

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

**PayPal**

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_jtvi-01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jtvi-01.php)

JOURNAL OF  
THE TRANSACTIONS  
OF  
The Victoria Institute,  
OR,  
Philosophical Society of Great Britain.

---

EDITED BY THE SECRETARY.

---

VOL. XXXIX.



LONDON :

(Published by the Institute, 8, Adelphi Terrace, Charing Cross, W.A.C.)

---

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

1907.

## ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

WAS HELD IN THE ROOMS OF THE INSTITUTE, ON  
MONDAY, MARCH 18TH, 1907.

MARTIN L. ROUSE, ESQ., B.L., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read and confirmed, and the following candidates were put forward by the Council for election :

MEMBER.—Dr. George H. Martin, M.D., San Francisco.

ASSOCIATE.—Rev. Edwin C. Dixon, M.A., Wisconsin, U.S.A.

The following paper was then read by the Author :—

*SURVIVALS OF PRIMITIVE RELIGION AMONG  
THE PEOPLE OF ASIA MINOR.* By the Rev. G. E.  
WHITE, Dean of Anatolia College. (With Plates.)

## INTRODUCTION.

IT is a pleasure to act on the suggestion of the Secretary, and submit to the Institute a brief statement of the American Mission work at Marsovan, Asiatic Turkey, and especially at Anatolia College, with which for sixteen years the present speaker has been connected.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the organ of the Congregational Churches of the United States, have a very extensive work in the Ottoman Empire, and have received much sympathy and direct and indirect assistance from British philanthropists and statesmen. Direct Christian effort for Turks is debarred by Mohammedan prejudice, but there are millions of Oriental Christians under the Turkish theocracy whose condition is pitiable. They are chiefly Armenians and Greeks. The language of their churches is practically dead to the common people. The common clergy are but slightly educated. The only schools for the children are those maintained by their impoverished religious communities. Agriculture, industry, and commerce are carried on under the

most repressive conditions, and the scanty profits are eaten up by the tax-gatherer, legal or illegal. At the time of the Turkish conquest, and sometimes after that, the Christian population was almost swept away, but a remnant remained; it survived and multiplied on the mountain tops, it held by the name and form of Christianity, it has taken advantage of every opening to make its way forward.

For several decades a growing evangelical work has been prosecuted among this old Christian stock, and there are now over 50,000 avowed Protestants connected with the native churches in Asia Minor. These are ministered to by native clergymen, who are on the whole a sound, strong, devoted body of Christian labourers, faithful to their high calling in the midst of poverty, discouragement and sometimes danger. The British and Foreign, and the American Bible Societies maintain important Levant Agencies at Constantinople, from which over 100,000 copies a year of the Holy Bible, or some part of it, are circulated. Colporteurs offer the Word of God to all the people, and the aggregate circulation of Armenian issues by the American Society exceeds an average of one for every Armenian family in Turkey. The Publication Department of our Board sends forth a steady stream of school books, sermons, tracts, hymn books, commentaries, and other volumes of religious and allied literature, and prints excellent family papers for adults and for children.

Meantime a steady process of reformation and enlightenment has been leavening the old Oriental Churches. They have been making heroic efforts in behalf of their schools, and certainly the value of their community schools has easily doubled within thirty or forty years. Preaching by monks, priests or teachers is frequently heard. Some spiritually minded leaders appear. Superstitions still abound, but are waning in number and influence. Pictures in the churches are less, and less influential. A few years ago when a suggestion was abroad that the Porte might require the withdrawal of American missionaries, the Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople expressed great apprehension at the loss that such a step would mean to his people.

Personally we are on the best of terms with Turks. The officials exchange friendly calls with us, religious authorities of every class, connection and garb discuss religious questions with a good degree of frankness and cordiality. The common people welcome us to their homes and tables. The sick come gladly to our hospitals for cure, and often say that they never

knew before that life could be lived without quarrelling, cursing, jealousy, deceit, and other dark concomitants. Many would enter our schools, but prejudice runs high and official supervision forbids them.

Latterly missionary effort has more and more taken the form of Christian education, and over 20,000 of the flower of the Anatolian children and young people are in schools connected with the mission. A few thousand of these were Armenian orphans, but these are now maturing and taking their own places in life. These schools are of all grades from the Kindergartens up to the American colleges incorporated in the United States, and conferring the bachelor's degree on their graduates.

In Marsovan itself Anatolia College has an attendance this year of 316 in the four colleges, and three preparatory classes. The faculty includes six Americans, one Swiss, eight Armenians and five Greeks. The native gentlemen have pursued advanced studies, one each in Berlin, America, Athens, Constantinople, Edinburgh, Stuttgart, and one is now in Paris. One has added about eighty new species of butterflies, beetles and plants to the knowledge of scientific men.

Students pay their own bills, the college making them as low as possible. About one-third, being too poor to pay wholly in cash, render some form of manual service in the Wickes Industrial for part of their dues. A little aid outright is given those who work well, and who otherwise could not be in college at all. The course of study includes languages, mathematics, natural sciences, history, philosophy, etc. Vocal and orchestral music and athletics have made a good beginning. Every student has a short Bible lesson every day, and our chief aim is from among the many aspiring young people of the country to bring forward a company filled with the spirit and power of Christ and return them with the strength of educated men to influence their people. The college is greatly hampered by lack of funds. Every additional pound means an added stroke of work, an added inch of usefulness.

