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received from the god of wisdom the power of transporting his soul into any other body, while by an antidote he keeps his own body from corruption. And here we are brought to a parallelism which cannot be accounted for on any theory of mediæval importation. The story of Vicram is essentially the story of Hermotimos of Klazomenai, whose soul wanders at will through space, while his body remains undecayed at home, until his wife, tired out by his repeated desertions, burns his body while he is away, and thus effectually prevents his resuming his proper form. A popular Deccan tale, which is also told by Pliny and Lucian, must have existed, if only in a rudimentary state, while Greeks and Hindus still lived as a single people. But a genuine humour, of which we have little more than a faint germ in the Greek legend, runs through the Hindu story. In both the wife is vexed by the frequent absence of her husband: but the real fun of the Deccan tale rises from the complications produced by the carpenter's son, who overhears the god Gunputti as he teaches Vicram the mystic words which enable him to pass from his own body into another; but as he could not see the antidote which Vicram received to keep his tenantless body from decay, the carpenter's son was but half enlightened. No sooner, however, had Vicram transferred his soul to the parrot's body, than the carpenter's son entered the body of Vicram, and the work of corruption began in his own. The pseudo-rajah is at once detected by the Wuzeer Butti, who stands to Vicram in the relation of Patroklos to Achilles, or of Theseus to Peirithoös, and who recommends the whole court to show a cold shoulder to the impostor, and make his sojourn in Vicram's body as unpleasant as possible. Worn out at last with waiting, Butti sets off to search for his friend, and by good luck is one of the throng assembled to witness the ascension of Champa Ranee. Butti recognises his friend, and at once puts him into safe keeping in a cage. On reaching home it became necessary to get the carpenter's son out of Vicram's body, and the Wuzeer, foreseeing that this would be no easy task, proposes a butting match between two rams, the one belonging to himself, the other to the pseudo-rajah. Butti accordingly submits his own ram to a





training, which greatly hardens his horns; and so when the fight began, the pretended rajah, seeing to his vexation that his favourite was getting the worst in the battle, transported his soul into the ram's body, to add to its strength and resolution. No sooner was this done, than Vicram left the parrot's body and re-entered his own, and Butti, slaying the defeated ram, put an end to the life of the carpenter's son, by leaving him no body in which to take up his abode. But fresh troubles were in store for Butti; and these troubles take us back to the legends of Brynhild and Persephoné, of Tammuz, Adonis, and Osiris. Not yet cured of his wandering propensities, Vicram goes to sleep in a jungle with his mouth open, into which creeps a cobra who refuses to be dislodged—the deadly snake of winter and darkness, which stings the beautiful Eurydikê, and lies coiled around the maiden on the glistening heath. The rajah, in his intolerable misery, leaves his home, just as Persephoné is taken away from Dêmêtêr, and Butti seeks him in vain for twelve years (the ten years of the struggle at Ilion), as he roams in the disguise of a fakeer. Meanwhile, the beautiful Buccoulee, who had recognised her destined husband under his squalid rags as Eurykleia recognises Odysseus, had succeeded in freeing Vicram from his tormentor, and thus all three returned to the long forsaken Anar Ranee. But before we examine incidents which take us into the more strictly mythical regions of Aryan folk-lore, it is necessary to show how large is that class of stories to which the tale of the Dancing Girl and the Woodcutter belongs. There are some which are even more remarkable for their agreement in the general scheme with thorough divergence in detail.

In the story entitled, 'The Table, the Ass, and the Stick' in Grimm's collection, a goat, whose appetite cannot be satisfied, brings a tailor into grievous trouble by leading him to drive his three sons away from their home on groundless charges. At last, finding that he had been cheated, he scourges the goat, which makes the best of its way from his dwelling. Meanwhile, the three sons had each been learning a trade, and each received his reward. To the eldest son was given a table, which at the words 'Cover thyself,' at once

The Table,  
the Ass,  
and the  
Stick.



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presented a magnificent banquet; the second received a donkey, which on hearing the word 'Bricklebrit' rained down gold pieces,<sup>1</sup> and both were deprived of their gifts by a thievish innkeeper, to whom they had in succession revealed their secret. On reaching home, the eldest son, boasting to his father of his inexhaustible table, was discomfited by finding that some common table had been put in its place; and the second in like manner, in making trial of his ass, found himself in possession of a very ordinary donkey. But the youngest son had not yet returned, and to him they sent word of the scurvy behaviour of the innkeeper. When the time of the third son's departure came, his master gave him a sack, adding 'In it there lies a stick.' The young man took the sack as a thing that might do him good service, but asked why he should take the stick, as it only made the sack heavier to carry. The stick, however, was endowed with the power of jumping out of the sack and belabouring any one against whom its owner had a grudge. Thus armed, the youth went cheerfully to the house of the innkeeper, who, thinking that the sack must certainly contain treasure, tried to take it from the young man's pillow while he slept. But he had reckoned without his host. The stick hears the fatal word, and at once falls without mercy on the thief, who roars out that he will surrender the table and the ass. Thus

<sup>1</sup> This donkey is, in fact, Midas, at whose touch everything turns to gold — a myth which reappears in the Irish tradition of Lavra Loingsech, who had horse's ears, as Midas had those of an ass. The reeds betrayed the secret in the case of Midas; the barber of Lavra whispered the secret in the Irish story to a willow; the willow was cut down, and the harp made of the wood murmured 'Lavra Loingsech has horse's ears.' (Fergusson, *The Irish before the Conquest*.) The horse and the ass doubtless represent the Harits of Hindu mythology; the production of gold (the golden light) by the sun or the dawn recurs again and again in Aryan legends. In Grimm's story of the 'Three Little Men in the Wood,' the kindly dawn-child shares her bread with the dwarfs, who, as in the Volung tale, guard the treasures of the earth, and in return they grant to her

the power of becoming more beautiful every day, and that a piece of gold shall fall out of her mouth every word that she speaks. But she has a stepsister, the winter, who, not having her kindly feelings, refuses to share her bread with the dwarfs, who decree that she shall grow more ugly every day, and that toads shall spring from her mouth whenever she speaks. This is the story of 'Bushy Bride' in Dasent's *Norse Tales*. The dawn-children reappear in the story of Hansel and Grethel, who, wandering into the forest (of night or winter), come upon a house with windows made of clear sugar (ice), where they fall into the power of a witch (Hades), who, like the dwarfs, guards the hoard of treasure. The old witch is destroyed by Grethel after the fashion of the cannibal in the Zulu tale. (Max Müller, *Chips*, ii. 214.)





the three gifts reach the tailor's house.<sup>1</sup> As for the goat, whose head the tailor had shaven, it ran into a fox's house, where a bee stung its bald pate, and it rushed out, never to be heard of again.

In the Deccan tale we have a jackal and a barber in the place of the goat and the tailor; and the mischief is done, not by leading the barber to expel his children, but by cheating him of the fruits of his garden. The parallel, however, is not confined to the fact of the false pretences; the barber retaliates, like the tailor, and inflicts a severe wound on the jackal. As before, in the German story, the goat is a goat; but the jackal is a transformed rajah, none other in short than the Beast who is wedded to Beauty and the monster who becomes the husband of Psyche, and thus even this story lies within the magic circle of strictly mythical tradition. But before he wins his bride, the jackal-rajah is reduced to sore straits, and his adventures give occasion for some sharp satire on Hindu popular theology. Coming across a bullock's carcass, the jackal eats his way into it, while the sun so contracts the hide that he finds himself unable to get out. Fearing to be killed if discovered, or to be buried alive if he escaped notice, the jackal, on the approach of the scavengers, cries out, 'Take care, good people, how you touch me, for I am a great saint.' The mahars in terror ask him who he is, and what he wants. 'I,' answered the jackal, 'am a very holy saint. I am also the god of your village, and I am very angry with you, because you never worship me nor bring me offerings.' 'O my lord,' they cried, 'what offerings will please you? Tell us only, and we will bring you whatever you like.' 'Good,' said the jackal; 'then you must fetch hither plenty of rice, plenty of flowers, and a nice fat chicken: place them as an offering beside me, and pour a great deal of water over them, as you do at your most solemn feasts, and then I will forgive you your sins.' The wetting, of course, splits the dry bullock's skin, and the jackal, jumping out, runs with the chicken in his mouth to the jungle. When again he was

The  
Brahman,  
the Jackal  
and the  
Barber.

<sup>1</sup> The Norse story of 'The Lad who went to the North Wind' turns on the same machinery.



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nearly starved, he heard a Brahman bewailing his poverty, and declaring that if a dog or a jackal were to offer to marry one of his daughters, he should have her—an eagerness in complete contrast with the reluctance of the merchant who is obliged to surrender his child to the beast. The jackal takes him at his word, and leads his wife away to a splendid subterranean palace, where she finds that each night the jackal lays aside his skin, and becomes a beautiful young man. Soon the Brahman comes to the jackal's cave to see how his child gets on; but just as he is about to enter, the jackal stops him, and, learning his wants, gives him a melon, the seeds of which will bring him some money. A neighbour, admiring the fruit produced from these seeds, buys some from the Brahman's wife, and finding that they are full of diamonds, pearls and rubies, purchases the whole stock, until the Brahman himself opens a small withered melon, and learns how he has been overreached. In vain he asks restitution from the woman who has bought them; she knows nothing of any miraculous melons, and a jeweller to whom he takes the jewels from the withered melon, accuses him of having stolen the gems from his shop, and impounds them all. Again the Brahman betakes himself to the jackal, who, seeing the uselessness of giving him gold or jewels, brings him out a jar which is always full of good things.<sup>1</sup> The Brahman now lived in luxury; but another Brahman informed the rajah of the royal style in which his once poorer neighbour feasted, and the rajah appropriated the jar for his own special use. When once again he carried this story of his wrongs to his son-in-law, the jackal gave him another jar, within which was a rope and a stick, which would perform their work of chastisement as soon as the jar was opened. Uncovering the jar while he was alone, the Brahman had cause to repent his rashness, for every bone in his body was left aching. With this personal experience of the powers of the stick, the Brahman generously invited the rajah and his brother

<sup>1</sup> This jar is, of course, the horn of Amaltheia, the napkin of Rhydderch, the never-failing table of the Ethiopians, the cup of the Malee's wife in the Hindu legend; but the countless forms assumed by the mysterious vessel which

serves as the source of life and wealth will be more fitly examined when we come to analyse the myth of the divine ship Argo. See the section on the Vivifying Sun. Book II. ch. ii.





Brahman to come and test the virtues of his new gift; and a belabouring as hearty as that which the wicked innkeeper received in the German tale made them yield up the dinner-making jar. The same wholesome measure led to the recovery of the precious stones from the jeweller, and the melons from the woman who had bought them. It only remained now, by burning the enchanted rajah's jackal-skin, the lion-skin of Herakles, to transform him permanently into the most splendid prince ever seen on earth.<sup>1</sup>

The independent growth of these tales from a common framework is still more conclusively proved by the fact that the agreement of the Norse with the Hindu legend is far more close and striking than the likeness which it bears to the German story. In the Norse version we have not three brothers, but one lad, who represents the Brahman; and in the Norse and Hindu stories alike, the being who does the wrong is the one who bestows the three mysterious gifts. The goat in the German version is simply mischievous: in the Norse tale, the North Wind, which blows away the poor woman's meal, bestows on her son the banquet-making cloth, the money-coining ram, and the magic stick.<sup>2</sup> The jackal and the cloth are thus alike endowed with the mysterious power of the Teutonic Wish. This power is exhibited under a thousand forms, among which cups, horns, jars, and basins hold the most conspicuous place, and point to the earliest symbol used for the expression of the idea.

The points of likeness and difference between the Hindu story of Punchkin and the Norse tale of the 'Giant who had no Heart in his Body' are perhaps still more striking. In the former a rajah has seven daughters, whose mother dies while they are still children, and a stepmother so persecutes them

The  
Lad who  
went  
to the  
North  
Wind.

The story  
of Punch-  
kin.

<sup>1</sup> In the mythology of Northern Europe the lion-skin becomes a bearsack, and thus, according to the story of Porphyry, Zalmoxis, the mythical legislator of the Getai, was a Berserkr, as having been clothed in a bearskin as soon as he was born. Probably the explanation is about as trustworthy as that which traces the name Tritogeneia to a Cretan word trito, meaning head. The other form of the name, Zamolxis,

has been supposed (Nork, *Real-Wörterbuch*, s.v.) to point to mulgeo, mulceo, and thus to denote the wizard or the sorcerer. The story of his remaining hidden for years in a cave, and then reappearing among the Getai, is merely another form of the myths of Persephoné, Adonis, Baldur, Osiris, and other deities of the waxing and waning year.

<sup>2</sup> Dasent, *Tales from the Norse*, xciv. cxli. 236.



