

ceded it, the crude and anthropomorphic ideas of the fathers were replaced by the more spiritual, yet in some respects more formal, conceptions of the sons; and centuries elapsed before the halo which time throws about his children rendered these written legends sacred in the nation's eyes.

In the book of Genesis, which is, as its name signifies, the Hebrew book of beginnings, at least three earlier sources can be traced. There is a complete set of traditions, which, judged by their local coloring, and by certain names which were peculiar to the south, had their origin among the Judean hills. Side by side with these and often interwoven with them in such a manner as to form one continuous, though at times inharmonious, narrative, is a set of legends which seem to have been written later and by some prophet of the north.

Although the second narrative is independent of the first, both appear to be based upon the earlier Hebrew ballad. The book as we have it today is the result of still another compilation which occurred at a later period in the history of the Jewish church—a period in which the priestly code received its full development, and *monotheism* was recognized as Israel's central faith.

The editor of the first six books of the Old Testament incorporated bodily into his work the writings of the earlier authors; thus the story of the growth of the Book of Genesis is the story of the growth of the whole Hexateuch.

From time immemorial the Hebrew people have been zealous in the education of their children. In no other ancient race, unless it be among our Saxon forefathers, do we find so true an appreciation of the sacredness of motherhood; and both the fathers and mothers in Israel took part in the education of their little ones.

The wise among the Hebrews seemed instinctively to feel that they lived in each succeeding generation; and

that therefore it was most important that the son be fitted to carry on his father's work.

"And these words shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up," was no idle saying in Israel.

In the tents of the herdsmen, in the wandering shepherd's home, at his mother's knee, or walking at his father's side, the little Hebrew lad listened to tales of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; learned to love the forgiving Joseph, and to honor Moses, his nation's strong deliverer.

Thus he grew wise in legend lore, but more fortunate in this than the average child of Christian parents, he learned these tales as legends. They had for him no shell of sacredness to close over his imagination and forbid the growth of reason.

If we would gain for ourselves, and have our children learn, the most valuable lessons which these wonderful Hebrew legends have to teach, we must, remembering their origin, read them as we would the Vedic myth, or the Anglo-Saxon poem, for the underlying truths and the law of growth which they reveal.

These considerations led to the adoption of the plan which has been pursued in the Intermediate Lesson series; a plan which has, I fear, proved quite unsatisfactory in many places; and which, stated briefly, has been this:

The first quarterly of the series treated of man's earliest religious thought and was designed as an introduction to the age of legend. One lesson reviewed the early races of mankind; another explained briefly the growth of myth and legend out of man's attempt to answer his own questions. It was the purpose of the lesson upon the bibles of the world to show that the Hebrew Bible is one among several books, or