Some of our students pursue Theological studies: ten graduated from our course last May and are now preaching in Turkey. Others go and study medicine. Turkey has need and room for good physicians. Many of our students teach for longer or shorter terms; a large proportion enter some form of business. The girls' boarding school at the other side of the same compound is training most admirably above 200 girls who are to be teachers, nurses, home makers, and leaders in all

those good ways open to educated Christian women. Our Medical Department, including dispensary and hospital with fifty beds, treated last year 2,229 cases in the clinics, and performed 354 operations requiring anæsthesia. These four institutions, Seminary, College, Girls' School and Hospital, stand side by side under one general administration and with one common aim. Our seal represents the sun rising over a mountain, just as seen from the front door of the College—and Anatolia means the land of the rising sun—and underneath is our motto, "The morning cometh."

### THE HITTITES, TURKS AND ARMENIANS.

An Occidental, who naturally first enters Asia Minor through such a port as Constantinople or Smyrna, is usually profoundly impressed with the lines of national cleavage prevailing between the different peoples. In race, religion, physical characteristics, social and political customs, and in language, there are fixed and evident boundary lines which people do not pass either by intermarriage or for any other ordinary reason. Asia Minor is ruled by Turks, but they are aliens encamped upon the soil. It does not include Armenia proper, but the history of the Armenians could not be written leaving Asia Minor out. Its boundaries do not march with Greece, but the northern and western coasts have been from time immemorial almost as Greek as Greece itself. The Hittites, perhaps, never ruled the whole, yet some of the richest Hittite finds have been made within its bounds. It is not Kurdish, yet shelters some 2,000,000 Kurds. It is separate from Mesopotamia, yet missionary children amuse themselves by picking up cuneiform fragments. It is distant from Egypt, yet its sphinxes are but one of the links of relation with the dwellers along the Nile. It is far from Rome, but for five hundred years was an important part of the Roman Empire. It has no Semitic population, but the two religions professed, Mohammedanism and Christianity, were rocked in a Semitic cradle. It does not include the Holy Land, yet at least ten books of the New Testament were first directed to its citizens. The Turkish is but one of several languages commonly spoken, and Osmanli Turkish in its three great elements, Turkish proper, Arabic and Persian, represents not only three languages, but three families of languages, Turanian, Semitic and Aryan. Before he takes ship to depart the hasty traveller is apt to avow that there is

no real unity in the present life of the fair and wide peninsula, with its fifteen millions of our fellow human beings.

The people of Asia Minor have more in common, however, than appears on superficial observation, and especially is this the case with many deep religious convictions and significant religious rites. However, many times since pre-Christian days these twenty provinces have been swept by invading armies, the whole population, or even the greater part of it, has never been swept away at once. In no case have the old cults been entirely wiped out, nor have alien formulas of worship entirely superseded them. As the Teutons conquered the Romans and absorbed their intellectual and religious ideas, so the successive hordes of soldiers invading Anatolia have in every instance absorbed much from native blood, and still more from native sentiments and practices. The history of creed, cult and conduct has been more nearly continuous than the history of public institutions. As it is increasingly clear that the generations that accepted Christianity carried with them into the Church much of what they formerly held as heathen, so Mohammedanism as practised is mingled with much that was never known to the Prophet. What is neither from the Scripture nor from the Koran must be of Pagan origin; a survival from primitive times which nominally ended nearly twenty centuries ago; and so far as the same superstitions are held, the same ceremonies practised by people of different races and nominal creeds, thus far there is a common bond among them all.

It is the object of this address to point out some of these present-day beliefs and practices in the land of the writer's adoption, of which many seem peculiar to one place or people, while others are widely prevalent and interlace our friends across political and ecclesiastical barriers, across national and linguistic lines. Most of the Anatolians may be classified in one or another of two double religious connections: these are Mohammedans, Sunnite or Orthodox, and Shiite or Alevi; and Oriental Christians, Armenian and Greek. Sundry fragments of creeds and cults remaining are omitted from the present review, as are also missionary converts and the rising generation of really educated and intelligent young people. We are dealing with what we may call men "of the old school," who still compose the great bulk of the population, although shadows of the truth have begun to give place to the rays of coming dawn.

In the Oriental Churches the Holy Trinity has been practically held to consist of the Father, the Son and the Virgin

Mary. The pictures emphasise this trio, and often ignore the Holy Spirit. Whence this honour ascribed the Virgin Mother of God? Different writers have pointed out that in the early Anatolian conception the chief of the divine beings was a goddess, not a god, witness the worship of the great goddess Ma at Comana and several other known centres, of Anahid among the Armenians, Anaitis in Zile, Cybele in Phrygia, and of Diana at Tyana and Ephesus. The mother principle in the divine nature was primary; the male element secondary. Those who have seen the remarkable Hittite sculptures at Yasili Kaya, near Boghaz Keuy, where Professor Dr. Winckler made his remarkable discovery of 3,000 more or less fragmentary cuneiform tablets in the summer of 1906, remember that in the larger gallery the chief goddess or priestess is immediately followed in the great procession by a smaller, perhaps younger, male figure, apparently her consort and perhaps her son. Similarly in the smaller gallery a large female figure embraces another smaller, younger, and apparently that of a *protégé* or son. Sir William Ramsay, in an exceedingly suggestive article in *The Expositor* for August, 1905, has traced the worship of the Virgin Mother back to the pre-Christian beliefs prevalent among the people of Anatolia. Terra cotta figurines found in abundance by the writer as well as by others at Chirishli Tepe, 25 miles south of Samsoun on the Black Sea, offer evidence pointing in the same direction. Here on a commanding hill-top was a great sanctuary perhaps 500 to 800 B.C., where votive offerings in terra cotta were deposited in quantities, most of them being heads of cattle or other animals, but many being heads of women. In the experience of the present speaker female figures or heads done in baked clay and dating from before the Christian era are very common in Asia Minor, but male figures corresponding are very rare.