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that they make their escape. In the jungle they are found by the seven sons of a neighbouring king, who are hunting; and each takes one of the princesses as a wife, the handsomest of course marrying the youngest. After a brief time of happiness, the eldest prince sets off on a journey, and does not return. His six brothers follow him, and are seen no more. After this, as Balna, the youngest princess, rocks her babe in his cradle, a fakeer makes his appearance, and having vainly asked her to marry him, transforms her into a dog, and leads her away. As he grows older, Balna's son learns how his parents and uncles have disappeared, and resolves to go in search of them. His aunts beseech him not to do so; but the youth feels sure that he will bring them all back, and at length he finds his way to the house of a gardener, whose wife, on hearing his story, tells him that his father and uncles have all been turned into stone by the great magician Punchkin, who keeps Balna herself imprisoned in a high tower because she will not marry him. To aid him in his task, the gardener's wife disguises him in her daughter's dress, and gives him a basket of flowers as a present for the captive princess. Thus arrayed, the youth is admitted to her presence, and while none are looking, he makes himself known to his mother by means of a ring which she had left on his finger before the sorcerer stole her away. But the rescue of the seven princes seemed to be as far off as ever, and the young man suggests that Balna should now change her tactics, and by playing the part of Delilah to Samson, find out where his power lies, and whether he is subject to death. The device is successful, and the sorcerer betrays the secret.

'Far away, far away, hundreds of thousands of miles away from this, there lies a desolate country covered with thick jungle. In the midst of the jungle grows a circle of palm trees, and in the centre of the jungle stand six jars full of water, piled one above another; below the sixth jar is a small cage which contains a little green parrot; on the life of the parrot depends my life, and if the parrot is killed I must die.'

<sup>1</sup> In the Gaelic story of the 'Young King of Easaidh Ruadh,' which contains this story, this puzzle is thus put, 'There is a great flagstone under the





But this keep is guarded by myriads of evil demons, and Balna tries hard to dissuade her son from the venture. He is resolute, and he finds true helpers in some eagles whose young he saves by killing a large serpent which was making its way to their nest. The parent birds give him their young to be his servants, and the eaglets, crossing their wings, bear him through the air to the spot where the six water jars are standing. In an instant he upsets the jar, and snatching the parrot from his cage, rolls him up in his cloak. The magician in his dismay at seeing the parrot in the youth's hands yields to every demand made by him, and not only the seven princes but all his other victims are restored to life—a magnificent array of kings, courtiers, officers, and servants.<sup>1</sup> Still the magician prayed to have his parrot given to him.

‘Then the boy took hold of the parrot, and tore off one of his wings, and when he did so, the magician’s right arm fell off.

‘Punchkin then stretched out his left arm, crying, “Give me my parrot.” The prince pulled off the parrot’s second wing and the magician’s left arm tumbled off.

‘“Give me my parrot,” cried he, and fell on his knees. The prince pulled off the parrot’s right leg, the magician’s right leg fell off; the prince pulled off the parrot’s left leg, down fell the magician’s left.

‘Nothing remained of him save the limbless body and the head; but still he rolled his eyes, and cried, “Give me my parrot!” “Take your parrot then,” cried the boy; and with that he wrung the bird’s neck, and threw it at the magician, and as he did so, Punchkin twisted round, and with a fearful groan he died.’

threshold. There is a wether under the flag. There is a duck in the wether’s belly, and an egg in the belly of the duck, and it is in the egg that my soul is.’

<sup>1</sup> This portion of the story is found in the *Arabian Nights* tale of ‘The two Sisters who were jealous of their Younger Sister.’ Here also the enchantments are overcome by gaining possession of a bird, and the malignant demons who

guard it are represented by dismal cries and jeering voices which assail all who attempt the task. The bird, as in the Hindu tale, is won by the youngest of the family, but it is the princess Parvade disguised as a man who performs the exploit, having, like Odysseus, as he approached the Seiren’s land, filled her ears with cloth. Nor is the bird less mighty than the magician, although he is not killed off in the same way.



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The Giant  
who had  
no Heart in  
his Body.

In its key-note and its leading incidents this story is precisely parallel to the Norse tale of the 'Giant who had no Heart in his Body.' Here, as in the Deccan legend, there is a king who has seven sons, but instead of all seven being sent to hunt or woo, the youngest is left at home; and the rajah whose children they marry has six daughters, not seven. This younger brother who stays at home is the Boots of European folk-lore, a being of infinitely varied character, and a subject of the highest interest for all who wish to know whence the Aryan nations obtained the materials for their epic poems. Seemingly weak and often despised, he has keener wit and more resolute will than all who are opposed to him. Slander and obloquy are to him as nothing, for he knows that in the end his truth shall be made clear in the sight of all men. In Dr. Dasent's words, 'There he sits idle whilst all work; there he lies with that deep irony of conscious power which knows its time must one day come, and meantime can afford to wait. When that time comes, he girds himself to the feat amidst the scoff and scorn of his flesh and blood; but even then, after he has done some great deed, he conceals it, returns to his ashes, and again sits idly by the kitchen fire, dirty, lazy, despised, until the time for final recognition comes, and then his dirt and rags fall off—he stands out in all the majesty of his royal robes, and is acknowledged once for all a king.'<sup>1</sup> We see him in a thousand forms. He is the Herakles on whom the mean

<sup>1</sup> Dasent, *Norse Tales*, cliv. Some of the stories told of Boots are very significant. Among the most noteworthy is Grimm's story of 'One who travelled to learn what shivering meant.' The stupid boy in this tale shows marvellous strength of arm, but he is no more able to shiver than the sun. At midnight he is still quick with the heat of fire, which cannot be cooled even by contact with the dead. Like Sigurd, he recovers the treasures in the robber's keeping, and he learns to shiver only when his bride pours over him at night a pail of water full of fish—in other words, when Helios plunges into the sea as Endymion. Elsewhere, he is not only the wanderer or vagabond, but the discharged soldier, or the strolling player, who is really the king Thrushbeard in the German story,

who tames the pride of the princess as Indra subdues Dahanâ; or he is the countryman who cheats the Jew in the story of the 'Good Bargain.' He is the young king of Easaidh Ruadh in the Scottish story, who gets for the giant the Glaive of Light (Excalibur, or the spear of Achilles), and who rides a dun filly, gifted like the horse Xanthos with the power of speech. He is the 'bald rough-skinned gillie' of the smithy in the Highland tale of 'The Brown Bear of the Green Glen,' on whose head the mysterious bird alights to point him out as the father of the dawn-child. In the story of the 'Three Soldiers' in the same collection, he is the poor soldier who is wheedled of his three wish-gifts, but recovering them in the end is seen in his native majesty.





Eurystheus delights to pour contempt; he is Cinderella sitting in the dust, while her sisters flaunt their finery abroad; he is the Oidipous who knows nothing,<sup>1</sup> yet reads the mysterious riddle of the Sphinx; he is the Phoibos who serves in the house of Admêtos and the palace of Laomedon; he is the Psyche who seeks her lost love almost in despair, and yet with the hope still living in her that her search shall not be unsuccessful; above all, he is the Ithakan chief, clothed in beggar's rags, flouted by the suitors, putting forth his strength for one moment to crush the insolent Arnaïos, then sitting down humbly on the threshold,<sup>2</sup> recognised only by an old nurse and his dog, waiting patiently till the time comes that he shall bend the unerring bow and having slain his enemies appear once more in glorious garb by the side of a wife as radiant in beauty as when he left her years ago for a long and a hard warfare far away. Nay, he even becomes an idiot, but even in this his greatest humiliation the memory of his true greatness is never forgotten. Thus the Gaelic 'Lay of the Great Fool' relates the

Tale of wonder, that was heard without lie,  
Of the idiot to whom hosts yield,  
A haughty son who yields not to arms,  
Whose name was the mighty fool.

The might of the world he had seized  
In his hands, and it was no rude deed;  
It was not the strength of his blade or shield,  
But that the mightiest was in his grasp.<sup>3</sup>

He becomes, of course, the husband of Helen,

The mighty fool is his name,  
And his wife is the young Fairfine;  
The men of the world are at his beck,  
And the yielding to him was mine;

and the Helen of the story has, of course, her Paris. The fool goes to sleep, and as he slumbers a Gruagach gives her a kiss, and like Helen 'the lady was not ill-pleased that he came.' But his coming is for evil luck, and the deceiver shall be well repaid when the fool comes to take vengeance.

Still will I give my vows,  
Though thou thinkest much of thy speech;  
When comes the Gruagach of the tissue cloak,  
He will repay thee for his wife's kiss.

<sup>1</sup> ὁ μηδὲν εἰδὼς Οἰδίπους.  
Sophokles, *Oid. Tyr.* 397.

<sup>2</sup> Campbell, *Tales of the West Highlands*, iii. 154.

<sup>3</sup> *Odyssey*, xviii. 110.





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Mythical  
repetitions  
and com-  
binations.

Boots then acts the part of Balna's son in the Hindu story, while the sorcerer reappears in the Norse tale as a giant, who turns the six princes and their wives into stone. The incident is by no means peculiar to this tale, and the examples already adduced would alone warrant the assertion that the whole mass of folk-lore in every country may be resolved into an endless series of repetitions, combinations, and adaptations of a few leading ideas or of their developements, all sufficiently resembling each other to leave no doubts of their fundamental identity, yet so unlike in outward garb and colouring, so thoroughly natural and vigorous under all their changes, as to leave no room for any other supposition than that of a perfectly independent growth from one common stem. If speaking of the marvels wrought by musical genius, Dr. Newman could say, 'There are seven notes in the scale; make them thirteen, yet how slender an outfit for so vast an enterprise,'<sup>1</sup> we may well feel the same astonishment as we see the mighty harvest of mythical lore which a few seeds have yielded, and begin to understand how it is that ideas so repeated, disguised, or travestied never lost their charm, but find us as ready to listen when they are brought before us for the hundredth time in a new dress, as when we first made acquaintance with them.

Agency of  
beasts in  
these  
stories.

In the modified machinery of the Norse tale, the remonstrances addressed to Balna's son in the Hindu story are here addressed to Boots, whose kindness to the brute creatures who become his friends is drawn out in the more full detail characteristic of Western legends. The Hindu hero helps eagles only; Boots succours a raven, a salmon, and a wolf, and the latter having devoured his horse bears him on

<sup>1</sup> *University Sermons*, p. 348. In these two stories the Magician Punchkin and the Heartless Giant are manifestly only other forms of the dark beings, the Panis, who steal away the bright treasures, whether cows, maidens, or youths, from the gleaming west. In each case there is a long search for them; and as Troy cannot fall without Achilles, so here there is only one who can achieve the exploit of rescuing the beings who have been turned into stone, as Niobé is hardened into rock. The

youthful son of Balna in his disguise is the womanlike Theseus, Dionysos, or Achilles. Balna herself imprisoned in the tower with the sorcerer whom she hates is Helen shut up in Ilion with the seducer whom she loathes; and as Helen calls herself the dog-faced, so Balna is transformed into a dog when Punchkin leads her away. The eagles whose young he saves, like the heroes of so many popular tales, are the bright clouds who bear off little Surya Bai to the nest on the tree top.





its back with the speed of light to the house of the giant who has turned his brothers into stone.<sup>1</sup> Then he finds, not his mother, like Balna's son, but the beautiful princess who is to be his bride, and who promises to find out, if she can, where the giant keeps his heart, for, wherever it be, it is not in his body. The colloquies which lead at length to the true answer exhibit the giant in the more kindly and rollicking character frequently bestowed on trolls, dwarfs, elves, and demons, in the mythology of the Western Aryans. The final answer corresponds precisely to that of Punchkin. 'Far, far away in a lake lies an island; on that island stands a church; in that church is a well; in that well swims a duck; in that duck there is an egg; and in that egg there lies my heart, you darling.' His darling takes a tender farewell of Boots, who sets off on the wolf's back, to solve, as in the Eastern tale, the mystery of the water and the bird. The wolf takes him to the island; but the church keys hang high on the steeple, and the raven is now brought in to perform an office analogous to that of the young eaglets in the Deccan legend. At last, by the salmon's help, the egg is brought from the bottom of the well where the duck had dropped it.

'Then the wolf told him to squeeze the egg, and as soon as ever he squeezed it, the giant screamed out.

"Squeeze it again," said the wolf; and when the prince did so, the giant screamed still more piteously, and begged and prayed so prettily to be spared, saying he would do all

<sup>1</sup> The constant agency of wolves and foxes in the German stories at once suggests a comparison with the Myrmidons whom the Homeric poet so elaborately likens to wolves, with Phoibos himself as the wolf-god of Æschylos, and with the jackal princes of eastern story. In Grimm's story of 'The Two Brothers,' the animals succoured are the hare, fox, wolf, and lion, and they each, as in the Hindu tale, offer their young as ministers to the hero who has spared their lives. In the beautiful legend of the Golden Bird, the youngest brother and the fox whom by his kindness he secures as his ally, alike represent the disguised chieftain of Ihaka, and the rajahs of the Hindu stories. The disguise in which the youngest

brother returns home is put on by himself. He has exchanged clothes with a beggar; the fox is of course enchanted, and can only be freed by destroying the body in which he is imprisoned. But this idea of enchantment would inevitably be suggested by the magic power of Athênê in seaming the face of Odysseus with the wrinkles of a squalid old age, while the Christianised Northman would convert Athênê herself into a witch. In this story the mere presence of the disguised youth, who was supposed to be murdered, just as the suitors supposed Odysseus to be dead, makes the golden bird begin to sing, the golden horse begin to eat, and the beautiful maiden to cease weeping. The meaning is obvious.



