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LEMURIA, THE LOST PARADISE.

In our review of Mr. Alfred Wallace's new conclusions relative to the geographical distribution of animals, we noted his very important statement that the study of the present habitations of both animals and plants may add greatly to our knowledge of the past history of our globe. In fact, the chief deduction which Mr. Wallace draws from his extended investigations is that such study may reveal to us, in a manner which no other evidence can, which are the oldest features of the earth's surface, which the newest, and which have sunk beneath the ocean and thus been blotted out for ever. It will be seen, therefore, that in the study of organic life we are brought face to face with one of Nature's own records. As in the rocks she writes of the birth of new continents and new islands, and of the time when, and the conditions under which, these mighty additions to the earth's surface were made: so in the habits of organized creatures she conceals the history of her destructive work. By the aid of such knowledge as to past organic mutations as the geological record supplies us with, we can determine the probable birthplace and subsequent migrations of the more important genera and families; and in this way, while reaching a conception of that grand series of co-ordinated changes in the earth and its inhabitants, whose final result is seen in the forms and geographical distribution of existing animals, at the same time we embark on a quest of lost lands.

It is a remarkable fact that traditions substantially agreeing with the Biblical account of the Deluge exist among every known people on the earth. Among the Hindoos, Greeks, Chinese, Mexicans, Peruvians, Feejee Islanders, the legends are closely similar; and it is but recently that, from the clay tablets of the Chaldeans, the late Mr. George Smith deciphered still another account of a great flood. It is besides true that, among a great many peoples, there are traditions of countries which no longer exist. Even on old Venetian maps the lost island of Atlantis, lying west of the Azores, prominently figures. The Greek geographers mention the island; and its sea kings, tradition says, invaded Europe and Africa; but were defeated by the Greeks and their allies. Whether that land was a myth, or whether it was America, is an open question (in view of Dr. Schliemann's discoveries, it is perilous to pronounce any ancient legend baseless); but this aside, the story goes that the Atlantes became so desperately wicked that a deluge swallowed up their island. Biblical critics, or at least the majority of them, have long since recognized the fact that, unless the supposition of a series of the most stupendous miracles be made, the theory of the Deluge covering the entire earth must be set aside; and, in lieu thereof, the view is preferred that the flood covered only the small area forming the basin of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, which then was the sole region occupied by the human race. If, however, we couple the two traditions, namely, deluges and lost lands, there will appear a probability that all relate to similar phenomena, which are the subsidence or overflowing of islands or portions of continents by the sea. Therefore it might be a more scientific view of the Flood to ascribe it to this well understood natural action than to venture so violent an hypothesis, even on the Mosaic account, as that, 1656 years after his creation, man was still confined to the little region in Mesopotamia.

In the whole range of deductions reached by the study of the distribution of animals, there is none more striking than that which proves that a vast continent once existed extending from the island of Madagascar to Ceylon and Sumatra. Examination of the fauna of Africa and of Madagascar shows that in Africa, especially in the east, there is an abundance of large ungulates and felines (elephants, lions, etc.), all of types now or recently found in India and Western Asia. Again, the fauna of Madagascar is wanting in all the larger and higher African forms, and has a wonderful resemblance to that of Malaya and South America. We are, therefore, sure that Madagascar must have been separated from Africa before the assemblage of large animals, above referred to, had entered. There is proof that, during early tertiary times, a continuous sea, from the Bay of Bengal to the British Isles, completely cut off all land communication between Central and Southern Africa on one side and the great continent of the eastern hemisphere on the other; so that Southern Africa and Madagascar were then united, and the latter island helped to form the great continent over which the tribe of lemurs were distributed. There is geological evidence, in Ceylon and South India, all going to show that those physical divisions were bounded on the north by a considerable extent of sea, and hence probably formed part of a great southern continent. If we suppose that this hypothetical land occupied the whole area now inhabited by lemuroid animals, we must extend it to Burmah, South China, and the Celebes.