Now given a people imbued with the idea that Mother Nature bestows upon them rain and sun, fruits and flocks and fertile fields, that she is a kind, protecting, watchful mother goddess, attended, often at least, by her youthful son, and teach among them the New Testament, what result should we look for? Why, at first we expect that the new and true Gospel will wholly supersede the old Paganism, but, when we think of what poor human nature really is, we are not so much surprised to be told that men soon began to mix the old with the new, that Mary was given the first place, while Christ her son was a subordinate associate. Come down to the fifth Christian



century. Most of the people had been swept into the Church, many of them without any evidence of a change of heart or of comprehending the nature of the Christian life. Many had but a thin veneer of Christianity laid over a pagan soul. The Church was under the patronage of diplomatic and worldly statesmen, like Constantine the Great, who used it, as they used any other agency, to further their personal and political ends. The clergy were men of slight education and sometimes of inferior character. People generally were not adequately instructed in the Christian faith, and in any case the human heart easily becomes degenerate and degraded.

In 431 the third Œcumenical Council of the Church convened in Ephesus, the city of Diana. The phrase "Mother of God," used of the Virgin Mary, had already begun to be heard among the people of Asia Minor, and by this Council its use was officially authorised. Where has the Christian worship of the Virgin Mary come from? From the primitive pagan worship of the people of Asia Minor.

Among primitive practices still regnant, a leading place is claimed by sacrifice. Men feel alienated from God, they are burdened with a sense of sin, they feel helpless amid the dangers and trials of human life, and they yearn for an act of reconciliation and a means of acceptance. Moses did not so much require sacrifice of the Israelites as to regulate the offerings which their own hearts prompted them to bring.

Sacrifice may be offered by an institution or an individual; it is sometimes prescribed, but far more often voluntary; there may or may not be a ministering priest. In fact, the customs in vogue vary considerably, and the prescriptions and descriptions of religious authorities, even of the same man at different times, vary among themselves quite as much as do the Pentateuchal Codes. It is generally said that the animal must be a male, but females are sometimes used; it is preferable to secure the services of a priest, but if none is present the virtue of the sacrifice is not impaired; the priest should bless the salt last fed to the victim before its death, or if convenient the meat and other food placed on the sacrificial table; if the offering is made at a Dervish *tekke*, strict rules place it all at the disposal of the chief Sheykh, but a more liberal interpretation usually gives him but half, or a good piece of meat, preferably the right thigh, and the skin; all regulations assign the skin to the officiating clergyman, but in these years at the Courban Festival, the great annual Mohammedan sacrifice, all skins are claimed by the Turkish Theocracy for the benefit of the

Hedjaz railway, designed to carry pilgrims to Mecca ; yet at the Courban of last year I heard a preacher addressing a thousand men make a charge that half had hidden their sacrificial skins and half had sold them for personal gain ; some of the meat should be distributed among the poor and the friends of the worshipper, seven persons participating if you, a mathematical Occidental, wish to be particular.

To atone for sin known or unknown, to placate or win favour with the supernatural Being or beings, to inaugurate any important enterprise, to avert some dreaded disaster, to express gratitude for a prosperous season, or for deliverance from danger at sea or on a journey, sacrificial animals are slain, sacrificial blood is shed. When a building is erected, a sheep is slain "at the foot of the threshold"; money also is sometimes buried in the threshold: a bride walks into her new home through the blood of a lamb killed at the door; to prevent a raging conflagration from crossing a street, sprinkle it with sacrificial blood; and do the same to check the spread of pestilence.

Sacrifice in Asia Minor to-day is interpreted to mean "blood for blood, bone for bone, flesh for flesh, life for life." The death carries the idea of expiation for sin, a vicarious atonement, and the feast which follows is the convivial meal of those who enjoy satisfactory relations with God. Piacular and honorific elements thus are both habitually present in the act of worship, though naturally the emphasis may be laid upon one or the other; possibly upon one to the exclusion of the other. Wine, bread, and sometimes other food usually accompany the flesh on the table. The meat is never wasted by burning.

Some time ago I spent a night away from home, and was urgently requested by a Greek to come and see his son who was sick. The young man seemed to be in the last stages of tuberculosis, and, as the parents talked with such yearning, the mother said to me: "I vowed that if my boy recovered I would go to our monastery four days distant and offer a sacrifice there."

A ruddy-faced youth was one day absent from school, and when he returned he stated as the reason, "For carrying a sheep to the Armenian Monastery for sacrifice." The lad's father was dead, and the widowed mother had lost one daughter by reason of a fever, so when another daughter, aged about sixteen, sickened with fever, the mother was thrown into an agony of fear and vowed to offer a sheep if the child was restored to health. She was restored; and then the family repaired with near friends to the monastery, killed a

sheep by the help of a butcher, had a service in the church where the priest read prayers while the meat was cooking, after which the party sat down to partake of the sacrificial feast with glad hearts. They invited whomsoever they found at hand to join them, and gave a portion to the sexton, who would serve the officiating priest.

One of my friends, a Turk who is not rich, told me how he once was so sick that they thought he would die. He vowed if he recovered to offer a goat at a certain *tekye*, a Mohammedan monastery, and such a vow he holds very sacred. True, this man because of poverty has not yet been able to redeem his pledge, but when he is able he will kill a goat with sacrificial rites, cook the flesh and prepare suitable accompanying food. Then he will invite to the feast several *hojas*, relatives and neighbours, a prayer will be offered, and his friends will partake with him in the convivial, sacrificial meal.

In 1905 the spring rains were much delayed, and on a ride of fifty miles through the country just then, I found the villagers everywhere offering prayers and sacrifices for rain. One of them, a Shia or Alevi Turk, thus described to me their village custom. "We sacrifice for rain every year when May comes on a Friday. We have our place in the graveyard near our village. We owe our *evliya* (patron saint, from the Arabic *vily*) two sheep a year, which we kill and cook there. We also collect cracked wheat from every house and make a great caldron of soup; then we turn in all the passers-by and invite them to share with us of the village in eating of the food. With or without rain in season we have the ceremony, and please God, our rain supply is not deficient."

