

than laws which have grown up through common usage. *With all his heart, and . . . soul*; used in the Old Testament to mean with one's whole inner life, including mind, affections and will.

Vs. 32, 33. *To stand to it*; to pledge themselves to persevere in obeying it. *Took away*; as in vs. 3-7. *The abominations*; used of such practices as were connected with idolatry. These were abominations to Jehovah. *All his days*. Unfortunately the situation was altered under Josiah's son, Jehoiakim, and those who followed him upon the throne.

Light from the East

A BABYLONIAN BOOK OF LAW—Fifteen years ago a Frenchman de Morgan was excavating the ruins of the old Persian city of Susa when he came on a great block of black diorite. On it was chiseled an inscription, the longest inscription that has come down to us from Babylonia or Assyria, some 8,000 words in all. It consists of a code of laws.

At the upper end there is carved the figure of the sun-god Shamash seated on a throne while before him stands in an attitude of reverence the Babylonian king, Hammurabi (who lived about B.C. 2,000). Shamash is presenting the laws written on stone to the king. In the ancient East men knew no such thing as man-made law such as we have; all law was from a god. All Mohammedan law to-day is thought of as given by Allah. So all Hebrew law was given by Jehovah.

When the law was read to Josiah he was overwhelmed with fear, and rent his clothes. Should we think of the reading as ending with such a chapter of curses as Deut., ch. 28? So Hammurabi's code concludes with a few blessings and many curses, the curses for the king who did not enforce the laws. The last is: "May the great gods of heaven and earth cover with irresistible curses him, his seed, his land, his army, his subjects and his soldiers. May Ellil' curse him out of his mouth with a mighty curse which cannot be altered which shall come speedily upon him."

ANCIENT BOOKS

The earliest books were written on tablets of stone, clay, wood, wax, lead and potsherds or fragments of pottery. In the British Museum there is a library of 20,000 tablets collected by several of the ancient kings of Assyria, especially Assur-bani-pal, B.C. 668-626. Leather was used in Egypt, Assyria, Persia and Asia Minor, and it was largely on this that the books of the Old Testament were written. The books of the New Testament were written, at first, on papyrus, manufactured from a plant which grows in Egypt and which was used by the Egyptians from a very early date as a material for writing. Parchment or vellum came into use in the second century B.C. This material differs from leather "in not being tanned; the skins are merely stretched and dried, the

hairs being removed from the one side and the flesh from the other, and the whole being pounded smooth with pumice." Until the third century A.D. books were in the form of rolls, the sheets of leather or papyrus being joined together and fastened on a wooden roller. The longest of such rolls known is one found in Egypt of 144 feet. No ordinary book, however, would be more than 30 feet in length. When vellum came into use the roll form was given up, and books were written in a form similar to our own. The name "parchment" is from Pergamum, one of whose kings introduced the use of this material, while "vellum" was originally parchment made from the skins of calves (Latin, "vitulus"), but afterwards came to mean any kind of parchment.

THE LESSON APPLIED

"Found a book of the law." The discovery of the Bible is always a significant event. When Martin Luther came across a dusty copy of the scriptures among the neglected books of a convent and began to read it, the new light that broke upon his mind presaged

the Reformation. Poor Cowper, harassed and tormented, found in Romans 3:24, the promise that brought sunshine to his overclouded soul. John Wesley made a discovery that profoundly affected his whole life when he came upon the words: "The law of the