the mighty prince of all things; one kingly frame, in which this universe revolves—fire and water, earth and ether, night and day, and Metis (counsel); the primeval father and all delightful Eros (love). All these things are

united in the vast body of Zeus. Would you behold his head and his fair face? It is the resplendent heaven, round which his golden locks of glittering stars are beautifully exalted in the air. On each side are the two golden taurine horns, the risings and settings, the tracks of the celestial gods: his eyes are the sun and opposing moon; his unfaillacious mind the royal incorruptible Ether."

The next fragment has been filched by the author of *Sanchoniathon*, and we must not quote it. After a recapitulation about Chaos, Cronos, Ether, and Eros, he proceeds:—"I have sung the illustrious father of night existing from eternity, whom men call Phanes, for he first appeared. I have sung the birth of powerful Brimo (Hecate), and the unhallowed deeds of the earth-born giants who showered down from heaven their blood—the lamentable seed of generation, from whence sprung the race of mortals, who inhabit the boundless earth for ever."

"Chaos was generated first, and then the wide-bosomed Earth—the ever stable seat of all the Immortals that inhabit the snowy peaks of Olympus and the dark dim Tartarus in the depths of the broad-wayed earth, and Eros—the fairest of the immortal gods, that relaxes the strength of all, both gods and men, and subjugates the mind and the sage will in their breasts. From Chaos were generated Erebus and black Night; and from Night again were generated Ether and day, whom she brought forth, having conceived from the embrace of Erebus; and Earth first produced the starry heaven, equal to herself, that it might inclose all things around herself."

The preceding is given by Hesiod (900 B.C.). The following is the version given by Aristophanes:—"First were Chaos and Night, and black Erebus and vast Tartarus; and there was neither Earth nor Air nor Heaven: but in the boundless bosoms of Erebus, Night with her black wings first produced an aërial egg, from which at the completed

time sprang forth the lovely Eros, glittering with golden wings upon his back like the swift whirlwinds. But embracing the dark-winged Chaos in the vast Tartarus he begot our race (the birds). The race of the Immortals was not till Eros mingled all things together; but when the elements were mixed one with another, Heaven was produced, and Ocean and Earth and the imperishable race of all the blessed gods."

"Maia, supreme of gods, Immortal Night, tell me, &c." The next invocation is to the double-natured Protogonus—the bull coming from the egg, the renowned light, the ineffable strength, Priapus the king, &c.—"Metis (wisdom) bearing the seed of the gods, whom the blessed inhabitants of Olympus call Phanes Protogonus." "Metis the first father and all-delightful Eros." Again, in allusion to Phanes,—"Therefore the first god bears with himself the heads of animals—many and single—of a bull, of a serpent, and of a fierce lion, and they sprung from the primeval egg in which the animal is seminally contained." "The theologist places around him the heads of a ram, a bull, a lion, and a dragon, and assigns him first both the male and female sex." "Female and Father is the mighty god Ericapeus; to him also the wings are first given."

The Japanese account of the creation is of sufficient interest to be noticed here. I quote it from a translation of the *Annals of the Emperors of Japan*, by Mons. Titsingh, assisted by interpreters of the Dutch Factory at Nagasaki, and rendered into French, after being duly compared with the original by M. J. Klapworth—(printed for the Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland; London, 1834). In the account of the seven generations of the heavenly bodies, we are told that "anciently the heaven and the earth were not distinct, nor was the female principle then separated from the male. The chaos, having the form of an egg, moved