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that the prince wished if he would only not squeeze his heart in two.

“Tell him if he will restore to life again your six brothers and their brides, you will spare his life,” said the wolf. Yes, the giant was ready to do that, and he turned the six brothers into king’s sons again, and their brides into king’s daughters.

“Now squeeze the egg in two,” said the wolf. So Boots squeezed the egg to pieces, and the giant burst at once.<sup>1</sup>

The Two  
Brothers.

If the morality of myths be a fair matter for comparison, the Eastern story has here the advantage. Balna’s son makes no definite promise to the magician; but a parallel to Punchkin, almost closer than that of the giant, is furnished in Grimm’s story of the Two Brothers, where a witch is forced to restore all her victims to life. “The old witch took a twig<sup>1</sup> and changed the stones back to what they were, and immediately his brother and the beasts stood before the huntsman, as well as many merchants, workpeople and shepherds, who, delighted with their freedom, returned home; but the twin brothers,<sup>2</sup> when they saw each other again, kissed and embraced and were very glad.”<sup>3</sup>

Influence  
of written  
literature  
on Folk-  
lore.

The supposition that these stories have been transmitted laterally is tenable only on the further hypothesis, that in every Aryan land, from Eastern India to the Highlands of Scotland, the folk-lore of the country has had its character determined by the literature of written books, that in every land men have handled the stories introduced from other countries with the deliberate purpose of modifying and adapting them, and that they have done their work in such a way as sometimes to leave scarcely a resemblance, at other times scarcely to effect the smallest change. In no other range of literature has any such result ever been achieved. In these stories we have narratives which have confessedly been received in the crudest form, if the fable of the Brahman and the goat is to be taken as the original of the Master Thief, and which have been worked up with marvellous vigour and

<sup>1</sup> The rod of Kirké. The persons changed into stones represent the companions of Eurylochos. They are petrified only because they cannot resist the

allurements or temptations of the place.

<sup>2</sup> The Dioskouroi, or the Asvins.

<sup>3</sup> See also Campbell’s *Tales of the West Highlands*, i. 103.





under indefinitely varied forms, not by the scholars who imported the volumes of the *Kalila and Dimna*, or the *Exploits of the Romans*, but by unknown men among the people. The tales have been circulated for the most part only among those who have no books, and many if not most of them have been made known only of late years for the first time to the antiquarians and philologists who have devoted their lives to hunting them out. How then do we find in Teutonic or Hindu stories not merely incidents which specially characterise the story of *Odysseus*, but almost the very words in which they are related in the *Odyssey*? The task of analysing and comparing these legends is not a light one even for those who have all the appliances of books and the aid of a body of men working with them for the same end. Yet old men and old women reproduce in India and Germany, in Norway, in Scotland, and in Ireland, the most subtle turns of thought and expression, and an endless series of complicated narratives, in which the order of incidents and the words of the speakers are preserved with a fidelity nowhere paralleled in the oral tradition of historical events. It may safely be said that no series of stories introduced in the form of translations from other languages could ever thus have filtered down into the lowest strata of society, and thence have sprung up again, like *Antaios*, with greater energy and heightened beauty, and 'nursery tales are generally the last things to be adopted by one nation from another.'<sup>1</sup> But it is not safe to assume on the part of Highland peasants or Hindu nurses a familiarity with the epical literature of the Homeric or Vedic poets; and hence the production of actual evidence in any given race for the independent growth of popular stories may be received as throwing fresh light on questions already practically solved, but can scarcely be regarded as indispensable. It can scarcely be necessary to prove that the tale of the *Three Snake Leaves* was not derived by the old German storytellers from the pages of *Pausanias*, or that *Beauty and the Beast* was not suggested by *Appuleius*. There is nothing therefore which needs to surprise us in the fact that stories already familiar to the

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller, *Chips*, ii. 216.



BOOK  
I.

The stories  
of King  
Putraka,  
and the  
Three  
Princesses  
of White-  
land.

western Aryans have been brought to us in their eastern versions only as yesterday.

Among such tales is the story, cited by Dr. Dasent, of King Putraka, who wandering among the Vindhya mountains finds two men quarreling for the possession of a bowl, a staff, and a pair of shoes, and induces them to determine by running a race whose these things shall be. No sooner have they started than Putraka puts on the shoes, which give the power of flight, and vanishes with the staff and bowl also. The story, which in this form has only recently been made known in Europe through the translation of the tales of Somadeva, is merely another version of the old Norse legend of the Three Princesses of Whiteland, in which three brothers fight for a hundred years about a hat, a cloak, and a pair of boots, until a king, passing by, prevails on them to let him try the things, and putting them on, wishes himself away. The incident, Dr. Dasent adds, is found in Wallachian and Tartar stories,<sup>1</sup> while the three gifts come again in the stories already cited, of the Table, the Ass, and the Stick, the Lad that went to the North Wind, and the Hindu tale of the Brahman, the Jackal, and the Barber. But the gifts themselves are found everywhere. The shoes are the sandals of Hermes, the seven-leagued boots of Jack the Giant Killer;<sup>2</sup> the hat is the helmet of Hades, the Tarn-Kappe of the Nibelungen Lied;<sup>3</sup> in the staff we have the rod of Kirkê, and in the bowl that emblem of fertility and life which meets us at every turn, from the holy vessel

<sup>1</sup> It occurs also in the German legend of 'The King of the Golden Mountain.' In the story of Gyges (Plato, *Pol.* 360), this power of making the wearer invisible resides in a ring, which he discovers far beneath the surface of the earth. This ring enables him to corrupt the wife of Kandaules, and so to become master of the Lydian kingdom; and thus it belongs to the number of mysterious rings which represent the Hindu Yoni. See also the Gaelic tale of 'Conal Crovi.' Campbell, i. 133. The triple power of wish is invested in the stone given by the dwarf to Thorston. Keightley, *Fairy Mythology*, 71.

<sup>2</sup> The ladder by which Jack ascends

to heaven is not peculiar to this story. It is possibly only another form of the Bridge of Heimdall. 'Mr. Tylor,' says Professor Max Müller, 'aptly compares the [Mandan] fable of the vine and the fat woman with the story of Jack and the Bean Stalk, and he brings other stories from Malay and Polynesian districts embodying the same idea. Among the different ways by which it was thought possible to ascend from earth to heaven, Mr. Tylor mentions the rank spear-grass, a rope or thong, a spider's web, a ladder of iron or gold, a column of smoke, or the rainbow.' *Chips*, ii. 268.

<sup>3</sup> *Il.* v. 845.





which only the pure knight or the innocent maiden may touch, to the horseshoe which is nailed for good luck's sake to the wall. These things have not been imported into Western mythology by any translations of the folk-lore of the East, for they were as well known in the days of Perikles as they are in our own; and thus in cases where there appears to be evidence of conscious adaptation the borrowing must be regarded rather as an exceptional fact than as furnishing any presumption against stories for which no such evidence is forthcoming. It will never be supposed that the imagery and even the language of the old Greek epics could be as familiarly known to the Hindu peasantry as to the countrymen of Herodotos: and hence the greater the resemblance between the popular stories of Greeks, Germans, and Hindus, the less room is there for any hypothesis of direct borrowing or adaptation. Such theories do but create and multiply difficulties; the real evidence points only to that fountain of mythical language from which have flowed all the streams of Aryan epic poetry, streams so varied in their character, yet agreeing so closely in their elements. The substantial identity of stories told in Italy, Norway, and India can but prove that the treasure-house of mythology was more abundantly filled before the dispersion of the Aryan tribes than we had taken it to be.

Probably no two stories furnish more convincing evidence of the extent to which the folk-lore of the Aryan tribes was developed, while they still lived as a single people, than that which we find in the German legend of Faithful John and the Deccan story of Rama and Luxman, who reflect the Rama and Laxmana of Purana legends. A comparison of these legends clearly shows that at least the following framework must have been devised before Hindus and Germans started on the long migration which was to lead the one to the regions of the Ganges and the Indus, and the other to the countries watered by the Rhine and the Elbe. Even in those early days the story must have run that a king had seen the likeness of a maiden whose beauty made him faint with love; that he could not be withheld from seeking her; that his faithful friend went with him and

Faithful  
John.



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I.

helped him to win his bride; that certain wise birds predicted that the trusty friend should save his master from three great dangers, but that his mode of rescuing him should seem to show that he loved his master's wife; that for his self-sacrifice he should be turned into a stone, and should be restored to life only by the agency of an innocent child. That two men in two distant countries knowing nothing of each other could hit upon such a series of incidents as these, none probably will have the hardihood to maintain. Still less can any dream of urging that Hindus and Germans agreed together to adopt each the specific differences of their respective versions. In the German story the prince's passion for the beautiful maiden is caused by the sight of her portrait in a gallery of his father's palace, into which the trusty John had been strictly charged not to let the young man enter.<sup>1</sup> Having once seen it, he cannot be withheld from going to seek her, and with his friend he embarks as a merchant in a ship laden with all manner of costly goods which may tempt the maiden's taste or curiosity. The scheme succeeds; but while the princess is making her purchases the Faithful John orders all sail to be set, and the ship is far at sea when the maiden turns to go home. At once we recognise the form in which Herodotos at the outset of his history has recorded the story of Iô, and are tempted to think that Herodotos did not in this instance invent his own rationalistic explanation of a miraculous story, but has adopted a version of the myth current in his own day. The comparative freedom from supernatural in-

<sup>1</sup> This is substantially the Rabbinical story of 'The Broken Oath,' the difference being that the young man is already in Fairy Land, and finds in the forbidden chamber, not the picture, but the maiden herself. The sequel of this story exhibits the maiden as the Fairy Queen, who lays the man under a pledge to remain with her. After a while he feels a yearning to return to his earthly home. He is suffered to do so on pledging his word that he will come back. But the pledge redeemed without murmuring by Thomas of Ercildoune is set at nought by the hero of this tale. The forsaken fairy carries

the case before the Rabbis, who decide that he must go back; but on his persistent refusal, she beseeches him to suffer her to take leave of him and to embrace him. 'He replied that she might, and as soon as she embraced him, she drew out his soul, and he died.' Thus far the story runs like that of Fouqué's Undine; but in the sequel the insensibility of the Jew to the ludicrous is shown in the words put into the mouth of the fairy, who leaves her son Solomon in the keeping of the Rabbis, assuring them that he will pass examinations satisfactorily. Keightley, *Fairy Mythology*, 505.





cidents would of course determine his choice. The next scene in the drama is a colloquy between three crows, whose language Faithful John understands, and who foretell three great dangers impending over the prince, who can be saved only at the cost of his preserver. On his reaching shore a fox-coloured horse would spring towards him, which, on his mounting it, would carry him off for ever from his bride. No one can save him except by shooting the horse, but if any one does it and tells the king, he will be turned into stone from the toe to the knee. If the horse be killed, the prince will none the more keep his bride, for a bridal shirt will lie on a dish, woven seemingly of gold and silver, but composed really of sulphur and pitch, and if he puts it on it will burn him to his bones and marrow. Whoever takes the shirt with his gloved hand and casts it into the fire may save the prince; but if he knows and tells him, he will be turned to stone from his knee to his heart. Nor is the prince more safe even if the shirt be burnt, for during the dance which follows the wedding the queen will suddenly turn pale and fall as if dead, and unless some one takes three drops of blood from her right breast she will die. But whoever knows and tells it shall be turned to stone from the crown of his head to the toes of his feet. The friend resolves to be faithful at all hazards, and all things turn out as the crows had foretold; but the king, misconstruing the act of his friend in taking blood from his wife, orders him to be led to prison. At the scaffold he explains his motives, but the act of revelation seals his doom; and while the king intreats for forgiveness the trusty servant is turned into stone. In an agony of grief the king has the figure placed near his bed, and vainly prays for the power of restoring him to life. Years pass on; twin sons are born to him, and one day, as he gives utterance to the longing of his heart, the statue says that it can be brought back to life if the king will cut off the heads of the twins and sprinkle the statue with their blood. The servant is restored to life, and when he places the children's heads on their bodies they spring up and play as merrily as ever.



BOOK

I.

Rama  
and  
Luxman.

In truth and tenderness of feeling this story falls far short of the Deccan tale, in which the prince Rama sees the image of his future bride, not in a picture, but in a dream. Having won her by the aid of Luxman, he is soon after attacked by the home-sickness which is common to the heroes of most of these tales, and which finds its highest expression in the history of Odysseus. During the journey, which answers to the voyage of the king with Faithful John, Luxman, who, like John, understands the speech of birds, hears two owls talking in a tree overhead, and learns from them that three great perils await his master and his bride. The first will be from a rotten branch of a banyan-tree, from the fall of which Luxman will just save them by dragging them forcibly away; the next will be from an insecure arch, and the third from a cobra. This serpent, they said, Luxman would kill with his sword.