As some of these matters were once referred to in a Bible class, one student said that he had seen sacrificial blood smeared on the door of a Turkish house at the Courban Festival not long before. Another said that he had seen sacrificial blood struck in the form of a cross on the door posts of Greek houses in Trebizond, and that it is a frequent custom of the Greeks to make such crosses whenever they offer a sacrifice. Another student stated that he had seen such crosses put on the door of Armenians in Yozghat during the time of cholera. In all these cases sheep were the victims slain, but another member of the same class added that he had seen the blood of cocks killed in sacrifice marked in the form of the cross on the white walls of an Armenian monastery near Sivas. Christians, Greek and Armenian, Mohammedans, orthodox and sectary, all in the crises of life naturally turning to sacrifice for relief.

Belief in the intercession of saints is a prominent article in every Anatolian creed. Whether it be a relic from some era of polytheism, or an instinctive groping for beings with human sympathy and superhuman authority, or the result of some other cause, worship especially in cases felt to be really critical is frequently offered in the name and at the tomb or shrine of some saint. The saint is supposed to have been once an ordinary man, though of great sanctity, and now although dead and buried is very much alive, active in the neighbourhood of his sepulchre, merciful to his own people, who habitually worship the Creator by his agency, possesses great influence with the Almighty, is dangerous when offended, and his advocacy may be enlisted by suitable prayers, sacrifices and ceremonies. The site is often a high place; usually there is a shady tree at hand, or a thicket of bushes, and frequently a sacred spring also.

If a person is sick or maimed, fears a reverse or yearns for a child, he offers his plea with or without sacrifice, at the village shrine, or he goes a greater distance to a tomb of greater reputation, or he seeks a saint who has the name of suiting his particular need. The fall of an embankment or an old wall is attributed to a saint's turning in his grave. No robbery or other deprecation may be committed there, and if a grove is near by its trees cannot be cut.

Some time ago the Governor of our city was on an expedition in pursuit of robbers. When he came to the region where they had been operating, he stopped with his retinue at the tomb of a saint, offered his petition, and vowed that if successful he would sacrifice there on his return. When he came back with the robber safely caught, he stopped again at the tomb and fulfilled his vow by the sacrifice of a ram. Piri Baba, who lived "five hundred, yes, six hundred years ago," said: "Let the redheads [*i.e.* *Shias*] seek their right of me." So redhead Turks come twenty days' journey to praise and pray at Piri Baba's tomb. If only the sepulchre of Moses were known, what crowds would have resorted thither, what structures would have been erected, what ceremonies would have been elaborated!

Not long ago a Turk with a reputation for learning and piety related to me how he was once sick unto death. The doctor whispered at the door that he had consumption of the liver and would die two hours before sunset. The sick man, writhing in pain, determined to make one more effort for life. He rose and staggered to a grave, in whose saint he had great confidence, and there poured out his soul in prayer that if possible his life might

be spared, but, if this could not be, that his soul might go direct to Paradise. In a few hours he was well; his pain was gone; and he rose and went to tell the doctor that there were remedies available when medical skill failed.

When I find myself in a region where I am a stranger and meet a man with whom to exchange greetings, I sometimes ask, "Isn't there a place named Khuddur Ellez near here?" And the answer usually comes, "Why, yes," and then follows a description of the place known by that name, which is understood to mean St. George, though there is some confusion as to the exact identity of St. George, and especially as to his relation to the prophet Elias, Ellez. St. George is venerated by Armenians, Greeks and Turks alike. I know a Khuddur Ellez visited by a whole village of Greeks on St. George's Day, and visited at all times by Turks, who pray and sacrifice there, especially for such children as are slow in learning to walk. The abundant candles of the Greek Church are said to be in honour of saints, and certainly the actual worship of the Greek Christians of Turkey is very largely saint worship. The same is true of the Alevi or Shia Turks, a great part of whose practical religion consists in their visiting *ziyarets*, or sacred places, and worshipping in the name of the saints buried there, with the aim of securing their merciful intercession. Mohammedans and Christians resemble each other in this part of their worship, and people of one faith often resort to shrines in the keeping of the other faith. I have seen shrines now Christian once Mohammedan, and, conversely, shrines now Mohammedan which were once in Christian keeping.

Corresponding to the lore connected with saints is that concerning *jinn*s or evil spirits. To the common Anatolian earth and air and sky are peopled with spirits malign as well as benign, and to neutralise the one is quite as important at the proper time as to utilise the other. A *mufti*, venerable in beard and furs, informed me that God created first the holy angels, then the devilish *jinn*s of seventy-two classes corresponding to the seventy-two races of men, and thirdly, God created man with character and possibilities partly angelic and partly devilish. The character of *jinn*s may be understood from the fact that one day after the afternoon call to prayer they destroyed eighty thousand prophets. This was before the creation of man! How there could be eighty-thousand prophets before the creation of man is a question that perhaps never occurred to the *mufti*, and if one should put it to him it might seem like needless homiletic nicety. For this transgression Allah wiped

the *jinn*s out; that is, he wiped them out of *sight*, and now they are seldom allowed to appear to human eyes.

At another time my companion in travel was a white-turbaned Moslem teacher named Solomon. As we rode he related how the earth is full of *jinn*s, which especially frequent streams, mills and lonely places, and lie in wait to work harm to men. They cannot enter a place, however, freshly trodden by oxen, as a newly ploughed field, though a fallow field is not thus protected. This notion is perhaps a survival of cattle worship. To avert their spell when one goes out at night he should "read" constantly, at any rate he should read (that is, repeat sacred passages from memory) just as he leaves the house door, and particularly as he puts on his shoes. If he does so he is safe for that walk, especially if he also gently blows in different directions, for blowing is very efficacious in warding off evil spirits, as also is spitting in any direction from which they may be feared.

