SAVAGE LIFE AND CUSTOM.

BY EDWARD LAWRENCE.

VI. THE POSITION OF WOMEN: COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE.

OF all the nonsense that has been written about savages, probably no greater nonsense has been written than that concerning their womenfolk. Not only have they been constantly described as mere "beasts of burden" under tyrannical subjection to their husbands, but even the cause of their early physical decay, after the age of twenty-five or so, has been gratuitously placed to the credit of the men. It is true that all the savages consider women, in certain respects, inferior to men, but it is a "superiority" in certain respects only which have for their foundation a natural basis; and such claim to superiority as exists is never offensively asserted.

In savage life, women occupy an important and recognized position; they themselves would be surprised that certain globe-trotters have considered their position a degraded one and held them to be mere slaves of the men. Both men and women have their allotted duties; and either would resent any attempt by the other sex to interfere with their work. The men are hunters and warriors; the protectors of hearth and home; the women are agriculturists and founders of the family. In savagery, a woman has no more desire to occupy a man's place or usurp his functions than she has to become a man herself. Neither sex can do as they might wish, because their whole social system is dominated by religious custom. Nor will any woman meddle with what does not concern her, nor manifest any desire to become a warrior or a chief. To her, that which is, is right. It is related of a Mombuttu chief that he always consulted his wives before taking any important step; his ugliest wife being the most influential and always to be seen at his side.

Thus the woman is *never* a slave; in most cases she can more than hold her own, for instance in the Congo region there is a tribe where the men do all the sewing—should a man refuse to make his wife's clothes, custom allows her to leave him forthwith. As a matter of fact, speaking generally, the women are in several respects better off in savage communities than are many of their more civilized sisters in Christian lands.

As has been stated, man is the hunter, the food-provider; it is

his place to kill the animals for food as it is the woman's place to cook them.

When a man desires to marry, he must possess certain qualities which, both in the lady's estimation and in the opinion of the tribe, fit him for matrimony. In Borneo for example, before it is possible for a man to obtain a bride, he must prove his prowess by hunting for human heads; no woman would dream of marrying any man before he had laid at least one of these trophies at her feet. Among the Indians of Brazil as well as those of the Gran Chaco, a young man wishing to marry must show proof that he can support a family by killing five peccaries or one jaguar; he is then open to an offer of marriage which must come from the lady herself.

In Northern Africa, the man begins his love-affair by sending the girl a little packet of charcoal, to show his heart is black, also a packet of sugar, which shows how sweet she is to him. Should he find favor with the lady, she keeps the sugar and returns the charcoal; if she refuses him she returns both articles. In any case, she has perfect liberty to accept or reject him. Sometimes the lady herself has anxious moments as to the possibility of an early marriage; in this case she will eat a puppy dog, which is supposed to have a magical result and to hasten her heart's desire.

The well-known custom of wife-purchase has often been held up to show how degrading are the matrimonial arrangements of savages. The very reverse is actual truth. So-called wife-purchase is really a great moral factor. When a man "buys" a wife, she becomes his and his only; any one who interfered and abused his right would be killed. And wives are not always cheap either; so much so that natives sometimes prefer to be married "English fashion" than by their own customary laws.

Mr. Hugh H. Romilly, who was at one time acting Commissioner of New Guinea, gives an illuminating illustration of this. He had as a servant a native Christian named Charles, who wished to marry a native girl. Charles approached the Commissioner and said: "You marry me in English fashion to Bezine; by-a-bye when I go to England she looks up some other fellow." Queen Victoria's representative in New Guinea remonstrated with Charles and told him he was not playing the game, to which Charles replied: "Well, I suppose I must get married in New Guinea fashion, but New Guinea fashion plenty dear; English fashion only two-bob." Now, New Guinea fashion would have cost Charles something like thirty shillings, in tomahawks and tobacco, hence his desire to be married in English fashion at the cheaper rate.

Fig. 17. NEWLY MARRIED COUPLE FROM SIAR, NEW GUINEA.

Note the ligature round the lady's stomach, referred to under "Tight Lacing." Her hair has been plastered with mud and then twisted into curls. (From Meyer's and Parkinson's *Album von Papua-Typen.*)

A chief once told Dr. Haddon that he gave for his wife, a camphor-wood chest, a dozen jerseys, some lengths of calico, twelve fish-hooks, and a pound of tobacco, and wound up by saying, "By golly, she too dear.!"

As a matter of fact, there is no real purchase in our sense of the term; it is simply a matter of exchange. It has been explained, for example, that the native word in Zulu for buying a wife—*ukulobola*—is the exact equivalent of the Hebrew *mohar* as used in the Old Testament (Ruth iii. 10) and that both the Hebrew and the native words are used only in relation to this custom and never in regard to chattels.

