

AC901
p3
no. 0815
p***

Euripides and in the Acts is described as a bust, with many breasts, tapering to a pedestal, the whole of black stone. It fell from heaven, and part of it may have been an aerolite, or it may have been made to replace the original aerolithic deity. The club of Heracles, worshipped in Thraee, was probably a Thor's hammer, the Thracians being of Northern kin, and an aerolite. Like the images or symbols of Apollo, the guardian of the ways, and of the Paphian Venus, it was said to have fallen from above. These uncertain instances are adduced first because the opportunity is afforded thereby to prove that it is not important as a matter of religion to discriminate between a real and an imaginary aerolite. A gentleman still living in Toronto having purchased from a farmer near Niagara a nodule containing quartz crystals, read a paper to a learned society, in which he explained its structure as being that of a planetoid, rounded, flattened at the poles, and he argued that the interior of our globe might be crystalline too. There is little doubt that the farmer saw a meteorite fall, and, picking up this geode, believed it to be the aerolite. Again, one of the secretaries of the Astronomical Society of Toronto, whose family thought they saw a meteorite fall into a snow-bank, delved into the drift and brought up a water-worn pebble of gneiss, which a less experienced person might have sworn to be an aerolite. So with the objects of the ancients' veneration, it could make little difference whether they were really meteorites or not, provided they were believed to have fallen from the skies.

To ascertain the probable views of the folks of the early ages in Europe, we must now see how the untutored races of the present day regard the aerolite.

Professor Garner, the well-known student of the speech of monkeys, who says the negroes of the Guinea Coast do not believe in a beneficent god, but rather in a being who does harm, tells the writer that in one African village he found the chief public treasure was two stones, about the size of hen's eggs. The natives said they had been shot out from the sun and had killed this malevolent being . . . who had, however, revived. They thought the stones had been alive, and because they still made fire when struck together they thought they were not dead yet, but were in a sort of trance. So they built a house for them and guarded them with care.

The Rev. H. S. Taylor gives an instructive account of the fall of a meteor, in the Report of the Government Central Museum of Madras, 1890. Two aerolites travelling through space together, or two pieces torn asunder by explosion, had fallen at Parmallee, Madras, India, February 28th, 1857—reaching the earth two miles apart. Persons were standing near each place of fall. "Many," says Mr. Taylor, "worshipped them." And again, "Of the excitement among the natives I need not speak . . . Some of them supposed they were gods that had fallen."