about like the waves of an agitated sea. The germs of everything were there, and these ultimately divided, the pure and transparent ones going upward to form heaven, whilst the dull and opaque ones coagulated and formed the earth. Between the two a divine being sprang up; he was followed by two others in succession." All these were pure males, and engendered without consorts. After them came a male and a female deity, but they had no intercourse with each other. These and three other divine couples, who followed them, reproduced their like by mutual contemplation. The last couple directed the "celestial spear made of a red precious stone"—said by Japanese commentators to be the phallus—into the world below, and stirred it up to the bottom. On withdrawing the lance some drops fell from it and produced an island, upon which the celestial couple descended. Each one then began to walk in opposite directions around the isle, and when they met the feminine spirit sang joyously—"I am delighted to find so handsome a young man." But this vexed the male spirit, who, being a man, asserted that he ought to have been allowed to speak the first. So they parted once more on their solitary walk; and when they met the second time, the woman waited to be spoken to. Then followed a conversation somewhat too coarse for repetition, which was followed by corporeal union. From the intercourse of these divine beings all creation sprang. But, after a time, the partners reflected that there was still wanting a governor for the world which they had engendered. So they again accoupled, and produced a daughter so lovely, that her parents thought her too good for earth; gave her the name of "the precious wisdom of the heavenly sun," and sent her to heaven, there to assume the universal government of all things. The parents once again united, and produced the moon, who was sent to heaven to assist her sister. A terrible fellow was then born from them, who represents the Devil,

or those tempests which seem to oppose the beneficent action of the sun upon the soil. The parents returned to heaven, and there are constant contentions between the brother and sister. The former is described as being furious under attempts at control; generally, he was quiet, and always had tears in his eyes (dew and rain), but sometimes, when provoked, he broke every thing, uprooted trees, and set the mountain forests on fire. We need not pursue the story further than to say that the celestial beings created a terrestrial couple, whose children bear considerable resemblance to the Greek Jupiter, Apollo, Neptune, and others, and from them came the first Emperors of Japan.

In the matter of evidence upon such a point as the conception of a man without a woman, or a woman without a man, it is clear that unsupported assertion is wholly valueless. For example, I may for a time absent myself from general society, and return to it again after a certain interval, having with me a child, whom I assert to be my very own, produced by my own inherent power, just as a tree produces a leaf which grows, matures, and falls. I may frame a romantic account of a dream, in which I was told that if I planted myself in the central bed of a certain garden, and contrived an apparatus for daily watering my buried legs, that a child would sprout from my right side, who should be to me as a daughter. Yet, however ingenious my tale, there is not any one possessing sound sense and knowledge who would believe me. In like manner, if a woman should tell a story analogous, though not identical, she is certain to be discredited; even the assertion of the existence of a divine father would not, if the woman were unmated, save her character from a stain.

We may next refer to the legend of Prometheus, inasmuch as in many points it resembles the Hebrew mythos so greatly, that we must imagine they both have a common

origin, or that the one is a copy—though an indifferent one, of the other. Prometheus, or forethought, was represented to be the first who made an ordinary man—he formed him of clay, and then animated him with fire from heaven. The Jewish tale asserts that it was Jehovah who made the first man. That man was first formed like a statue out of clay or dust, and had no life until breath was infused into his nostrils. In both stories man alone is formed first. In the Grecian fable Prometheus does not make a consort for his man; nay, he refuses to receive one for himself when the gods send to him Pandora—a paragon of loveliness. Instead of this he gives the damsel to Epimetheus—or afterthought—who takes her carelessly, and finds that even a charming woman is not a guarantee against cares and woes. Some accounts, however, say that Prometheus made both man and woman out of clay. The discrepancy does not signify much, for we see the same in Genesis, wherein we are told in one place that man and woman were made together, whilst in another the story runs that Adam preceded Eve, and that, instead of being formed of dust or clay, the latter was formed of bone.

We may now refer to the story of Apollonius Tyaneus, whose history has interest for us, inasmuch as it illustrates three important points, upon which much stress has been, and may still be, laid by inquiring minds. The most conspicuous is the propensity of historians, or, to speak more correctly, of a biographer, to record wonderful things about an extraordinary man; next the ridicule cast upon the tale by those who have circulated stories equally improbable, and the indication that travel to Hindostan was apparently common, prior to and during his time. In sketching the life of the philosopher, I quote something from *Le Dictionnaire Infernal*, and the rest from Smith's *Biographical Dictionary*. The philosopher in question was born about 4 years B.C. His history was written

by Philostratus, about 100 years after the hero's death, and is ostensibly founded upon memoirs left by his secretary, Damis, an Assyrian, who accompanied Apollonius during his travels, and recorded his discourses and prophecies, and acted much as Luke did with Paul.