‘But a drop of the cobra’s blood shall fall on her forehead. The wuzeer will not care to wipe off the blood with his hands, but shall instead cover his face with a cloth, that he may lick it off with his tongue; but for this the rajah will be angry with him, and his reproaches will turn this poor wuzeer into stone.

“Will he always remain stone?” asked the lady owl. “Not for ever,” answered the husband, “but for eight long years he will remain so.” “And what then?” demanded she. “Then,” answered the other, “when the young rajah and ranee have a baby, it shall come to pass that one day the child shall be playing on the floor, and, to help itself along, shall clasp hold of the stony figure, and at that baby’s touch the wuzeer will come to life again.”

As in the German tale, everything turns out in accordance with the predictions of the birds. When, therefore, Luxman saw the cobra creep towards the queen, he knew that his life must be forfeited for his devotion, and so he took from the folds of his dress the record of the owl’s talk and of his former life, and, having laid it beside the sleeping king, killed the cobra. The rajah, of course, starts up just as his friend is licking the blood from his wife’s forehead, and, drawing





the same inference with the German prince, overwhelms him with reproaches.

'The rajah had buried his face in his hands: he looked up, he turned to the wuzeer; but from him came neither answer nor reply. He had become a senseless stone. Then Rama for the first time perceived the roll of paper which Luxman had laid beside him; and when he read in it of what Luxman had been to him from boyhood, and of the end, his bitter grief broke through all bounds, and falling at the feet of the statue, he clasped its stony knees and wept aloud.'

Eight years passed on, and at length the child was born. A few months more, and in trying to walk, it 'stretched out its tiny hands and caught hold of the foot of the statue. The wuzeer instantly came back to life, and stooping down seized the little baby, who had rescued him, in his arms and kissed it.'

There is something more quiet and touching in the silent record of Luxman which stands in the place of Faithful John's confession at the scaffold, as well as in the doom which is made to depend on the reproaches of his friend rather than on the mere mechanical act of giving utterance to certain words. But the Hindu legend and the German story alike possess a higher interest in the links which connect them, like most of the popular stories already noticed, with the magnificent epic to which we give the name of Homer, with the songs of the Volsungs and Nibelungs, with the mythical cycle of Arthur and Charlemagne, and the Persian Rustem. The bridal shirt of sulphur and pitch, which outwardly seemed a tissue of gold and silver, carries us at once from the story of Faithful John to the myth of

Mythical  
imagery  
of these  
stories.

<sup>1</sup> The calamity which overtakes Luxman and Faithful John is seen in an earlier and less developed form in the German story of the Frog Prince. Here the faithful friend is overwhelmed with grief because his master is turned into a frog. But this transformation is merely the sinking of the sun into the western waters (see note 3, p. 165), and the time of his absence answers to the charmed sleep of Endymion. Trusty

Henry is so grieved at the loss that he binds three iron bands round his heart for fear it should break with grief and sorrow. When the Frog Prince sets out with his bride in the morning, the iron bands break and Trusty Henry is set free. This is the stony sleep of Luxman, brought on by grief, and broken only by the light touch of early morning, there represented by the innocent child of Rama.



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I.

Deianeira and the poisoned coat which put an end to the career of Herakles. We enter again the charmed circle, where one and the same idea assumes a thousand different forms, where we can trace clearly the process by which one change led to another, but where any one disregarding the points of connection must fail to discern their sequence, origin, and meaning. In the legend of Deianeira, as in that of Iasôn and Glaukê, the coat or shirt is laden with destruction even for Herakles. It represents, in fact, 'the clouds which rise from the waters and surround the sun like a dark raiment.' This robe Herakles tries to tear off, but the 'fiery mists embrace him, and are mingled with the parting rays of the sun, and the dying hero is seen through the scattered clouds of the sky, tearing his own body to pieces, till at last his bright form is consumed in a general conflagration.'<sup>1</sup> In the story of Medeia this robe is the gift of Helios, which imparts a marvellous wisdom to the daughter of the Kolchian king. It is the gleaming dress which reappears in story after story of Hindu folk-lore. 'That young rajah's wife,' people said, 'has the most beautiful saree we ever saw: it shines like the sun, and dazzles our eyes. We have no saree half so beautiful.' It is the golden fleece of the ram which bears away the children of the Mist (Nephelê) to the Eastern land. In other words, it is the light of Phoibos, the splendour of Helios, the rays or spears of the gleaming Sun. As such, it is identified with the sword of Apollo the Chrysâôr, with the sword which Aigeus leaves to be discovered by Theseus under the broad stone, with the good sword Gram which Odin left in the tree trunk for Volsung to draw out and wield, with the lion's skin of Herakles, with the jackal's skin worn by the enchanted rajahs of Hindu story, with the spear of Achilleus and the deadly arrows of Philoktêtês, with the invincible sword of Perseus and the sandals which bear him through the air like a dream, with the magic shoes in the story of King Patrika and of the Lad who went to the North Wind, with the spear of Artemis and the unerring darts of Meleagros. Whether under the guise of spears or fleece or arrows, it is the golden hair on the head of Phoibos

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, ii. 89.





Akersekomês, which no razor has ever touched. It is the wonderful carpet of Solomon, which figures in the Arabian Nights as the vehicle for relieving distressed lovers from their difficulties,<sup>1</sup> and bears away the Princess Aldegonda by the side of the Pilgrim of Love in the exquisite legend of the Alhambra.

This story is, indeed, only a more beautiful form of the German and Hindu tales. Here, as in the other legends, special care is taken to guard the young prince against the dangers of love, and the lad grows up contentedly under the care of the sage Eben Bonabben, until he discovers that he wants something which speaks more to the heart than algebra. Like Balna in the tower or Helen in Ilion, he is prisoned in a palace from which he cannot get forth; but the sage Bonabben has taught him the language of birds, and when the joyous time of spring comes round, he learns from a dove that love is 'the torment of one, the felicity of two, the strife and enmity of three.' The dove does more. She tells him of a beautiful maiden, far away in a delightful garden by the banks of the stream from which Arethousa, Daphnê, Athênê, Aphroditê, all are born; but the garden is surrounded by high walls, within which none were permitted to enter. Here the dove's story, which answers to the picture seen in the German tale and the dream of Rama, connects the legends with the myths of Brynhild, Surya Bai, and other imprisoned damsels, whom one brave knight alone is destined to rescue. Once again the dove returns, but it is only to die at the feet of Ahmed, who finds under her wing the picture seen by the prince in the German story. Where to seek the maiden he knows not; but the arrow of love is within his heart, and he cannot tarry. The princess too, to whom the dove had carried the message of Ahmed, is yearning to see him; but she is surrounded by a troop of suitors as numerous as those which gather round Penelopê, and she must appear at a great tournament (the fight at Ilion) which is to decide who shall be her husband. But Ahmed, like Achilleus after the death of Patroklos, is unarmed; how then can he think of encountering the valiant warriors who are hastening to the

The Pilgrim of Love.

<sup>1</sup> The story of Prince Ahmed and Pari Banou.



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contest? In this dilemma he is aided by an owl (the white bird of Athênê), who tells him of a cavern (the cave in which Zeus, Mithra, and Krishna alike are born) 'in one of the wildest recesses of those rocky cliffs which rise around Toledo; none but the mousing eye of an owl or an antiquary could have discovered the entrance to it. A sepulchral lamp of everlasting oil shed a solemn light through the place. On an iron table in the centre of the cavern lay the magic armour; against it leaned the lance, and beside it stood an Arabian steed, caparisoned for the field, but motionless as a statue. The armour was bright and unsullied as it had gleamed in days of old; the steed in as good condition as if just from the pasture, and when Ahmed laid his hand upon his neck, he pawed the ground and gave a loud neigh of joy that shook the walls of the cavern.' Here we have not only the magic armour and weapons of Achilles, but the steed which never grows old, and against which no human power can stand. Probably Washington Irving, as he told the story with infinite zest, thought little of the stories of Boots or of Odysseus: but although Ahmed appears in splendid panoply and mounted on a magnificent war-horse, yet he is as insolently scouted by the suitors of Aldegonda as the Ithakan chieftain in his beggar's dress was reviled by the suitors of Penelopê. But the same retribution is in store for both. Ahmed bears the irresistible weapons of Odysseus. No sooner is the first blow struck against the Pilgrim of Love (for Ahmed again like Odysseus and Herakles must be a wanderer) than the marvellous powers of the steed are seen. 'At the first touch of the magic lance the brawny scoffer was tilted from his saddle. Here the prince would have paused; but, alas! he had to deal with a demoniac horse and armour—once in action nothing could control them. The Arabian steed charged into the thickest of the throng; the lance overturned everything that presented; the gentle prince was carried pell-mell about the field, strewing it with high and low, gentle and simple, and grieving at his own involuntary exploits. The king stormed and raged at this outrage on his subjects and his guests. He ordered out all his guards—they were unhorsed as fast as they came up.





The king threw off his robes, grasped buckler and lance, and rode forth to awe the stranger with the presence of majesty itself. Alas! majesty fared no better than the vulgar—the steed and lance were no respecters of persons: to the dismay of Ahmed, he was borne full tilt against the king, and in a moment the royal heels were in the air, and the crown was rolling in the dust.' It could not be otherwise. The suitors must all fall when once the arrow has sped from the bow of Odysseus; but although the Ithakan chief was earnest in his revenge, the involuntary exploits of Ahmed are matched by many an involuntary deed of Herakles or Oidipous or Perseus. That the horse of Ahmed belongs to the same stock with the steeds of Indra it is impossible to doubt as we read the words of the Vedic poet:—

'These thy horses, excellent Vayu, strong of limb, youthful and full of vigour, bear thee through the space between heaven and earth, growing in bulk, strong as oxen; they are not lost in the firmament, but hold on their speed, unretarded by *reviling*; difficult are they to be arrested as the beams of the Sun.'<sup>1</sup>

The incidents which follow present the same astonishing accordance with old Greek or Hindu traditions. No sooner has the sun reached the meridian than 'the magic spell resumed its power; the Arabian steed scoured across the plain, leaped the barrier, plunged into the Tagus, swam its raging current, bore the prince breathless and amazed to the cavern, and resumed his station like a statue beside the iron table.' The spell is, in fact, none other than that which sends the stone of Sisyphos rolling down the hill as soon as it has reached the summit; the Tagus is the old ocean stream into which Helios sinks at eventide, and the cave is the dark abode from which the wandering Sun had started in the morning, and to which he must come back at night. But further, Ahmed appears in the sequel as Paiêôn, the healer. Aldegonda is sick with love for the beautiful prince who has gladdened her eyes but for a few brief moments. In vain do hosts of physicians seek to cure her. The power to do so rests with Ahmed only, and the owl, coming to his aid as

The spell  
of mid-day.

<sup>1</sup> *Rig Veda Samhita*, H. H. Wilson, vol. ii. p. 51.



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zealously as Athênê Glaukopis (the owl-eyed or bright-faced) to that of Odysseus, advises him to ask as his reward the carpet of Solomon, on which he soars away with Aldegonda, like the children of Nephelê on the Golden Fleece. The force of these astonishing parallelisms is certainly not weakened by any suggestion that some of these incidents may be found in legends of the Arabian Nights. The enchanted horse reappears in the Dapplegrim of Grimm's German stories, in the steed which carries the Widow's Son in the Norse tales, and the marvellous horse of Highland tradition.<sup>1</sup> In a burlesque aspect, it is the astonishing horse in the Spanish story of Governor Manco,<sup>2</sup> who is outwitted by the old soldier precisely as the Sultan of Cashmere is outwitted by the possessor of the Enchanted Horse in the Arabian Nights story.

The sleep  
or death  
of Sum-  
mer.

In the Hindu story, as in the Spanish tale, the bride of Rama is won after an exploit which in its turn carries us away to the deeds of Hellenic or Teutonic heroes. When the prince tells Luxman of the peerless beauty whom he has seen in his dream, his friend tells him that the princess lives far away in a glass palace.<sup>3</sup> 'Round this palace runs a large river, and round the river is a garden of flowers. Round the garden are four thick groves of trees. The princess is twenty-four years old, but she is not married, for she has determined only to marry whoever can jump across the river and greet her in her crystal palace; and though many thousand kings have assayed to do so, they have all perished miserably in the attempt, having either been drowned in the river or broken their necks by falling.' The frequent recurrence of this idea in these Hindu tales might of itself lead any one who knew nothing of the subject previously to doubt whether such images could refer to any actual facts in the history of any given man or woman. In the story of Rama it has lost much of its old significance. The death-like cold of a northern winter gives place to the mere notion of solitude and seclusion. Running streams and luxuriant gardens show

<sup>1</sup> Campbell, *Tales of the West Highlands*, 'The Young King of Easaidh Ruadh.'

