

Other Jonahs

The familiar story of Jonah and the whale, recently so widely discussed on account of Dr. Lyman Abbott's recent lecture, and the numerous comments which it has aroused, has many apparent counterparts in the legends and folklore of the past. Some of these are surprisingly like the Biblical story of Jonah and are not generally known.

There is a legend preserved to us by Berossus (330-260 B. C.) as current among the Babylonians of a certain Oannes, who taught the people the arts of agriculture and civilization. He is described as being part man, part fish, and a picture of him has been found on one of the ancient monuments which is now in the British Museum.

It is related that he was possessed of a human voice by which he communicated with men. He taught them how to write how to build temples and cities, how to make laws, and how to sow, reap, plough and drain the land. He only appeared at daybreak, and, as the sun set, plunged into the sea, reappearing at intervals whenever men needed him most.

The Babylonian story of the creation, which bears certain resemblances to the first chapter of Genesis, is attributed to Oannes, who described how the chief god, Bel, created the other gods, the good and evil spirits, animals, man, the planets and stars, sun, moon, &c.

Students of folklore do not hesitate to call the story of Oannes a sun myth, finding the key to the legend in his daily disappearance at sunset.

The Phoenicians, and Philistines worshipped Dagon, one of their gods in the shape of a figure half man, half fish, or sometimes as a man just coming out of the mouth of a fish. The fact that the sun is called Jawah by the Persians, and in Troy was known as Jona, is proof positive to Professor Goldziher, an eminent German scholar, that the origin of the story lies in the sun being swallowed up by storm clouds or by the sea at setting.

Among the Persians, Jamshid gives Iran all of the benefits of civilization, invents the fine arts, especially music, and, being swallowed by the dragons of storm and night, afterward rises to continue his benefactions to the human race.

The Hindoo Story

The Hindoos have a fable in the "Somadeva Blatta" that the King's daughter had made a vow to marry no one but the man who had seen the "golden city." Her suitor, Saktideva, embarks upon a ship bound for Utshala, where the "king of the fishermen" lived. A terrific storm breaks over the ship, which goes to pieces, Saktideva being swallowed by a huge fish.

The king's servants catch the fish, cut it open and Saktideva comes forth alive. He is taken to Utshala, sees the "golden city" and returns to marry the princess.

The story appears in various forms among the Greeks. Hercules rescues Hesione from the sea monster by leaping into its jaws, where he remains for three days and nights, tearing at its entrails. Another version has it that he was swallowed by a whale, at Joppa, and when he was thrown out, three days later, his head was bald.

The story of Arion is somewhat similar. Arion was a Corinthian harper, who had amassed great wealth while playing in Italy and Sicily, and wished to return to his native city, Corinth. He took passage in a ship, but the sailors found out that he had much money with him and plotted to kill him.

He happened to overhear the conspiracy and begged for his life, offering to give them all his wealth. But the sailors refused, fearing that he would inform the authorities as soon as the ship reached Corinth, and they would be punished. So he was told to prepare for death. Taking his harp he played so melodiously that he attracted a school of dolphins to the ship.

When he had finished playing he was compelled to jump into the sea, but one of the dolphins picked him up, and, taking him on its back, carried him safely and quickly to Corinth. When the ship reached that city the sailors were punished and his wealth was restored. It is notable that Oannes and Jamshid were supposed to have introduced the art of music for which Arion was remarkable.

The familiar character, Proteus, is associated with similar stories, which are too well known to require repetition here.

Other Similar Myths

It seems a "far cry" from Jonah to Little Red Riding Hood, but folklorists hold that this nursery tale is the survival in a modified form of a very ancient sun myth. The color red is a special mark of identification. The sun attracts most attention at rising or setting, both on account of the coloring of the sky and the fact that it marks the beginning and end of the day. Besides, the sun may be looked at without discomfort at these times, but not when it is in the zenith in the heavens.

Red Riding Hood carries food to her grandmother, the sun causes the growth of produce on mother earth. Oannes teaches agriculture. The wolf (night) swallows the grandmother—earth, first, apparently, creeping up and swallowing Red Riding Hood (the sun) later.

This was the original form of the tale. The hunters who slay the wolf (night) and cutting it open, bring earth and sun to

life again, are a survival of the ancient story of Marduke, the god-hunter, slaying the spirits of night and evil.