Piles of small stones are often seen by the road-side, and passing travellers heap them higher to secure "travellers' luck." One theory is that the pile of stones holds down evil spirits and prevents their wreaking harm upon the passer-by. If by casting a small stone on a pile a driver may secure protection for a mile, it is a cheap form of insurance, when on any mile of road a horse may sicken, the wagon break down, or robbers waylay the driver.

If a person is believed to be possessed by an evil spirit, one form of treatment is to heat an iron chain red-hot, form it into a ring and pass the afflicted person through the opening, on the theory that the evil spirit cannot pass the hot chain and so is torn from his victim and left behind.

Dervishes are believed to call up familiar spirits amid the ruins of the frequent deserted castle and village sites by reading from their sacred volumes, and then to learn from these spirits where to dig for buried treasure. Or if a robbery has been committed, a dervish or *hoja* may be called, who for a small consideration will read over a cup of water in which some member of the family may then see black *jinn*s and from them gain such information as, whether the thieves were male or female, young or old, tall or short, fair or swarthy, departed to the east or west, and the like. Acting on this information the parties endeavour to track the thieves and regain their property.

At Ghat, an Alevi village, a rather gruesome custom prevails. The *dedes* or Alevi priests there keep always in stock a moderate supply of serpents which are stored in a cave.

Whenever a person has erysipelas (the Turkish name for which means "little serpent") or a sore or wound that refuses to heal, he may, if he chooses, resort to Ghat. There he gives his name to the *dedes*, with a few piastres, and they open the door of the cave calling, "let the enemy of so-and-so come forth." When the first serpent appears it is taken to impersonate that enemy, and the victim of the disease attacks and kills it. He then returns to his home trusting that a hostile charm is broken, and that his cure will speedily follow.

Along with the "bondage through fear" of evil spirits may be mentioned the "bondage through fear" of the evil eye. This doubtless is a remnant of devil worship, and it is practically universal in Asia Minor. Indeed, the Yezidees of Eastern Asia Minor are alleged to be devil worshippers. Their theory is the negative one of trying to get through life without laying one's self liable to penalty or persecution. They are believed to hold that God will do a man no harm, being benevolent in disposition, and that if they can only "square" Satan and his coadjutors, if they can only keep the powers of evil inactive, they will fare well enough.

People generally are not Yezidees, but they avow and believe that if we say three-fourths of the dead in their graves are there by reason of the evil eye we would not be at fault. A person of short stature, light complexion and blue eye is sometimes made miserable by the apprehension which he rouses. People come and cut slivers from the threshold of his house as an antidote against his dreadful glance, and he may be compelled to renew his whole threshold several times every year.

To keep the evil eye from a child, blue beads are put upon it; to avert it from a field, a skull of some animal is erected upon a pole; to counteract its influence on a mill, a great placard, with the words "wonder of God," is nailed to the roof; to protect a dwelling, a bunch of garlic or a pair of deer's antlers is fixed in a conspicuous place; to prevent milk from souring, bits of charcoal are laid upon it; to protect a camel, its saddle is made of a particular kind of wood; and so forward *ad infinitum*. People's notions and fears of the evil eye vary with their environment and the degree of their general intelligence, but there is no marked difference traceable to religious connection.

I was once asked by a villager, whom I had never seen before, to tie a knot on a string he had wound around his wrist. It seems he had malaria, attributed it to some evil influence, and thought he might use me to bind the spell. His notion was

perhaps, not that I would hold an acceptable brief with the superhuman powers, but that I, as a Christian, would be so *unacceptable* as to render a service similar to that performed by a skull planted on a pole in a garden, whose unsightliness transfixes the evil eye, and leaves the tender plants to grow without harm.

Just as a bridal couple entered their home I have seen an old woman smash an earthen dish at their feet. Her idea was that as we observe human life we may safely infer that there are superhuman forces at work which are bent on smashing something. It is better, therefore, to get the start of their activity, to keep them quiet by doing their work for them, and lose the value of a cheap dish rather than endanger the health or property of the new household. If this superstition is not a survival of devil worship I know not how to account for it.

On the whole the power most trusted, whether as a prophylactic against or as a remedy for the ill effects of evil spirits or evil eyes, is "reading," that is, reciting from some of the sacred books. If a sheep does not come in from its pasturage at nightfall, read to protect it. Then if a wolf pursues it cannot catch the sheep; if it catches cannot bite it; if it bites cannot pull its teeth out, and the sheep will reach home dragging the wolf as its victim—or rather as the victim of the powerful reading. If the charm fails—God knows best.

A gipsy girl died, and her poor father attributed it to the effect of reading. The girl had been sought in marriage, but had refused, not wishing to marry at all. The disappointed suitor "read" over the flowing water of a fountain from which the maiden drank, doubtless to win her affection; but the water clove to her breast bone, and she sickened and died. Even the reading over her of a Christian priest and a Mohammedan imam could not save her.

Religious ideas are always seeking expression in connection with some visible, tangible object, such as a votive offering. A rag or a bit of rope or hair from the person of a sick suppliant at a sacred grave is usually tied to a sacred tree there, in the hope that the sufferer may leave his disease bound to the spot and go home without it. Parings of finger nails are preserved in secret places, such as cracks in the wall, and children's extracted teeth are driven into pillars in churches and mosques that new ones may come in well. At the tomb of Hussein Ghazi headache is treated by an attendant leading the patient seven times around the tomb, placing a string of wooden beads about his head, each of which is struck with a mace, and



then the aching head is sprinkled with dust taken from beside the grave. To exorcise an evil spirit, a quotation from a sacred volume is written—the greater the reputation of the copyist for holiness, the more efficacious his copy—the paper is burned, and the patient inhales the flame; or the paper may be reduced to pulp in water, and the whole given to the afflicted person to drink. People who dread a snake, or fear that they have been in some way bewitched, find a cast off snake skin, burn it and inhale the smoke.