<sup>2</sup> Washington Irving, *Tales of the*

*Alhambra*.

<sup>3</sup> The glass or marble of the Hindu tale answers to the ice of the Norse legends.





that the myth has been long transferred to a more genial climate; but it is scarcely necessary to say that the changes in the story indefinitely enhance its value, so long as the idea remains the same. In some form or other this idea may be said to run through almost all these legends. In the story of 'Brave Seventee Bai' it assumes a form more closely akin to the imagery of Teutonic mythology; and there we find a princess who declares that she will marry no one who has not leaped over her bath, which 'has high marble walls all round, with a hedge of spikes at the top of the walls.' In the story of Vicram Maharajah the parents of Anar Ranee 'had caused her garden to be hedged round with seven hedges made of bayonets, so that none could go in nor out; and they had published a decree that none should marry her but he who could enter the garden and gather the three pomegranates on which she and her maids slept.' So, too, Panch Phul Ranee, the lovely Queen of the Five Flowers, 'dwelt in a little house, round which were seven wide ditches, and seven great hedges made of spears.' The seven hedges are, however, nothing more than the sevenfold coils of the dragon of the Glistening Heath, who lies twined round the beautiful Brynhild. But the maiden of the Teutonic tale is sunk in sleep which rather resembles death than life, just as Dêmêter mourned as if for the death of Persephonê while her child sojourned in the dark kingdom of Hades. This idea is reproduced with wonderful fidelity in the story of Little Surya Bai, and the cause of her death is modified in a hundred legends both of the East and the West. The little maiden is high up in the eagle's nest fast asleep, when an evil demon or Rakshas seeks to gain admission to her, and while vainly striving to force an entrance leaves one of his finger-nails sticking in the crack of the door. When on the following morning the maiden opened the doors of her dwelling to look down on the world below, the sharp claw ran into her hand, and immediately she fell dead. The powers of winter, which had thus far sought in vain to wound her, have at length won the victory; and at once we pass to other versions of the same myth, which tell us of Eurydikê stung to death by the hidden serpent, of Sifrit



BOOK  
I.

Origin of  
all myths  
relating to  
charmed  
sleep of  
beautiful  
maidens.

smitten by Hagene (the Thorn), of Isfendiyar slain by the thorn or arrow of Rustem, of Achilles vulnerable only in his heel, of Brynhild enfolded within the dragon's coils, of Meleagros dying as the torch of doom is burnt out, of Baldur the brave and pure smitten by the fatal mistletoe, of the sweet Briar Rose plunged in her slumber of a hundred years.

The idea that all these myths have been deliberately transferred from Hindus or Persians to Greeks, Germans, and Norsemen may be dismissed as a wild dream.<sup>1</sup> Yet of their substantial identity in spite of all points of difference and under all the disguises thrown over them by individual fancies and local influences, there can be no question. The keynote of any one of the Deccan stories is the keynote of almost all; and this keynote runs practically through the great body of tales gathered from Germany, Scandinavia, Ireland, and Scotland. It is found again everywhere in the mythology of the Greeks, whether in the legends which have furnished the materials for their magnificent epics, or have been immortalised in the dramas of their great tragedians, or have remained buried in the pages of mythographers like Pausanias or Diodoros. If then all these tales have some historical foundation, they must relate to events which took place before the dispersion of the Aryan tribes from their original home. If the war at Troy took place at all, as the Homeric poets have narrated it, it is, to say the least, strange that precisely the same struggle, for precisely the same reasons, and with the same results, should have been waged in Norway and Germany, in Wales and Persia. The question must be more fully examined presently; but unless we are to adopt the hypothesis of conscious borrowing in its most exaggerated form, the dream of a historical Ilion and a historical Carduel must fade away before the astonishing multitude of legends which comparative mythologists have

<sup>1</sup> Of these stories, taken as a class, Professor Max Müller says 'that the elements or seeds of these fairy tales belong to the period that preceded the dispersion of the Aryan race; that the same people who, in their migrations to the north and the south, carried along with them the names of the sun and the

dawn, and their belief in the bright gods of heaven, possessed in their very language, in their mythological and proverbial phraseology, the more or less developed germs, that were sure to grow up into the same or very similar plants on every soil and under every sky.'—*Chips*, ii. 226.





traced to phrases descriptive of physical phenomena. At the least it must be admitted that the evidence seems to point in this direction. To take these stories after any system, and arrange their materials methodically, is almost an impossible task. The expressions or incidents worked into these legends are like the few notes of the scale from which great musicians have created each his own world, or like the few roots of language which denoted at first only the most prominent objects and processes of nature and the merest bodily wants, but out of which has grown the wealth of words which feed the countless streams of human thought. In one story we may find a series of incidents briefly touched, which elsewhere have been expanded into a hundred tales, while the incidents themselves are presented in the countless combinations suggested by an exuberant fancy. The outlines of the tales, when these have been carefully analysed, are simple enough; but they are certainly not outlines which could have been suggested by incidents in the common life of mankind. Maidens do not fall for months or years into deathlike trances, from which the touch of one brave man alone can rouse them. Dragons are not coiled round golden treasures or beautiful women on glistening heaths. Princes do not everywhere abandon their wives as soon as they have married them, to return at length in squalid disguise and smite their foes with invincible weapons. Steeds which speak and which cannot die do not draw the chariots of mortal chiefs, nor do the lives of human kings exhibit everywhere the same incidents in the same sequence. Yet every fresh addition made to our stores of popular tradition does but bring before us new phases of those old forms of which mankind, we may boldly say, will never grow weary. The golden slipper of Cinderella is the slipper of Rhodôpis, which an eagle carries off and drops into the lap of the Egyptian king as he sits on his seat of judgement at Memphis.<sup>1</sup> This slipper reappears in the beautiful Deccan story of Sodewa Bai, and leads of course to the same issue as in the legends of Cinderella and Rhodôpis. The dragon of the Glistening Heath represents the seven-headed cobra of the Hindu story,

<sup>1</sup> *Ælian*, *V. H.* xiii. 33; *Strabo*, xvii. p. 808.



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and in the legend of Brave Seventee Bai the beautiful Brynhild becomes his daughter, just as the bright Phoibos is the child of the sombre Leto. In the Greek myth dragons of another kind draw the chariot of Medeia, the child of the sun, or impart mysterious wisdom to Iamos and Melampous, as the cobras do to Muchie Lal. That the heroes of Greek and Teutonic legends in almost every case are separated from, or abandon, the women whom they have wooed or loved is well known; and the rajahs and princes of these Hindu stories are subjected to the same lot with Herakles and Odysseus, Oidipous and Sigurd, Kephalos and Prokris, Paris and Oinônê. Generally the newly-married prince feels a yearning to see his father and his mother once more, and, like Odysseus, pines until he can set his face homewards. Sometimes he takes his wife, sometimes he goes alone; but in one way or another he is kept away from her for years, and reappears like Odysseus in the squalid garb of a beggar.

Charms  
or spells  
in the  
Odyssey  
and in  
Hindu  
stories.

Curiously enough, in these Hindu stories the detention of the wandering prince or king is caused by one of those charms or spells which Odysseus in his wanderings discreetly avoids. The Lotos-eaters and their magic fruit reappear in the nautch-people or conjurors, whom the rajah who has married Panch Phul Rancee, the Lady of the Five Flowers, asks for rice and fire. The woman whom he addresses immediately brings them. 'But before she gave them to him, she and her companions threw on them a certain powder, containing a very potent charm; and no sooner did the rajah receive them than he forgot about his wife and little child, his journey and all that had ever happened to him in his life before: such was the peculiar property of the powder. And when the conjuror said to him, "Why should you go away? Stay with us and be one of us," he willingly consented.'<sup>1</sup> Unless the translator has designedly modified the language of the Deccan tale-teller (and in the absence of any admission to this effect we cannot

<sup>1</sup> This forgetfulness of his first love on the part of the solar hero is brought about in many of the German stories by his allowing his parents to kiss him on one side of his face, or on his lips. In

the Gaelic story of the Battle of the Birds neither man nor other creature is to kiss him, and the mischief is done by his greyhound, who recognises him as Argos knows Odysseus. Campbell, i. 34.





suppose this), we may fairly quote the words as almost a paraphrase from the *Odyssey*:—

CHAP.  
VIII.

τῶν δ' ὅς τις λωτοῖο φάγοι μελιηδέα καρπὸν,  
οὐκ ἔτ' ἀπαγγεῖλαι πάλιν ἤθελεν οὐδὲ νέεσθαι,  
ἀλλ' αὐτοῦ βούλοντο μετ' ἀνδράσι λωτοφάγοισιν  
λωτὸν ἐρεπτόμενοι μενέμεν νόστον τε λαθέσθαι.<sup>1</sup>

The nautch-woman here has also the character of Kirké, and the charm represents the *φάρμακα λυγρὰ* which turn the companions of Eurylochos into swine, while Kirké's wand is wielded by the sorcerers who are compelled to restore to life the victims whom they had turned into stone, and by the Rakshas from whom Ramchundra, in the story of Truth's Triumph, seeks to learn its uses. 'The rod,' she replies, 'has many supernatural powers; for instance, by simply uttering your wish, and waving it in the air, you can conjure up a mountain, a river, or a forest, in a moment of time.' At length the wanderer is found; but Panch Phul Ranee and Seventee Bai have the insight of Eurykleia, and discern his true majesty beneath the fakeer's garb.<sup>2</sup> 'The rajah came

<sup>1</sup> *Od.* ix. 97.

<sup>2</sup> This garment of humiliation appears in almost innumerable legends. In the German story of the Golden Bird the prince puts it on when, on approaching his father's house, he is told that his brothers are plotting his death. In the tale of the Knapsack, the Hat, and the Horn, the wanderer who comes in with a coat torn to rags has a knapsack from which he can produce any number of men, and a horn (the horn of the Ma-ruts) at whose blast the strongest walls fall down. He thus takes on his enemies a vengeance precisely like that of Odysseus, and for the same reason. In the story of the Golden Goose, Dummeling, the hero who never fails in any exploit, is despised for his wretched appearance. In that of the Gold Child the brilliant hero comes before the king in the guise of a humble bear-hunter. The tale of the King of the Golden Mountain repeats the story of King Putraka, and shows the Gold Child in a shepherd's ragged frock. Elsewhere he is seen as the poor miller's son (the Miller's Son and the Cat), and he becomes a discharged soldier in the story of 'The Boots made of Buffalo Leather.' The beggar reappears in the Norse tale of

Hacon Grizzlebeard, the Thrushbeard of Grimm's collection, while Boots, who grovels in the ashes, is the royal youth who rides up the mountain of ice in the story of the Princess on the Glass Hill. In another, Shortshanks, who by himself destroys all the Trolls opposed to him, is a reflection of Odysseus, not only in his vengeance, but in his bodily form. Odysseus is Shortshanks when compared with Menelaos (*Iliad* iii. 210-11). In the tale of the Best Wish (Dasent), Boots carries with him in the magic tap the horn of Amaltheia, and is seen again as a tattered beggar in the story of the Widow's Son. In the legend of Big Bird Dan he is the wandering sailor, who, like Odysseus, is tossed, worn and naked, on the Phaiakian shore; in that of Soria Moria Castle (a tale in which the Sun seeks for the Dawn, the reverse of the Pysché story) he is Halvor who grubs among the ashes—the connection with fire and light being never forgotten in these stories, for these ashes are always living embers. The adventure of Halvor is for the recovery of a Helen, who has been stolen away by a Troll; but no sooner is the Ilion or stronghold of the robber demolished than, like Odysseus, he begins to feel an irresistible



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towards them so changed that not even his own mother knew him; no one recognised him but his wife. For eighteen years he had been among the nauteh-people; his hair was rough, his beard untrimmed, his face thin and worn, sunburnt, and wrinkled, and his dress was a rough common blanket.' Can we possibly help thinking of the wanderer, who in his beggar's dress reveals himself to the swineherd—

*ἐνδον μὲν δὴ ὅδ' αὐτὸς ἐγὼ, κακὰ πολλὰ μογήσας,  
ἤλυθον εἰκαστῷ ἔτει ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν.<sup>1</sup>*

or of his disguise, when Athênê

*ξανθὰς ἐκ κεφαλῆς ὄλεσε τρίχας, ἀμφὶ δὲ δέρμα  
πάντεσσιν μελέεσσι παλαιοῦ θῆκε γέροντος,  
κνύζωσεν δὲ οἱ ὅσσε πάρος περικαλλέ' ἐόντε·  
ἄμφι δὲ μιν ῥάκος ἄλλο κακὸν βάλεν ἥδ' ἑ χιτῶνα  
ῥωγαλέα ῥυτιδῶντα, κακῶ μεμορυγμένα καπνῶ.<sup>2</sup>*

and lastly of his recognition by his old nurse when she saw the wound made by the bite of the boar who slew Adonis? So in the Vengeance of Chandra we see the punishment of the suitors by Odysseus, an incident still further travestied in Grimm's legend of the King of the Golden Mountain. So too as we read of the body of Chundun Rajah, which remained undecayed though he had been dead many months, or of Sodewa Bai, who a month after her death looked as lovely as on the night on which she died, we are reminded of the bodies of Patroklos<sup>3</sup> and of Hektor<sup>4</sup> which Aphroditê or Apollôn anointed with ambrosial oil, and guarded day and night from all unseemly things.