Having established the possibility of the existence of this last continent, Lemuria, we need follow geology in the person of Mr. Wallace no longer, but pass to Herr Peschel's views of the great importance of this hypothesis to the history of our race. Peschel, in his chapter on the first home of humanity, states that all oceanic islands, when first discovered by European navigators, were uninhabited; and from this and other considerations, he concludes that the first human beings were inhabitants of a continent. Then, by examining into the resemblances of various peoples, he logically reaches the view that all our race, starting from a common habitat, may have gradually ranged over all continents and peopled them. He next takes each grand division of the earth in turn, and, by studying its zoological forms and their changes, he seeks to determine which division was

the probable cradle of humanity. The basis of his inquiry is the fact that the more highly integrated creatures are the newer, the less perfectly integrated, the older; and measured by this standard, Australia and South America are speedily eliminated from the question. North America has remained primitive in the second highest order of mammalia. Our continent has no tailless ape; and it is where the highest animals appear—the chimpanzee, the gorilla, and the orang—that we must also look for man. Searching through the Old World, the lowlands of Siberia are geologically too recent; while if Europe had been the starting point, we should have found fossil men, as we have fossil apes. In Southern Asia, British India has been studied geologically with great minuteness; and judging from the types of mammals found, our primordial parents cannot be localized there.

The inquiry is now narrowed down to Lemuria, a continent, Peschel asserts, required by anthropology; for we can then conceive that the inferior populations of Australia and India, the Papuans of the East Indian Islands, and lastly the negroes, would thus be enabled to reach their present abode by dry land. Such a region would also be climatically suitable; for it lies in the zone in which we now find the anthropomorphous apes. The selection of this locality, Peschel points out, is far more orthodox than it at first glance might appear; for we here find ourselves in the neighborhood of the four enigmatic rivers of the Scriptural Eden—in the vicinity of the Nile, the Euphrates, the Tigris, and the Indus. By the gradual submergence of Lemuria, the expulsion from Paradise would also be inexorably accomplished. To this may be added that ecclesiastical writers, such as Lactantius, the venerable Bede, Hrabanus Maurus, Kosmos Indicopleustes, and also the anonymous geographer of Ravenna, placed the Scriptural Paradise in Southeastern Asia, and some explicitly state that it was on a detached continent, and that the ingenious maps of the middle ages exhibit the first parental pair on a land surrounded by sea, lying beyond India. This explains how Columbus, after the discovery of South America, taking it for an insular continent lying southeast of the mouth of the Ganges, wrote home to Spain: "There are great indications suggesting the proximity of the earthly Paradise, for not only does it correspond in mathematical position with the opinions of holy and learned theologians, but all other signs concur to make it probable."

Herr Peschel's hypothesis need not disquiet those who prefer to believe that Paradise was nearer to the eastern lands of the Scriptures. Its value, its author states, is that "it challenges a geological investigation of Madagascar, Ceylon, and the island of Rodriguez, as well as deep sea soundings in the Indian Ocean, to ascertain whether vestiges exist of the higher points of vanished Lemuria."

CITY ARCHITECTURE.

There is a widely extended discussion now going on as to the merits of the better class of houses built in these days. Dr. Richardson attacks them on sanitary grounds, and his condemnation is as sweeping and as unreasonable as that of Mr. Ruskin; and the only remedy which these gentlemen propose for the people of Great Britain is to sweep away every dwelling from one end of the island to the other. Such exaggerated statements come naturally from the lips of Mr. Ruskin, whose æstheticism does good by inculcating a taste for correctness and purity in style and for genuineness and thoroughness in work; but Dr. Richardson has more utilitarian aims, and such wild propositions serve only to repel people from the consideration of the many sensible suggestions which he has made. Although it may be theoretically true that a kitchen should be at the top of the house, it is not necessary to destroy a dwelling that has one at the bottom; and the people who live in modern houses are not so contemptible, either physically or morally, that their homes should be demolished at the instance of these architectural reformers on account of their unfitness for habitation. Architects and hygeists would do much more for their contemporaries, and for art and science too, if they would show us how to make the best of what we have; to ventilate thoroughly our basement kitchens rather than to tear down our houses; to lead our sewer gases away from our houses rather than to pull down one side of the structure to build a gas shaft; in short, to improve the homes we must live in rather than to dream about those we might have if the world were created to-day, and everybody began existence with unbounded wealth.

Of the comfort and wholesomeness of the better class of American houses it is impossible to speak too highly. The ventilation is generally well provided for, and the heating is equable, and the temperature moderate; dryness in the cellars is an object which our architects spend much pains to achieve; and usually ample light is admitted into the front and back rooms of our houses. But our readers will at once see that we speak of the houses found in the better quarters of our large cities; and our tenement houses in crowded neighborhoods, and many of the flimsy frame structures in rural districts, are scarcely capable of improvement without razing the entire structure. The evils in the first are due to heavy taxation, which compels landlords to crowd their tenants on to the smallest possible area, and to the inability of tenants to pay rents for large apartments. But there is no reason why large buildings, each accommodating a great number of families, should not have every necessary provision for health and convenience. The houses of the building corporations in London and other European cities, which have been built especially to solve the problem of