Amongst the proofs which Damis gives of his veracity, he tells us that when he and his master traversed the Caucasus, they saw the chains which bound Prometheus, still fixed to the rocks. This bit of verification is now derided, but in my school-days I recollect having an account put into my hands, written by some author, stating that the remains of the ark were still to be seen upon Mount Ararat.* There was also current a "Joe Miller" about some old woman, who would not believe in flying-fish, which her sailor-boy had seen, but who readily believed his tale of hooking up a chariot wheel on an anchor fluke from the bottom of the Red Sea!

Dr. Smith, or Mr. Jowett, the author of the article, very judiciously says—"We have purposely omitted the wonders with which Philostratus has garnished his narrative. . . . *Many of these are curiously coincident with the Christian miracles*—(the italics are our own). The proclamation of the birth of Apollonius to his mother by Proteus and the incarnation of Proteus himself; the chorus of swans which sung for joy on the occasion, the casting out of devils, the raising the dead and healing the sick, the sudden disappearances and reappearances of Apollonius;

* On the day before this was written there appeared in *The Telegraph* a paragraph, to the effect that an Assyrian slab had been translated by Mr. Smith of the British Museum. The record is said to give an account of "the deluge," and it tallies nearly with that given by Berosus, recorded in my second volume. It adds, however, that the ark was at that period in existence, and its wood and bitumen used as amulets. Singularly enough, the tale is supposed to confirm the bible legend, the writer of the paragraph never dreaming that it more certainly confirms the Babylonian or Assyrian origin of the book of Genesis. The other parts of this slab, which were wanting, have more recently been found. But there is no necessity for me to change the wording of the note.

his adventures in the cave of Trophonius, and the sacred voice which called him at his death—to which may be added his claim as a teacher, having authority to reform the world—cannot fail to suggest the parallel passages in the Gospel history." We learn, moreover, that the biographer was high in favour with Alexander Severus, and that Eusebius of Cæsarea naively allows the truth of Philostratus' narrative in the main, with the exception of what is miraculous. None of the authors quoted seem to think of the adage—"Change but the names, and the same classes of wonders are a matter of faith to you." Surely it is as easy to credit the strange deeds of Proteus as those of Gabriel.

Whether we choose to adopt the hypothesis that Apollonius was a rival of Jesus, that the Nazarene and Tyanean were independent of each other, that the evangelists took a hint from Damus, or Philostratus imitated Luke in more ways than one, we have still the fact that two different biographers, giving a history of the life of two contemporary individuals, assert that the birth of their respective heroes was announced by a divine being, who himself brought about the conception of the infant that, on arriving at maturity, was held to be divine. In writing thus, it will be distinctly understood that we draw no comparison between Jesus and Apollonius, but only between the authors who have undertaken their respective biography.

Leaving this curious point, the next noteworthy one is that Philostratus records, that the Tyanean went through Assyria, Babylonia, and Bactria, to India, "where he met Jarchus, the chief of the Brahmins, and disputed with Indian gymnosophists *already versed in Alexandrian philosophy.*" I have placed these last words in italics, to call attention to the apparent belief of the historian, that prior to his day there had been extensive religious communication between India and Greece—a point on which I have much insisted in

a previous chapter. The Tyanean is said to have been five years upon his eastern journey. We have no idea where the Nazarene was during his youth and before he began his public career, and we cannot help regarding the omission to notice this part of his life as being blameworthy in the evangelists. Those who knew so much of Jesus at his conception, and about his birth and infancy, could surely, if they would, have informed us of his adult years.