A teacher called upon me one day bringing his son, a child, who had a tremendously swollen cheek, over which some astonishing ink marks were traced. The father explained that he had written a powerful quotation there in the expectation that it would reduce the swelling. A venerable gentleman of my acquaintance attributes his good health to the fact, that when he was a lad, a dervish wrote for him something on a paper, and had him lick off the ink. It has proved to be a cheap and effective medical prescription. A Greek boy attending a Protestant school became quite sick with malaria. His friends attributed it to the influence of his unorthodox teacher, and tried to persuade the boy to go and spit in the teacher's face, thus to repudiate and conquer his influence. The decent pupil's sense of shame was too much for him, however, and so his father bought a mulberry leaf to the teacher, asking him to spit on it, that the sick boy might spit over the spittle of the teacher and thus break the spell. Chance visitors at shrines will have their heads and bodies rubbed by the attendant with a pair of deer's horns kept resting on the grave, if they will allow it. Some Armenian villagers fix a certain kind of thorny plant in the form of a cross over the chimney of a house in order to prevent witches from coming down and strangling the little children. In some places they set a cross of wood in the chief window of a house at the vernal equinox, that the sun's rays as it crosses the line, and thereafter, may light the household across the holy symbol. Armenians often, and Greeks still more often, acting under the auspices of their respective churches, throw metal crosses, usually of silver or gold, into a pool, or into the sea, the young men dive for them, and whoever can bring up one is reckoned specially fortunate or blessed. Small presents are showered upon him, and the waters are accounted holy. The characteristic Christian symbol is put to more uses than can be recounted here.

All Anatolians value pilgrimage, whether the place of resort be Mecca, Jerusalem, Kerbela, where the late Shah of Persia

was to be interred, or places of secondary rank like Damascus, or the Hadji Bek Tashi monastery, or some local shrine.

The Armenians of one region are wont to assemble on Cross Mountain at the festival of Vartavar in midsummer, which is interpreted as celebrating the transfiguration of our Lord, and partly also as recalling the flood of Noah. They may throw water over one another in memory of the flood, or release captive pigeons as Noah sent the dove forth of the ark, but why do they in some cases build fires, about which they walk seven times and then jump through the flames? And why do they in some places read from the Gospel at each of the four sides of the fire, and then take a burning stick and shake ashes from it on all the principal parts of the house, or strike it seven times on every person and animal at hand? Why indeed, unless the midsummer festival of the Armenians, which is traced by their own more intelligent men to the pre-Christian Armenian festival in honour of Anahid, preserves certain features of fire worship held by the early Armenians in common with their neighbours and kinsfolk, the Persians?

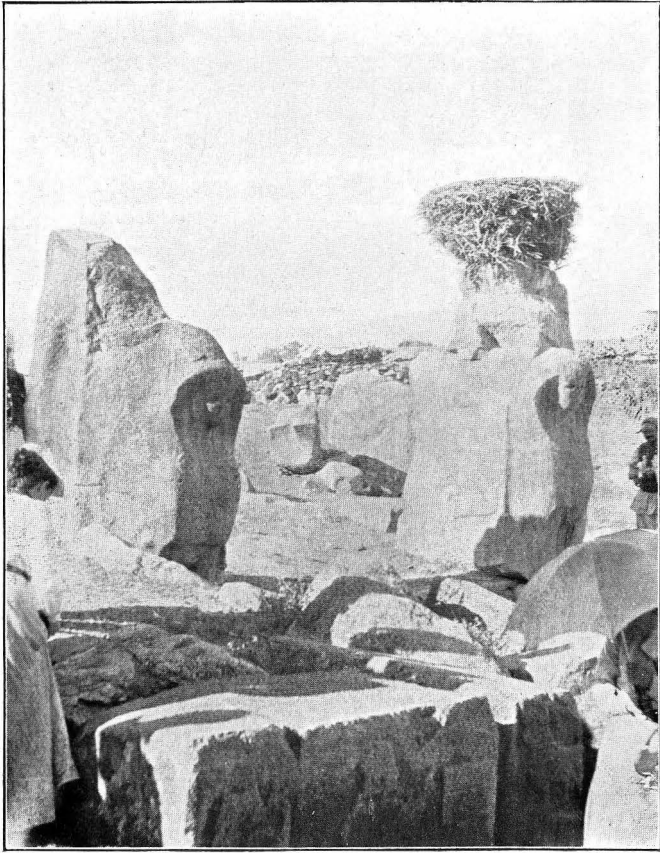
At Beuyurtlen in Pontus, Greeks from a hundred villages are said to gather on a mountain top in the summer of every year. There they spend the night in the open air, have religious services, led by the priests, in the morning dawn, they eat the food they have brought, and after enjoying to the full a religious picnic return to their homes.