The Snake  
Leaves.

But though the doom of which Achilleus mournfully complained to Thetis lies on all or almost all of these bright beings, they cannot be held in the grasp of the dark power which has laid them low. Briar-Rose and Surya Bai start from their slumbers at the magic touch of the lover's hand, and even when all hope seemed to be lost, wise beasts provide an antidote which will bring back life to the dead. In the story of Panch Phul Raneë these beneficent physicians are jackals, who converse together like the owls of Luxman or

longing to see his father and his home once more.

The story of Shortshanks is told in the Gaelic tale of the Sea-Maiden,

Campbell, i. 101.

<sup>1</sup> *Od.* xvi. 207, xxi. 208.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* xiii. 435, xvi. 175.

<sup>3</sup> *Il.* xix. 32.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* xxiv. 20.





the crows in the tale of Faithful John. 'Do you see this tree?' says the jackal to his wife. 'Well, if its leaves were crushed, and a little of the juice put into the rajah's two ears and upon his upper lip, and some upon his temples also, and some upon the spear-wound in his side, he would come to life again, and be as well as ever.' These leaves reappear in Grimm's story of the Three Snake Leaves, in which the snakes play the part of the jackals. In this tale a prince is buried alive with his dead wife, and seeing a snake approaching her body, he cuts it in three pieces. Presently another snake, crawling from the corner, saw the other lying dead, and going away soon returned with three green leaves in its mouth; then, laying the parts of the body together, so as to join, it put one leaf on each wound, and the dead snake was alive again. The prince applying the leaves to his wife's body restores her also to life. The following are the words of Apollodoros in relating the story, also told by Ælian, of Glaukos and Polyidos:—'When Minos said that he must bring Glaukos to life, Polyidos was shut up with the dead body; and, being sorely perplexed, he saw a dragon approach the corpse. This he killed with a stone, and another dragon came, and, seeing the first one dead, went away, and brought some grass, which it placed on the body of the other, which immediately rose up. Polyidos, having beheld this with astonishment, put the same grass on the body of Glaukos, and restored him to life.'<sup>1</sup>

These magic leaves become a root in the German story of the Two Brothers, a tale in which a vast number of solar myths have been rolled together. The two brothers, 'as like one another as two drops of water,' are the Dioskouroi and the Asvins, or the other twin deities which run through so large a portion of the Aryan mythology. They are also the

The Two  
Brothers.

<sup>1</sup> Apollodoros, iii. 3, 1. Mr. Gould, referring to this story as introduced in Fouqué's 'Sir Eliduc,' places these flowers or leaves in the large class of things which have the power of restoring life, or splitting rocks, or opening the earth and revealing hidden treasures. The snake leaves represent in short the worms or stones which shatter rocks, the sesame which opens the robbers'

cave, and finally the vulgar hand of glory, which, when set on fire, aids the treasure-seeker in his search. All these fables Mr. Gould refers to one and the same object—lightning; and thus a multitude of popular stories again resolve themselves into phrases originally denoting merely physical phenomena. *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*, second series, p. 145, &c.



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I.

Babes in the Wood, although it is their father himself who, at the bidding of his rich brother, thrusts them forth from their home, because a piece of gold falls from the mouth of each every morning. They are saved by a huntsman, who makes them marksmen as expert as Kastor and Polydeukes. When at length they set out on their adventures, the huntsman gives them a knife, telling them that if, in case of separation, they would stick it into a tree by the wayside, he who came back to it might learn from the brightness or the rusting of the blade whether the other is alive and well. If the tale thus leads us to the innumerable stories which turn on sympathetic trees, gems, and stones, it is not less noteworthy as bringing before us almost all the brute animals, whose names were once used as names of the sun. The two brothers lift their weapons to shoot a hare, which, begging for life, promises to give up two leverets. The hare is suffered to go free, and the huntsmen also spare the leverets, which follow them. The same thing happens with a fox, wolf, bear, and lion, and thus the youths journey, attended each by five beasts, until they part, having fixed the knife into the trunk of a tree. The younger, like Perseus, comes to a town where all is grief and sorrow because the king's daughter is to be given up on the morrow to be devoured by a dragon on the summit of the dragon's mountain. Like Theseus and Sigurd, the young man becomes possessed of a sword buried beneath a great stone, and, like Perseus, he delivers the maiden by slaying the dragon. Then on the mountain-top the youth rests with the princess, having charged his beasts to keep watch, lest any one should surprise them. But the victory of the sun is followed by the sleep of winter, and the lion, overcome with drowsiness, hands over his charge to the bear, the bear to the wolf, the wolf to the fox, the fox to the hare, until all are still. The Marshal of the kingdom, who here plays the part of Paris, now ascends the mountain, and, cutting off the young man's head, leads away the princess, whom, as the dragon-slayer, he claims as his bride. At length the sleep of the lion is broken by the sting of a bee, and the beast rousing the bear asks the reason of his failing to keep watch. The charge is passed from one beast to the





other, until the hare, unable to utter a word in its defence, begs for mercy, as knowing where to find a root which, like the snake leaves, shall restore their master to life. A year has passed away, and the young man, again approaching the town where the princess lived, finds it full of merriment, because she is going on the morrow to be married to the Marshal. But the time of his humiliation is now past. The huntsman in his humble hostel declares to the landlord that he will this day eat of the king's bread, meat, vegetables, and sweetmeats, and drink of his finest wine. These are severally brought to him by the five beasts, and the princess, thus learning that her lover is not dead, advises the king to send for the master of these animals. The youth refuses to come unless the king sends for him a royal equipage, and then, arrayed in royal robes, he goes to the palace, where he convicts the Marshal of his treachery by exhibiting the dragon's tongues which he had cut off and preserved in a handkerchief bestowed on him by the princess, and by showing the necklace, of which she had given a portion to each of his beasts, and which is, in fact, the necklace of Freya and the Kestos or cestus of Aphrodite. But the tale is not told out yet, and it enters on another cycle of the sun's career. The youth is no sooner married to the princess than, like Odysseus or Sigurd, he is separated from her. Following a white doe into a forest, he is there deceived by a witch, at whose bidding he touches his beasts with a twig, and turns them into stones, and is then changed into a stone himself. Just at this time the younger brother returns to the place where the knife, now partially covered with rust, remained fixed in the tree. He becomes, of course, as in the myth of Baldur, the avenger of his brother, and the witch undergoes the doom of Punchkin or of the Giant who had no heart in his body; but when he tells the younger brother that even his wife had taken him to be her husband, and admitted him into her chamber, the latter cuts off the elder's head. The magic root is again brought into use, and he learns how faithful his brother had been when his wife asks him why, on the two previous nights, he had placed a sword in the bed between them. The story thus, in



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I.

Myths of  
the Night,  
the Moon,  
and the  
Stars.

its last incident, runs into the tales of Sigurd and the Arabian Allah-ud-deen.<sup>1</sup>

If we sought to prove the absolute identity of the great mass of Hindu, Greek, Norse, and German legends, we surely need go no further. Yet there are other points of likeness, at least as striking as any that have been already noticed, between the stories which in the East and West alike relate to the phenomena of night. In the Hindu tale the disguised wife of Logedas Rajah finds Tara Bai on a gold and ivory throne. 'She was tall and of a commanding aspect. Her black hair was bound by long strings of pearls, her dress was of fine-spun gold, and round her waist was clasped a zone of restless, throbbing, light-giving diamonds. Her neck and her arms were covered with a profusion of costly jewels, but brighter than all shone her bright eyes, which looked full of gentle majesty.' But Tara Bai is the star (boy) child, or maiden, the Asteropaïos of the *Iliad*, of whom the Greek myth said only that he was the tallest of all their men, and that he was slain after fierce fight by Achilles, whom he had wounded.<sup>2</sup> Elsewhere she reappears as Polydeukes, the glittering twin brother of Kastor, and more particularly as the fairy Melusina, who is married to Raymond of Toulouse. This beautiful being, who has a fish's tail, as representing the moon which rises and sets in the sea, vanishes away when her full form is seen by her husband.<sup>3</sup> In another phase she is Kalypsô, the beautiful night which veils the sun from mortal eyes in her chamber flashing with a thousand stars, and lulls to sleep the man of many griefs and wanderings.<sup>4</sup> Lastly, she is St. Ursula, with her eleven thousand virgins (the myriad stars), whom Cardinal Wiseman, in a spirit worthy of Herodotos, transforms into a company, or

<sup>1</sup> The Norse tale of Shortshanks (Dasent) is made up in great part of the materials of this story.

<sup>2</sup> *Il.* xxi. 166, &c.

<sup>3</sup> The name Melusina is identified by Mr. Gould with that of the Babylonian Mylitta, the Syrian moon-goddess.—*Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*, second series, 'Melusina.'

Mr. Gould, in his delightful chapter on this subject, connects Melusina, as first seen close to a fountain, with the

Vedic Apsaras, or water-maidens, of Vedic mythology, and the swan maidens of Teutonic legend. She thus belongs to the race of Naiads, Nixies, and Elves, the latter name denoting a running stream, as the Elbe, the Alpheios. The fish's or serpent's tail is not peculiar to Melusina, and her attributes are also shared with the Assyrian fish-gods, and the Hellenic Proteus.

<sup>4</sup> *Od.* v. 60, &c.





rather two companies, of English ladies, martyred by the Huns at Cologne, but whose mythical home is on Horselberg, where the faithful Eckhart is doomed to keep his weary watch. Labouring on in his painful rationalism, Cardinal Wiseman tells us of one form of the legend which mentions a marriage-contract, made with the father of St. Ursula, a very powerful king, how it was arranged that she should have eleven companions, and each of these a thousand followers.<sup>1</sup> There are thus twelve, in addition to the eleven thousand attendants, and these twelve reappear in the Hindu tales, sometimes in dark, sometimes in lustrous forms, as the twelve hours of the day or night, or the twelve moons of the lunar year. Thus in the story of Truth's Triumph a rajah has twelve wives, but no children. At length he marries Guzra Bai, the flower girl, who bears him a hundred sons and one daughter; and the sequel of the tale relates the result of their jealousy against these children and their mother. Their treacherous dealing is at last exposed, and they suffer the fate of all like personages in the German and Norse tales.

There is, in fact, no end to the many phases assumed by the struggle of these fairy beings, which is the warfare between light and darkness. But the bright beings always conquer in the end, and return like Persephonê from the abode of Hades to gladden the heart of the Mater Dolorosa.<sup>2</sup> The child in the Deccan stories appears not only as Guzra Bai, but as Panch Phul Ranee, as Surya Bai, as the wife of Muchie Lal, the fish or frog-sun.<sup>3</sup> All these women are the

The  
battle of  
light and  
darkness.

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on Religion and Literature*, edited by Abp. Manning (1865), p. 252.

<sup>2</sup> Grote, *History of Greece*, i. 55.

<sup>3</sup> The frog prince or princess is only one of the thousand personifications of names denoting originally the phenomena of day and night. As carrying the morning light from the east to the west, the sun is the bull bearing Eurôpe from the purple land (Phoinikia); and the same changes which converted the Seven Shiners into the Seven Sages, or the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, or the Seven Champions of Christendom, or the Seven Bears, transformed the sun into a wolf, a bear, a lion, a swan. As resting on

the horizon in 'the morning,' he is Apollôn swathed by the water-maidens in golden bands, or the wounded and forsaken Oidipous; as lingering again on the water's edge before he vanishes from sight, he is the frog squatting on the water, a homely image of Endymion and Narkissos. In this aspect the sun is himself an apsara, or water-maiden; and thus the Sanskrit Bhiki is a beautiful girl, whom a king wins to be his wife on the condition that he is not to let her see a drop of water. Of course the king one day forgets his promise, shows her water, and Bhiki vanishes. This is the counterpart to



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daughters of a gardener or a milkwoman, in whom we see the image of Dêmêtêr, the bountiful earth, who lavishes on her children her treasures of fruits, milk, and flowers. In her hand she holds her mystic cup, into which falls the ripe mango, which is her child transformed, as the ripe fruit falls on the earth. This cup, again, is the horn of Amaltheia, the table of the Ethiopians, of which Herodotos speaks as laden continually with all good things, the cup into which Helios sinks each night when his course is run, the modios of Serapis, the ivory ewer containing the book of Solomon's occult knowledge, which Rehoboam placed in his father's tomb, the magic oil-bowl or lamp of Allah-ud-deen, and finally the San-Greal which furnishes to the knights of Arthur's round table as splendid a banquet as their hearts can desire.

Character  
of Aryan  
folklore.