The period of three days and nights mentioned in many of these myths, according to scholars, refers to the winter solstice, December 22 to 25, when the sun is supposed to be in the lowest regions. Attention has also been called to the sign Pisces, the fish, of the Syrian and Egyptian zodiac, as connected with the part which a fish plays in most of the legends.

A Short Talk on being Tired.

Are you a working man or are you a working woman? I don't mean one who is so by classification, or by having been born on the sinister side of certain lines of social cleavage, but solely because you daily do some sort of real, honest, and useful work? Yes? I shake your hand. I hope you manage to live by it without overdoing, and that (being still hearty and healthy) you sometimes feel yourself tired, dog tired and hungry as a wolf, with plenty of good feed for supper. Then hey! for bed and a genuine sleep of eight hours; to jump from bed in the morning, both feet on the floor at once. That's the right kind of "tired" and the heaven descended brand of rest. It's a blessing in itself and bears others in its train.

But the variety of fatigue so many people are all the time writing us about is different. Listen to this one for instance: "In September, 1893," he says, "I was overcome by a feeling of languor. I was easily tired and comparatively slight efforts served to exhaust me completely. Indeed, I never seemed rested at all, and was as tired in the morning as when I went to bed. Both muscles and mind were inert and relaxed. At the same time my appetite appeared to be tired too. I had no relish for food, and after eating, felt an uneasiness and distress in the stomach and a pain in the chest. My skin was sallow also, and there was a dull aching at my right side in the region of the liver."

"I was constantly belching up a sour fluid, and my food would sometimes repeat or rise into my mouth. All I could do to rectify this miserable state of things I did, acting upon the suggestion of friends and others, but I failed to come across a remedy for my complaint, which meantime obtained a stronger hold upon me."

"On account of my inability to eat and digest food my flesh fell off till I became so thin you might have fancied me as having gone into a decline. And I was so weak that I could scarcely get about. I remained in this condition month after month, unfit for work of course and virtually a man out of the world's fight."

"The doctor who prescribed for me probably understood my case, but he was not able apparently to cure me. And I notice it is in illness as in business; unless one holds his own, he is bound to be falling behind, which made me anxious to obtain relief soon, lest I might pass beyond the reach of it. And in answer to the hope finally came the help I needed."

"In July of the year 1894 I read about Mother Seigle's Syrup in a small pamphlet which was left at our house. The book described my symptoms perfectly, and stated the disease to be indigestion, and inactivity of the liver, the latter the result of the former. The weakness and loss of weight is explained naturally enough, to be the effect of want of nourishment. Cure the stomach trouble in such cases, said an article in the pamphlet, and the consequences will vanish of themselves."

"On this I procured a bottle of the Syrup from Messrs Robertson & Co., Chemists, Hunslet Carr, and after taking it for a few days, I found myself much better. My food now ceased to give me pain, and I gained some strength with every meal. No better proof of the power of this medicine could I ask. I continued the use of it; the bad symptoms abated and no longer troubled me, and in a few weeks I felt as vigorous and well as ever I did. I could work as before and experienced that kind of fatigue only which promotes rest and is relieved by it. I have since enjoyed good health and you are welcome to publish this short account of my case. (Signed) Percy Hardaker, 42 Woodhouse Hill Road, Hunslet Carr, Leeds, March 29th, 1895."

Mr. Hardaker is agent for the Pearl Assurance Society, and is well and widely known. His own intelligent comments on his complaint, render any words of ours quite needless. In private conversation he said he looked upon that unnatural "tired" feeling as a warning that none should neglect. It means not the effect of work but of exhaustion through the subtle disease, indigestion. Mother Seigle's Syrup should be taken then, as he would have taken it had he heard of it. We hope Mr. Hardaker's timely words, based as they are on an instructive experience, will be heeded by all to whom they apply.

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UNCLE SAM'S AUCTION SALE.

Annual Disposal of the Accumulations of the Dead Letter Office.