Take another day in midsummer and visit a bald limestone ridge, a hundred miles from the last named place, and, if what eye-witnesses say is true, you will see another crowd, this time one of Redhead or Shia Turks, assembling to the number of thousands. There is a sheep for every house among the well-to-do, the animals are sacrificed, the meat is distributed to the poor and to friends, with plenty left over for the family that makes the offering. The date is determined by the beginning of the harvest in any given year, or as some affirm by the summer solstice, "the turn of the year." I have not yet been able to accept the invitation given me to attend and participate in this scene. There is more truth, however, than is sometimes realised in the claim of Shia Turks, that less than the thickness of an onion skin separates them from Christians. They are strongly affirmed by outsiders to practise a degenerate form of the Lord's Supper, but they are ignorant, low in the social scale, and in religious habits are secretive and deceptive. All the gatherings of religious clans, of which the above are samples, represent a mild type of pilgrimage. The more formal pilgrim-

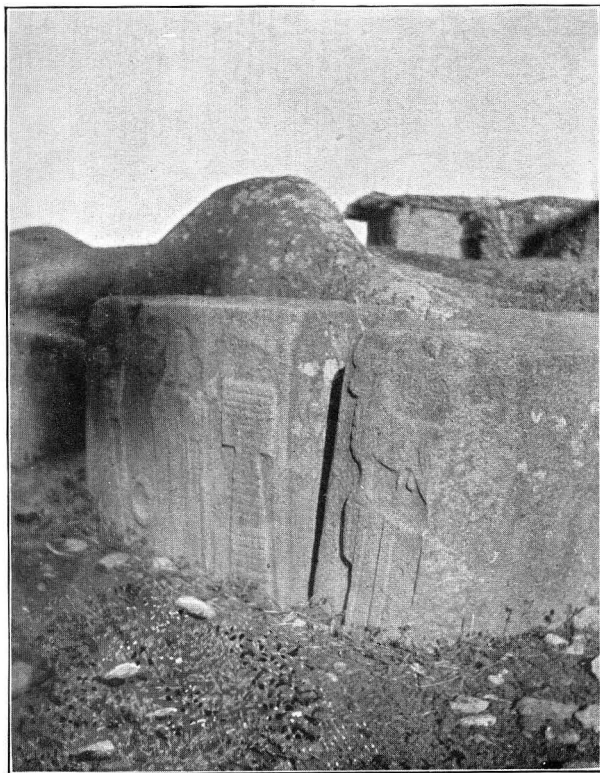
age to the great world centres is enjoined by the various hierarchies, but this resort to local shrines is a remnant of pagan customs, for it is similar to what we know was practised in Asia Minor in the centuries preceding the Christian era.

The desire to forecast the future and the attempt to force the omens to assume a favourable character are impulses planted deeply in the human bosom. Books on this and kindred subjects, to the value of fifty thousand pieces of silver, were once burned in Asia Minor, but I suppose that any language of the Levant can still furnish books telling how to read the stars, the palm of the hand, etc. Old women in the city streets offer for sale collections of rings, seals and stones recommending certain ones as very powerful and sure to bring good luck. In Zile I saw a flat stone in a graveyard with a few pebbles on it, and a friend informed me that people often go to this stone, throw a handful of pebbles upon it with a prayer, and from the number of pebbles in a given space, or from the number as odd or even, or from the desigus as resembling letters of the alphabet, they predict a favourable or unfavourable issue to any undertaking in hand. A shop-keeper sometimes hires a person considered luck-bringing to be the first customer at his shop in the morning, hoping thus to secure good luck in business for the day. At a retired nook in the mountains is a peculiar hole in the thin edge of a huge rock through which people have tried to pass in such numbers as to have worn the rock smooth. Supposably a sinner cannot pass; an innocent person can. The place also abounds in little stones: a person gathers up a handful, and expects to live as many years as he has stones in his haud. At the monastery of Sourp Minas visitors clap stones against a wall greasy from the candles which have been lighted and stuck against it, and if a stone adheres to the wall the owner is expected to be fortunate. When a dog rolls before the door of a sick man it is thought that he has seen the angel of death; and so in the house of a sick man bread is kept ready to throw to the dogs to prevent them from rolling before the door.

There are traces remaining of a primitive agricultural religious year. Praying for rain in the Spring, already referred to, is a custom which has a wide and deep hold. Fixing crosses in the windows at the Spring equinox, or holding a festival at the beginning of harvest, which coincides almost exactly with the Summer solstice, has the same significance. A day in Spring is called "mouse day," and no work, especially no weaving, is done on it by the women lest mice gnaw and spoil the result.



No. 1.



No. 2.



No. 3.

Special forms of Christian prayer are in use for that day. Grapes, which next to wheat are the agricultural product most prized in Turkey, are blessed in all the Armenian Churches at the feast of Astvadzadzin, the feast of the Mother of God, which fell in 1906 on August 26th. Many devout Armenian women eat no fruit from Lent until Astvadzadzin, and in general Armenians do not eat freely of the grapes, if at all, until they have been blessed in the Church.

These are specimen facts from the beliefs and practices of our friends, the people of Asia Minor. They indicate a real sense of sin and helplessness, of fear and failure, a groping for peace, comfort and reconciliation with God. And yet my experience is that however learnedly Anatolians discuss religious principles, however devotedly and at whatever cost of money, time and effort, they fulfil the rites which the custom of immemorial ages has prescribed or the self-sacrifice which conscience urges, they have no satisfying confidence in any. They have no consistent way of salvation; they have no clear idea of a personal Saviour.

This address has aimed to deal with nothing characteristically Christian or Mohammedan, nothing directly from the Bible or the Koran. It has dealt rather with facts as they have come under the writer's personal observation; questions of cause, comparison and anthropological significance may be left to scholars who specialize in such subjects.