Nor, *à propos* to this short account of the biography of Apollonius, by Damis and Philostratus, must we omit to notice the conceits of those who have assumed that the Tyanean was set up as a counterfoil to, or an imitator of, Jesus of Nazareth; for, just as the Christians may, with some show of reason, affirm that the miracles recorded in their writings have been filched by others; so may the Buddhist, with still greater plausibility, declare that the greatest part of the life of the Nazarene, as given in the Gospels, has been copied almost verbatim from the biographers or evangelists of the Indian sage. For myself, I consider that the miraculous parts of the history of all the three conspicuous men which have been named are equally true or—false.

The idea of attributing to the Supreme God the birth, or, rather, the procreation, of an extraordinary man, seems, so far as we can judge, to have existed in the Western Hemisphere as well as in the Eastern. For example, in an interesting book, entitled *New Tracks in North America*, by W. A. Bell, M.A., M.B., Cantab; London, 1869, we find the following legend respecting Montezuma, the most popular ruler of the ancient Mexians. The legend is intended to explain the occurrence of vast ruins amongst the Pima Indians, of which other history is silent, and runs thus: "Long ago a woman of exquisite beauty ruled over the valleys and the region south of them. Many suitors came from far

to woo her, and brought presents innumerable of corn, skins, and cattle to lay at her feet. Her virtue and determination to continue unmarried remained alike unshaken, and her store of worldly possessions so greatly increased, that, when drought and desolation came upon her land, she fed her people out of her great abundance, and did not miss it, there was so much left. One night, as she lay asleep, her garment was blown from off her breast, and a dew drop from the Great Spirit fell upon her bosom, entered her blood, and caused her to conceive. In time she bore a child, who was none other than Montezuma, who built the large 'Casas,' and all the other ruins which are scattered through the land" (vol. i. p. 199).

It is allowable for the reader to doubt whether there ever was a Mexican Queen whose renown was spread far and wide, who preferred celibacy to marriage, and who, being rich, was not plundered by the chiefs whose alliance was rejected. We may equally doubt the efficacy of a drop of water, even though it came from the Great Celestial Spirit; but notwithstanding every objection which the most sceptical can advance, the legend is quite as probable as those current amongst the ancient Greeks, the religious Hindoos, and a large portion of modern Christians. A miracle always improbable, is not necessarily true because it is said to have occurred in the old world, or indubitably false because it is reported to have happened in the new. Nor can one who regards faith as superior to reason, refuse to believe or to question the truth of any supernatural story simply because he was not told it during his childhood or youth.

When the philosophical inquirer finds that in every country with whose literature we are familiar, there are, not only abundance of tales about supernatural generation before the world was formed, but from the earliest periods of history to our own day, he may well pause and inquire into

the intrinsic value of a religion or a faith that is founded mainly, if not wholly, upon the assertion that a certain person was the son of the Supreme Creator, and being so, has the qualities of his sire as well as those of his human mother. The orthodox in Britain do not believe in Christna, Krishna, or Vishnu, because the Hindoo sacred books declare that he has appeared repeatedly as an incarnation of the Creator—nor do they credit the tales told of the supernatural generation of Bacchus or Hercules—yet, when they are asked what stronger evidence they have for the truth of their own story, they are unable to give more than affirmations, strong, perhaps, but not more so than those of ancient Hellenic priests.

It is out of my province, now, to enter into everything connected with the doctrine held by those who are known as Trinitarians. My main endeavour in this part of my subject is to clear the way for "reconstruction." It is my desire to give to those who have not the leisure, or, perhaps, the inclination, to wade through the dull tomes of theological, mythological, and similar books, an account of what is and has been entertained as religious belief by others, with whom or with whose opinions, they have not come in contact. I have no special wish to prove that my opinions are right and the prevailing ones wrong; my chief aim is to give data by which others may form a judgment for themselves. With this view I have systematically endeavoured to satisfy myself of the trustworthiness of the witnesses whom I call upon to testify to facts; to my knowledge, nothing has been suppressed which seems to me to bear upon my subject, nor is aught set down to malice.