It is scarcely necessary to go further. If we do, we shall only be confronted by the same astonishing parallelism which is exhibited by the several versions of the stories already cited. The hypothesis of conscious borrowing is either superfluous or dangerous. It is unnecessary, if adduced to

the legend of Melusina, who also dies if seen in the water. The sun and moon must alike sink when they reach the western sea. 'This story,' says Professor Max Müller, 'was known at the time when Kapila wrote his philosophical aphorisms in India, for it is there quoted as an illustration. But long before Kapila, the story of Bhekî must have grown up gradually, beginning with a short saying about the sun—such as that Bhekî, the sun, will die at the sight of water, as we should say that the sun will set when it approaches the water from which it rose in the morning.'—*Chips from a German Workshop*, ii. 248. In the Teutonic version, the change of the sun into the form of a frog is the result of enchantment; but the story of the Frog Prince has more than one point of interest. The frog is compelled to jump into the fountain, out of which only the youngest daughter of the king has the power of drawing him. These daughters again are the companions of Ursula; the daughters of the rajah who are jealous of their youngest sister; the hours of the night, sombre in their beauty, and envious of the youngest and

the fairest of all the hours, the hour of the dawn, which alone can bring the frog prince out of the pond. In the German story the enchantment can be ended only by the death of the frog; but this answers to the burning of the enchanted rajah's jackal skin in the Hindu tale. The sun leaping fully armed into the heaven as Chrysâor might well be another being, from the infant whom the nymphs swathe with golden bands in his gleaming cradle. The warrior comes to life on the death of the child, and the frog on being dashed against the wall becomes a beautiful prince. Of course he takes away his bride, 'early in the morning as soon as the sun rose, in a carriage drawn by eight white horses with ostrich feathers on their heads, and golden bridles,' the Harits who draw the car of Indra, the glistening steeds of Helios, the undying horses who are yoked to the chariot of Achilles. But with Achilles comes Patroklos; and as Luxman attends on Rama, so 'Trusty Henry' who comes with the carriage of the Frog Prince, represents the Faithful John of the Teutonic legend. (See note <sup>1</sup>, p. 149.)





explain the distant or vague resemblances in one story, while they who so apply it admit that it cannot account for the far more striking points of likeness seen in many others. It is dangerous because it may lead us to infer an amount of intercourse between the separated Aryan tribes for which we shall vainly seek any actual evidence. It is inadequate, because in a vast number of instances the point to be explained is not a similarity of ideas, but a substantial identity in the method of working them out, extending to the most unexpected devices and the subtlest turns of thought and expression. That the great mass of popular tradition has been thus imported from the East into the West, or from the West into the East, has never been maintained; and any such theory would rest on the assumption that the folklore of a country may be created by a few scholars sitting over their books, and deliberately determining the form in which their stories shall be presented to the people. It would be safer to affirm, and easier to prove, that no popular stories have thus found their way from learned men to the common people. The ear of the people has in all ages been dead to the charming of the scholars, charm they never so wisely. Bookmen may, if they please, take up and adapt the stories of the people; but the legend of 'the Carter, the Dog, and the Sparrow' would never have found its way into the nurseries of German peasants if written by Grimm himself in imitation of some other Aryan tale. The importation of one or two stories by means of written books is therefore a matter of very slight moment, so long as it is admitted that legends, displaying the most astonishing parallelism in the most distant countries of Europe and Asia, cannot be traced to any intercourse of the tribes subsequent to their dispersion from a common home. We thus have before us a vast mass of myths, fables, legends, stories, or by whatever name they are to be called, some in a form not much advanced beyond the proverbial saying which was their kernel, others existing apparently only as nursery tales, others containing the germs of the great epics of the Eastern and the Western world. All these may be placed together in one class, as springing from phrases which at first denoted



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physical phenomena; and enough has perhaps been already said to show that this class includes a very large proportion of strictly popular stories which seem at first sight to be in no way connected with epical mythology. There remain the comparatively few stories which seem to have had their origin in proverbs or adages; and it is, of course, possible that some or all of these may belong to those more recent times when men had attained to some notion of the order of a moral world, to some idea of law and duty. But it is impossible not to see that some at least of these stories turn on notions suggested by the older mythical speech. The dog and the parrot in the stories of the Carter and the Nautch-girl are weak things which bring down the pride of those who oppress the helpless; but this is simply the character and the office of Boots in Teutonic stories, and Boots and Cinderella, Oidipous and Herakles, alike represent the sun, who, weak and powerless as he starts on his course, is at length victorious over all his enemies. The phenomena of nature present analogies to the order of the moral world, which are perhaps closer than theologians have imagined. If the words which we use to denote the most abstract ideas were at first mere names of sensible things,<sup>1</sup> the phrases which described the processes of nature must be capable of receiving a moral meaning. The story of the sun starting in weakness and ending in victory, waging a long warfare against darkness, clouds, and storms, and scattering them all in the end, is the story of all heroism, of all patient self-sacrifice, of all Christian devotion. There is, therefore, nothing to surprise us if the phrases which we use with a spiritual meaning, and the proverbs in which we sum up our spiritual experience, should have been suggested by the very phenomena which furnished the groundwork of Aryan epic poetry. The tendency of physical science is to resolve complex agencies into a single force: the science of language seems to be doing the same work for the words and the thoughts of men.

Historical  
value of

But the story of the heroes of Teutonic and Hindu folklore, the stories of Boots and Cinderella, of Logedas Rajah,

<sup>1</sup> See p. 31, &c.





and Surya Bai, are the story also of Achilleus and Oidipous, of Perseus and Theseus, of Helen and Odysseus, of Baldur and Rustem and Sigurd. Everywhere there is the search for the bright maiden who has been stolen away, everywhere the long struggle to recover her. The war of Ilion has been fought out in every Aryan land. Either, then, the historical facts which lie at the root of the narrative of the Iliad took place before the dispersion of the Aryan tribes from their common home, or they are facts which belong to the beautiful cloudland, where the misty Ilion 'rises into towers' at early dawn. In either case the attempts recently made to exhibit the war in the plains of Troy to the south of the Hellespont as an historical reality are rendered plausible only by ignoring the real point at issue.

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VIII.Aryan  
popular  
traditions.



## CHAPTER IX.

### MODERN EUEMERISM.

The  
Method of  
Euëmeros.

WHATEVER may have been the sins of Euëmeros against truth and honesty, his method aimed simply at the extraction of historical facts from the legends of his country by stripping them altogether of their supernatural character, and rejecting all the impossible or improbable incidents related in them. Making no pretence of access to documents more trustworthy than the sources from which the poets had drawn their inspiration, he claimed to be regarded as a historian, merely because, after depriving him of all divine powers, he left Zeus a mortal man, who, for benefits done to his fellows, was worshipped as a god.<sup>1</sup>

Its results.

Although in more recent times this system has been eagerly adopted and obstinately maintained, Euëmeros was not popular among his countrymen. To them the process which reduced the gods to the level of mankind seemed to resolve itself into mere atheism. Still, except as applying his method to the stories of the gods as well as to the legends

<sup>1</sup> For a detailed account of Euëmeros, see Grote, *History of Greece*, part i. ch. xvi. His method has been reproduced in all its completeness or nakedness in the article on Mythology inserted in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Having told us that 'the adventures of Jupiter, Juno, Mercury, Apollo, Diana, Minerva or Pallas, Venus, Bacchus, Ceres, Proserpine, Pluto, Neptune, and the other descendants and coadjutors of the ambitious family of the Titans, furnish by far the greatest part of the mythology of Greece,' the writer with prodigious assurance adds, 'They left Phœnicia, we think, in the days of Moses; they settled in Crete, a large and fertile island; from this region they

made their way into Greece.' There they introduced art, religion, law, custom, polity, and good order; but, oddly enough, in spite of all these wholesome and sobering influences, the Greeks remained a 'deluded rabble, who insisted on paying them divine honours.' The mere enunciation of such absurdities is disgraceful in any work which professes to speak to educated readers, and would deserve even a severer condemnation if addressed to the unlearned. But it is altogether inexcusable, in an article to which are affixed references to the works of Grimm, K. O. Müller, Max Müller, Hermann, and others. For the amusing Euemerism of the Abbé Banier, see Max Müller, *Lectures*, second series, 400.





of the epical heroes, he gave no cause of offence which had not already been given by Herodotos and Thucydides. To the historian of the Persian war the legends of Iô and Eurôpê, of Medeia and Helen, were valuable simply as supplying links in the chain of human causes which led to that great struggle. For this purpose he either availed himself of the least improbable versions of these myths current in his own day, or he placed the myths, full as they were of dragons and speaking heifers, into the crucible of probabilities, and was rewarded with a residuum of plausible fiction which would have gladdened the heart of De Foe. This method, as applied by Thucydides to the story of the Trojan war, produces results which make it difficult to believe that his knowledge of that strife was obtained only from the poems which told of the wrongs and woes of Helen. Yet so it is. Although in these poems their career was inwoven into the whole fabric of the narrative, Helen is gone, and Paris and Achilleus; Hektôr and Sarpêdôn have vanished, with Memnôn and Athênê and Aphroditê; and there remains only a chieftain who undertakes the expedition not at all to rescue a woman who may never have existed, and a war which lasted ten years, not because Zeus so willed it,<sup>1</sup> but because want of men made it necessary that part of the forces should betake themselves to tilling the ground and raising crops on the Thrakian Chersonesos, while the rest carried on the siege.<sup>2</sup>

That such a method should find favour at the present day with writers who have made themselves in any degree acquainted with the results of comparative grammar is indeed astonishing. Argynnis and Phoroneus, Briséis and Achilleus, Paris and Helen, names of persons in Hellenic legend, are in the earliest songs of the Aryan family found still in their original application as names of the morning, of the sun, or of darkness; and as it is with these, so is it also with Kerberos and the Charites, with Orthros, with Varuna, and Zeus himself. That these names and these tales could have overrun the world from chance, or that the incidents which they relate could have a distinct historical foundation in a series

Its antagonism ;  
with the  
science of  
language.

<sup>1</sup> *Iliad*, ii. 328.

<sup>2</sup> Thucyd. i. 9-11.



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of incidents occurring in the same sequence and with the same results in every Aryan land, are positions which few would now venture to maintain; yet such were the theories which attempted, with some show of reason, to account for their origin and diffusion before the sciences of comparative grammar and mythology came into being. There can scarcely be a greater extravagance of credulity than that which frames an infinite series of the most astounding miracles in the vain effort to solve mysteries which must all be opened by one and the same key, or by none. No absurdity needs to startle us if we are ready to believe that four or five independent writers could describe a series of events in exactly the same words;<sup>1</sup> it is, if possible, even more absurd to suppose that tribes, savage and civilised, many of them utterly unknown to each other, should hit upon the same stories, should disfigure them by the same indecencies, should atone for these blots by the same images of touching pathos and grace and beauty. Yet some such demand is made on our powers of belief by a writer who holds that 'they who literally accept Scripture cannot afford to ridicule mythology,' and who, looking about for traces of an historical character in Greek mythical tradition, concludes that 'there are the fairest reasons for supposing that Hercules was not an allegorical hero, typical of ideal prowess, endurance, and physical strength; but a real man, who, living in very remote times, and in some part of the world where the land was infested with savage beasts and perhaps the sea with pirates, earned the gratitude of a defenceless people by clearing earth and sea of monsters, as a remarkably uniform tradition ascribes to him. The Cyclopes were probably a race of pastoral and metal-working people from the East, characterised by their rounder faces, whence

<sup>1</sup> In the supposed case of a number of special correspondents sending home to English journals accounts of a battle or a campaign, the narrative of which was in all nearly word for word the same in several passages, Mr. Froude says that, 'were the writers themselves, with their closest friends and companions, to swear that there had been no intercommunication, and no story pre-existing of which they had made use, and that each had written *bonâ fide* from

his own original observation, an English jury would sooner believe the whole party perjured than persuade themselves that so extraordinary a coincidence could have occurred.'—*Short Studies on Great Subjects*, i. 246.