One of the queerest "institutions" of the national capital is the annual clearance sale of the dead letter office, in which a vast accumulation of articles gone astray in the mails is sold to the highest bidders. The auction house where it is held is continually crowded with excited men, women and children, and beside it the bargain counters during the holidays are as havens of rest, for when Uncle Sam goes into the junk-shop business great things are expected. As in the church fair raffle, you pay a small amount of money and trust to luck to get back more than its value. The articles, previously listed in a wholesale sort of way, are tied up in bundles of from three to a half dozen and "auctioned" for what they will bring, the average bids ranging between 10 cents and a dollar.

Nobody is permitted to examine the goods before purchasing, and no money is refunded to the dissatisfied. Everybody hopes to pull a genuine plum from the pie in the shape of a diamond ring, a silk dress pattern or a silver teapot, and although comparative blanks are the rule, there is always the possibility of a prize. For example, the auctioneer holds up one of these odd shaped bundles, listed "pictures, underwear, mules, cigars." Going—going—gone—for 90 cents to a dapper young gentleman who was caught by the word "cigar." He opens it on the spot—an unwise thing to do if one objects to good natured ridicule—and this is what he finds: Six cigars, broken into bits with a sledge hammer could have done it; underwear—a female 10 cent "jersey;" pictures—a collection of newspaper cuts designed for amusement of some small child. The lot would be dear at a quarter and is of no use to the buyer.

In the dead letter office proper—that charnel house which swallows nearly half a million missives every month—it is positively harrowing. More than 40 bushels of photographs have accumulated there, awaiting the annual cremation. There are tresses of hair enough to stuff a dozen mattresses, grandmothers' silver locks and babies' golden curls, many no doubt cut from dead brows, and small sums of money which poor workmen send home to feed their wives and little ones, and servant girls save from their scanty wages for needy parents—gone to Uncle Sam's rich purse, not because the United States wants it, but because the senders' writing or orthography was beyond mortal ken. It is hard to realize that in this land of schools, at the close of the nineteenth century, there are so many people so ignorant or so careless as to send several millions of letters a year without stamps or addresses or with addresses which no man can make out. People seem to be so intent on what goes into the letters that they forget all about the superscription. It is estimated that \$4,500,000 in drafts and \$80,000,000 in cash is received every year through dead letters.—Indianapolis Journal.

COST OF A TRAIN.

The Expense and Profits of Travel on English Railway Lines.

How many people who travel in trains ever think of the cost of running them? It will probably surprise most people who have traveled from London to Edinburgh to know that every mile of the journey costs the railway company over half a crown. The cost of the whole journey from the English to the Scotch capital is £50.

The average cost of running a train in England is 2s. 7d. per mile, so that, the fare being reckoned at 1d. per mile, a train with less than 81 passengers for each mile is run at a loss. There are few trains, however, that do not carry more than this number of passengers, and many of them carry the number doubled many times over. It is necessary frequently to run trains that do not pay—usually in thinly inhabited country districts—but for every train run at a loss probably 100 are run at an enormous profit.

Take, for instance, the journey from London to Edinburgh, which costs the railway company £50. The average number of "through" passengers in these trains is probably 60, in which case the total fares would be nearly £100—a clear gain of nearly £50. When it is remembered that these trains run several times a day, and every day in the year, it will be understood what an enormous revenue a single line yields in the course of 12 months. Supposing the average number of passengers to be 60, the midnight train from London to Edinburgh yields over £20,000 for dividend in a year!

The longest railway journey in the United Kingdom would probably be from Penzance, in Cornwall, to Thurso, in the north of Scotland, a distance of over 1,000 miles. A train running between these two places would exhaust an ordinary clerk's salary for a whole year, the cost being no less than £138.—London Tit-Bits.

To Grow Teeth.

A Moscow dentist has solved the problem of supplying the human mouth with false teeth which will grow into the gums as firmly as natural ones. Dr. Zainensky has performed several successful operations on dogs as well as human beings. The teeth are made of gutta percha, porcelain or metal, as the case may be.

At the root of the false tooth holes are made. Holes are also made upward into the jaw. The tooth is then placed in the cavity. In a short time a soft, granulated growth finds its way from the patient's jaw into the holes in the tooth. This growth gradually hardens and holds the tooth in position.

It is stated that it does not matter whether the cavity in which the tooth is to be placed is one from which a natural tooth has been recently drawn or whether it has been healed for some years.—Moscow Letter.

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