#### NOTES ON THREE PHOTOGRAPHS.

- No. 1. Eyuk, Central Asia Minor. A pair of Hittite sphinxes guarding a temple door, one now surmounted by a stork's nest. Each sphinx about eight feet in height; a double-headed eagle supporting the figure of a priest on the inner wall of the right-hand sphinx. Date, 1200 to 1400 B.C.
- No. 2. Eyuk, Central Asia Minor. Sacrificial scene, near the temple door, being part of the approaching dromos. Altar, before which stands a ministering priest with a musical instrument (?) in his right hand. Bull on the other side of altar, for sacrifice or to receive the sacrifice as a cattle god.
- No. 3. Boghaz-keuy (Pteria), Central Asia Minor, fifteen miles from Eyuk. Two figures in the smaller Yasili-Kaya gallery, the taller with ribbed cap, being a female, probably a mother-goddess, her left arm being thrown around the neck of the younger, smaller figure, her consort, and perhaps her son. Hittite winged solar disc in upper ground; figures with tip-tilted shoes. Date, 1200 to 1400 B.C.

## DISCUSSION.

The SECRETARY (Professor HULL, F.R.S.), in moving a vote of thanks to the author, said,—I wish to be allowed to express my gratitude to the Rev. Mr. White for his interesting communication. It is not the first with which he has favoured the Institute, as he sent us a paper in 1901 published in the *Journal of the Society*.\* Since then he has been appointed to the important position of Dean of the Anatolia College—and it is gratifying to know that this institution is in such a flourishing condition, and is doing such good work amongst the Christian population of that historical region. We can never forget that Asia Minor was the country of the Seven Churches of the Apocalypse—and it is lamentable to hear how the nominal Christians have fallen away from the simplicity of the Apostolic faith. To that faith American Missionaries are endeavouring, and not without success, to recover them—and we all join in congratulating the Dean on being selected to preside over the College which is taking so important a part in the evangelisation and the spread of knowledge amongst the people of Asia Minor.

There is another reason why we should take a special interest in the intellectual prosperity of this country—from the connection with it in recent times of our late friend, General Sir Charles Wilson. It will be in the recollection of some of us that this distinguished officer was appointed to be Consul-General of Anatolia under the Anglo-Turkish Convention, a position which he held from 1879 to 1882. It was doubtless due to the influence of the British Plenipotentiaries to the Berlin Congress, the late Lords Beaconsfield and Salisbury, that Sir Charles Wilson was appointed to this position, for which he was peculiarly fitted by his familiarity with Oriental populations, and his mature and considerate judgment, and I venture to think that if he had been allowed to remain for some years longer in that position of peaceful influence those terrible massacres of the Armenian population from 1893 to 1896 by the

---

\* "Visit to the Hittite cities of Eyuk and Boghaz-Keoy," *Trans. Vict. Inst.*, vol. xxxiii.

Turks which afterwards took place would have been averted.\* It is very gratifying to hear from the author of this paper, that the bearing of the Turkish rulers towards their Christian subjects has so much improved, and that, although not open to the reception of the Gospel themselves, they do not offer any opposition to evangelical teaching amongst their Christian fellow countrymen.

Dr. E. CLAUDE TAYLOR.—I wish to add testimony to the value of the work at Anatolia College by the American Missionaries and their Armenian and Greek colleagues. In the midst of ignorance and superstition it is splendid to see the growth of knowledge and spiritual feeling. It is specially noticeable in the second generation. Further I would like to suggest that if any member of the society felt able to pay a visit to Anatolia College he would be able to help them in many ways by encouragement and support, and he would find the experience, along out-of-the-way paths, most enjoyable.

Colonel HENDLEY said that he also had much pleasure in testifying to the great value of the work done by the American Missionaries in Turkey. When he was in Constantinople a few years ago he had not only heard from old residents of the good that they had effected in Asia Minor, but of the special importance of their labours in Bulgaria, where their educational institutions had been the means of so improving the powers of mind of the youth of the country that it was expected that, in a very few years, the population would be in a position to resist all oppression, whether at home or abroad. What was wanted was the formation of a strong backbone, as it were, and this was being done by the missionaries.

Canon GIRDLESTONE said that the Turkish Empire owed a great debt to the American Mission. With regard to the title of the

---

\* It may be mentioned in this connection that after the massacre of the Armenians, in 1896, a committee of ladies was formed in London to rescue and assist the unhappy Armenian widows and children, and a large number were taken in British ships to Cyprus. Miss Charlotte Hull, M.D. (now Mrs. Ferguson-Davie), was sent out to take charge of these destitute people, and she fitted up a large house—given over by the governor to her—as a hospital and home, where for several months Miss Hull and her assistants ministered to the wants of their charge, both in food, clothing and medical aid, until they were enabled to return to their country on the restoration of peace.



paper, the word "primitive" was ambiguous. It might mean "ancient," but it might also mean "original." There was a tendency at the present time to regard the most degraded and superstitious cults as nearest to the original. This idea was to be deprecated.

The author had omitted direct reference to the Jewish religion. But many members of the Hebrew race had found their way into Asia Minor at least as far back as the days of Joel; and various rites referred to in the paper looked like reminiscences of Jewish ceremonies.

After referring to the Goddess Ma, who might be identified with the Egyptian Goddess Thmei, who was also called Ma, he called attention to the possibility of finding standing stones in Asia Minor similar to those discovered in Palestine.

Colonel C. E. YATES, C.S.I., C.M.G.—With reference to what the Lecturer has told us regarding the custom of sheep sacrifice in Asia Minor, I would just mention that a similar practice is common throughout North-Eastern Persia. When I was Consul-General at Meshed I travelled a great deal throughout that part of the country, and it was a common thing to find myself welcomed on arrival at any place by the sacrifice of a sheep as I alighted from my horse. Also when paying a visit to any local chief or man of importance I often found my host waiting for me at the outer door with a sheep whose throat was cut just in front of me as I arrived, so that I stepped over its blood as I entered his house.

This custom is mentioned, I think, in my book *Khurasan and Sistan*, published by Blackwood in 1900.

The vote of thanks having been put from the Chair, was carried unanimously, and the author having briefly replied, the meeting separated.