It is enough to say that the application of any such hypothesis of independent origination to the mythology of the Aryan nations involves difficulties, if possible, still more stupendous.





arose the story of their one eye.' In the myth of Atlas, the same writer thinks it 'impossible to doubt that we have a tradition of the Garden of Eden.' If it be said that these traditions are common to many nations, he is ready with the reply that the real Herakles or the real Theseus lived very long ago, and that the other nations got these, as they got most of their mythical heroes, from the Etruscans. We find 'Adrastus, Tydeus, Odysseus, Meleagros, Polydeuces, written Atresthe, Tute, Utwey, Melacre, Pultuke; and similarly Agamemnon, Thetis, Perseus, Polynices, Telephus, represented by Achmien, Thethis, Pharse, Phulnike, Thelaphe. So Apollo is Apulu, Hercules is Ercule, Alexander is Elchentre.' It might as well be said that English names are French in their origin because London and Dover are written Londres and Douvres, and Sir Humphry Davy has been designated 'Sromfredévé.' It can scarcely be maintained with seriousness that that which is only in part obscure, and elsewhere is wonderfully luminous, can be illustrated by what is utterly dark. These names in their Etruscan dress have absolutely no meaning; in their Greek form most of them are transparent. But when Achilles is found in Greek and Aharyu in Sanskrit tradition, when Briséis reappears as the child of Brisaya, Helen as Saramâ, Ouranos as Varuṇa, Orthros as Vritra, and when the meaning of these names is perfectly plain, we are forced to the conclusion that no explanation can be received which does not apply to Greek, Sanskrit, and Teutonic names alike. It would be more reasonable, failing this, to fall back upon the ingenious theory by which Lord Bacon, in his 'Wisdom of the Ancients,' converted the whole cycle of Greek legend into wholesome advice for princes, cabinet ministers, and heads of families.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Home and Foreign Review*, No. VII. p. 111, 1864. It is possible, and even likely, that the distinguished critic whose well-known initials appended to this article make it unnecessary to keep up any disguise may have modified or rejected these conclusions. It is unnecessary to say that among modern thinkers none can be found actuated by a more earnest and single-minded desire to ascertain the truth of facts without regard to any secondary considerations

than Mr. Paley. If he has examined the question since the time when his article appeared in the *Home and Foreign Review*, he will probably have seen, with Professor Max Müller (*Lectures on the Science of Language*, second series, ix.), that we cannot accept any etymology for a Greek name which is not equally applicable to the corresponding terms in Sanskrit and Latin.



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The science of language in its bearing on history.

But the science which traces both the names of Greek mythical heroes and the incidents in their career to the earlier forms in which their original signification becomes apparent, completely strips of all historical character the localised wars of Troy or Thebes, and the traditions which speak of Kolchis as the scene of the exploits of Iasôn. It is possible that there may have been a war undertaken to avenge the wrongs of an earthly Helen; that this war lasted ten years, and that ten years more were spent by the chiefs in their return homewards; that the chief incident in this war was the quarrel of the greatest of all the heroes with a mean-spirited king, a quarrel in which a truce of gloomy inaction is followed by the magnificent victory and early death of the hero. But if such a war took place, it must be carried back to a time preceding the dispersion of the Aryan tribes from their original home, and its scene can be placed neither in the land of the Five Streams, nor on the plains of the Asiatic Troy, not in Germany or Norway or Wales. The comparison of the Aryan languages sufficiently establishes these conclusions; but the denial of any historical character to the general narrative of the Trojan war, as given whether by the Attic tragedians or by our so-called Homeric poems (be these earlier or later than the days of Æschylos and Sophokles), makes it a matter of justice to examine patiently and impartially the arguments and alleged facts adduced by those who still maintain the positions of Euêmeros with regard to the story told in all its supernatural detail in the Iliad, and pared down to the plausible prosiness of Robinson Crusoe by Thucydides.

The Wolfian Theory.

At the outset it may be safely affirmed that undue stress has been laid on the Wolfian theory respecting the origin and structure of the Iliad as affecting the attitude of historical critics at the present day towards the momentous topic of Homeric credibility. There is really no ground for the notion that doubts as to the historical credibility of the poems to which we give the name of Homer can be entertained only by those who accept the position of Wolf and his followers. The Wolfian theory, to speak briefly, maintains that the Iliad is made up of a number of songs which existed at first





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as detached poems, and which were handed down from generation to generation by a school of rhapsodists or professional minstrels. It was not, therefore, the work of any one man, and possibly not even of any one age. This conclusion is grounded partly on the absence of writing at and long after the time when these poems first came into existence, and in part on the incoherence and contradictions which an examination of the poems brings prominently into view. It follows that there was no one author of the *Iliad*, or in other words, that Homer is a name, not a person. This hypothesis has found its extreme expression in the 'Klein-lieder Theorie' of Köchly.

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But if this notion were exploded utterly,<sup>1</sup> the real question at issue would probably be in no degree affected. Thus, although Mr. Grote may have affirmed that 'Homer is no individual man, but the divine or heroic father of the gentle Homerids,'<sup>2</sup> he nowhere argues from this statement as a premiss, while he is careful to add that the *Odyssey* is indubitably one poem written by one man, and that the *Iliad* in its present form, although it contains an *Ilias* and an *Achilléis* combined, is probably the work of one and the same poet, who pieced together two compositions which he had wrought out for two different purposes. If we further take his conclusion, that the *Odyssey* in all likelihood was not composed by the author of the *Iliad*, even then we have only two, or at the utmost only three poets, to whom we are indebted for the great Greek epics which have been handed down to us. Whether these conclusions are hasty or extravagant, whether

The real  
question at  
issue.

<sup>1</sup> At present it cannot be regarded as exploded at all. Dr. Latham's words have here great weight:—The Wolfian doctrine of the rhapsodic character of the Homeric poems, had the existing state of knowledge been sufficient for the criticism, would scarcely have been paradox. As it was, it dealt with the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as ordinary epics, comparing them only with those of Virgil, Tasso, Ariosto, Camoens, Erccilla, and Milton: epics of which the single-handed authorship was a patent historical event, as clear as that of the authorship of Falconer's *Shipwreck* or Glover's *Leonidas*. The fact that was

either not recognised or not promulgated was, the essentially rhapsodic character of *all* known poems belonging to that stage of civilisation to which the Homeric compositions are referred. With the recognition of this, the method, as the details, of the criticism wants changing; and it is not so much a question whether the facts in the structure of two wonderful poems justify the hypothesis that they arose out of the agglutination of rhapsodies, but whether there is even a presumption against their having done so.—*Nationalities of Europe*, i. 207.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Greece*, part i. ch. xxi.



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they run counter to the evidence of facts or are opposed to common sense, it is clear that the poems are not invested with more of a historical character because we hold that they are the work of three or two authors, or of one. Such a result is impossible, unless we can prove that the poet (or poets) lived in or near to the time of which the history is professedly narrated, and if his (or their) statements are borne out by other contemporary writers. If the story which the poet relates had come down from a period remote even in his day—if its general character, both in the causes and the sequence of incidents, exhibits a close resemblance to the traditions of distant countries with which the Hellenic tribes could not possibly have had any intercourse—if the very names of the actors and the deeds attributed to them are found in the legends of other lands or other ages—we are obviously just where we were before, so far as the attainment of historical fact is concerned, even when we have succeeded in proving that there was only one Homer, and that he was born at Smyrna. Whether we believe in twenty Homers or in one is, in one sense, a matter of supreme indifference in comparison with the inquiry which is to determine whether the events recorded in the poems are to be considered historical.

Residuum  
of historical  
fact in  
the Iliad.

On such a subject as this all reference to consequences is out of place, and of itself suffices to show that we are not actuated wholly and solely by a disinterested and unswerving resolution to reach, so far as may be in our power, the truth of facts. The question must be treated altogether as one of evidence only, and no pain which we may feel at the possible necessity of parting with old associations should have the slightest weight with us. Even if we had to abandon a rich inheritance of poetical beauty, the sacrifice ought to be cheerfully made. The fear that any such sacrifice will be demanded of us is idle and groundless; but for those who deny the historical credibility of the Iliad or Odyssey it is necessary to know how much of real history their opponents suppose these poems to contain. Happily, this question is answered with most satisfactory clearness by the latest and the most strenuous of the champions of the traditional theory.





In the belief of Mr. Blackie, the residuum of fact is, it seems, this: 'That there was a kingdom of Priam, wealthy and powerful, on the coast of the Dardanelles; that there was a great naval expedition undertaken against this Asiatic dynasty by the combined forces of the European Greeks and some of the Asiatic islanders, under the leadership of Agamemnon, king of Mycenæ; that there was a real Achilles, chief of a warlike clan in the Thessalian Phthiotis, and a real quarrel betwixt him and the general-in-chief of the Hellenic armament; that this quarrel brought about the most disastrous results to the Greek host, in the first place, and had nearly caused the failure of the expedition; but that afterwards, a reconciliation having been effected, a series of brilliant achievements followed, which issued soon after in the capture of the great Asiatic capital.'<sup>1</sup>

If this outline of Homeric history were placed before one who had never heard of Homer, and if he were further told that the outline is the picture, what would be his reply? Must he not say, 'You do not ask me to believe much, and indeed you have only sketched out some incidents of not uncommon occurrence; I suppose, however, that you have obtained them from some narrative which gives no ground for calling its trustworthiness into question, and which is corroborated by the testimony of competent witnesses. In other words, you have doubtless gained this knowledge precisely in the same way as I have learnt that some eight hundred years ago there was a great struggle which ended in the death of the English king at Hastings, and the forced election of William the Norman in his place?'

The test of  
Homeric  
credibility.

The admission that he must look for nothing of the kind, and that the process by which these historical results are obtained is of a wholly different nature, would probably cause him some perplexity, and might possibly waken in him a vague feeling of distrust. If he were possessed of the critical faculty, and still more, if he had any acquaintance with the applications of the laws of evidence to alleged facts

Results of  
this test.

<sup>1</sup> Blackie, *Homer and the Iliad*. Mr. residuum of the Odyssey, although that Blackie does not point out with the same clearness the precise historical theory which he so zealously upholds.



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of the present day, he would naturally begin to examine with some care the statements brought before him, and the grounds on which they rest. The examination would be followed by unfeigned astonishment, for he would find himself asked to believe in political struggles between conflicting empires on the authority of a narrative in which from first to last there is not a semblance of political motive, and where, instead of a chain of causation like that which obtains in ordinary life, there is throughout a thaumaturgic plot in which gods and men are inextricably mingled together. He is introduced to a struggle which lasts ten years, because so it had been ordained of Zeus according to the sign of the snake and the sparrows, and which is brought about and turns solely on the theft of the Spartan Helen by Paris, once or otherwise called Alexandros. Apart from this, there is absolutely no motive for the war, nor without it is there anything left of the story. It is of the very essence of the narrative that Paris, who has deserted Oinônê, the child of the stream Kebrên, and before whom Hêrê, Athênê, and Aphroditê had appeared as claimants for the golden apple, steals from Sparta the beautiful sister of the Dioskouroi; that the chiefs are summoned together for no other purpose than to avenge her woes and wrongs; that Achilleus, the son of the sea-nymph Thetis, the wielder of invincible weapons and the lord of undying horses, goes to fight in a quarrel which is not his own; that his wrath is roused because he is robbed of the maiden Brisêis, and that thenceforth he takes no part in the strife until his friend Patroklos has been slain; that then he puts on the new armour which Thetis brings to him from the anvil of Hephaistos, and goes forth to win the victory. The details are throughout of the same nature; Achilleus sees and converses with Athênê; Aphroditê is wounded by Diomêdês, and Sleep and Death bear away the lifeless Sarpêdôn on their noiseless wings to the far-off land of light.<sup>1</sup>

Laws of  
evidence.

By what standard, then, or by what tests is this story to

<sup>1</sup> The contents of the two great poems of Homer are . . . of an entirely mythic character. They treat divers series of legends which stand in close uninterrupted concatenation, and only here and there take notice of others

lying apart from this connection: these series are, moreover, so handled as to form each a rounded-off and complete whole.'—K. O. Müller, *Introduction to a Scientific Mythology*, p. 24.





be judged, and how are we to measure its historical value? Mr. Blackie pauses in some vehement denunciations of modern sceptical tendencies, to refer us to Sir Cornewall Lewis's volumes on the Credibility of Early Roman History, 'a work distinguished by all that comprehensiveness of plan, massive architecture, and substantial workmanship, so characteristic of its author.' The reader who is unacquainted with the book might well suppose, from the absence of all other reference to it, that on the whole it bears out Mr. Blackie's method of dealing with the Homeric poems. He would again be perplexed at finding there a merciless demolition of all his theories and all his conclusions. But at the least he would be under no doubt as to Sir Cornewall Lewis's meaning, and he would find principles laid down which claim to be of universal application, and which must be false if exceptions are to be admitted. 'It seems to be often believed,' says Sir G. C. Lewis, 'and at all events it is perpetually assumed in practice, that historical evidence is different in its nature from other sorts of evidence. Until this error is effectually extirpated, all historical researches must lead to uncertain results. Historical evidence, like judicial evidence, is founded on the testimony of credible witnesses. Unless, therefore, a historical account can be traced by probable proof to the testimony of contemporaries, the first condition of historical credibility fails.'

How then would a British jury deal with a charge brought against the chief of one Scottish clan of murdering the chief of another clan, in feuds which, if now unknown, were familiar enough not many generations ago? What if the witnesses came forward to say that even before his birth the slain chief had been marked as the future destroyer of his kinsfolk; that deserting his own wife, he had requited the hospitality of the accused by carrying off his young bride; that thence had sprung a feud between their clans, which the seanagals or soothsayers had said should last for ten years; that before the final conflict, in which the aggressor was slain, strange sights were seen in the heavens, and strange sounds were heard in the air; that in the battle itself the progenitors of the clans had been seen fighting

Their application in English courts of justice.