The Sikani Indian of North America approaches the lady in the following manner by asking her whether "she will park his beaver-snares for him." This question is equivalent to a proposal of marriage. If she is agreeable she answers "Perhaps, ask my mother." But it is the damsel herself who breaks the news and "asks mother." Thereupon her mother instructs her daughter to build a lodge at the side of the maternal dwelling. During the evening the man comes to the new lodge, where the young lady awaits him, and hands her his beaver-snare. This simple ceremony constitutes the whole of the marriage service and they are now man and wife. Should the girl not wish to become his wife, when he puts the question, she pointblank refuses him and says: "No! there are plenty of women, ask another."

It is by no means uncommon for the ladies themselves, as mentioned above, to make matrimonial overtures. One of the lessons taught in school to the young men of the western islands of Torres Straits is: "You no like girl first; if you do, girls laugh at you and call you a woman"—i. e., a man must wait for the girl to propose.

Dr. A. C. Haddon, in a lecture delivered before the Royal Institution some years ago, gave some most amusing accounts of native courtship in those islands. He said if a lad be a good dancer, dancing sprightly and energetically, he stands a good chance of an early proposal, and if he could add to his claim the taking of somebody's head it would further add to his chance and rebound to his prowess. The smitten lady plaits a string armlet which she entrusts to a mutual friend, who, approaching the swain, says: "I have some good news for you; a woman likes you." In reply the young man sends a message, asking the girl to keep an appointment in the bush. When the couple meet, they, like all other couples, sit down and talk, the conversation being conducted with perfect decorum. As

to what actually takes place, Dr. Haddon's friend, Maino, chief of Tud, enlightens us.

The man asks: "You like me proper?"

"Yes," she answers, "I like you proper with my heart inside. Eye along my heart sees you—you my man."

Not wishing to give himself away the young man asks: "How you like me?"

"I like your fine leg—you got fine body—your skin good—I like you altogether," the girl replies.

The damsel, now anxious to clinch the matter, asks him when they are to be married, to which he replies: "To-morrow if you like."

On the return to their respective homes the girl's folk fight the man's people—this mock fight being part of the marriage program.

It is to be regretted that the missionaries have done their best to put an end to this harmless custom of ladies proposing matrimony. They have also taught the natives to read and write, with the result that proposals are now made in writing; in one instance the proposal was written on a school-slate.

Dr. Haddon has elsewhere quoted some letters which he obtained. I will quote one of which he gives the following translation by a native:

"Pita, what do you say? I try you. My heart he like very bad for you. You send me back a letter. Yes, this talk belong me. Pita, you. Good-bye. Me, Magena."

To which Peter replies: "Magena. I make you know. Me just the same. I want very bad for you. My talk there. If you like me, all right, just the same; good for you and good for me. Yes, all right. Finish. You, Magena. Good-bye. Me, Pita."

While native law usually permits a man to possess more than one wife, in actual pratice the number is limited to one. Contrary to what might be thought the women themselves often wish their husbands to add to their number. The ladies are sorry when a man has only one wife. On one occasion, Bentley, the pioneer missionary of the Congo, was asked why he had only one wife, as he would have only one to cry over him when he was dead; he might as well be a slave!

Many of the very lowest races never possess more than one wife, and the spouses are united in a life-long union. Divorce and bigamy, polygamy, and polyandry, are almost unknown; death itself

is the sole terminator of their affection. Instance after instance could be given in support of these assertions.

Thus Mr. W. H. Man, whose careful researches among the aborigines of the Andaman Islands are so well known, and who lived with them for nearly twelve years, tells us that there is no divorce nor bigamy and that death itself is the only separation. With them conjugal fidelity is the rule, not the exception, and although the women are Eve-like as regards their clothing, they are strikingly modest, good wives, and models of constancy, in which respect the men do not fall far short.

Sir W. W. Hunter says of the Santals, a hill-tribe of Bengal, that second marriages are unknown; divorce is rare and can only be effected by the consent of the clan itself.

Of the Sakais, Semangs, and other wild tribes of the Malay Peninsula, it is stated that the married people are in the highest degree faithful to each other, and that cases of unfaithfulness in either sex are exceedingly rare.

Such evidence could be multiplied over and over again. Nor does the evidence rest upon the hasty generalizations of touring travelers, but is the outcome of special investigations made by scientific observers often extended over a period of many years.

VII. OCCUPATION IN PEACE AND WAR.

Hunting and Fishing.

Self-preservation being Nature's first law, the necessity of providing himself and family with food is the basis upon which many customs and religious observances of savage races are founded.

Like the great apes, primitive man subsists upon a farinaceous diet—upon the fruits and roots which abound in the forests, this being supplemented by animal food when other supplies are not sufficiently forthcoming. Even cattle-owning tribes seldom kill their animals for food, but live chiefly upon a vegetable diet.

Both sexes have to earn their own living. While the women attend to all domestic matters—prepare the food, do the marketing, and toil in the fields—the men, no less active, fish and hunt, do the weaving and work metals. Of the Kafirs of South Africa it has been said that an incredible amount of energy is used up in warfare and in the chase. It will therefore be quite obvious that there exists no serious ground whatever for the oft repeated assertion that the women are mere slaves to the men and that such an accusation can only be put forward by those travelers who from ignorance or from

prejudice have completely misunderstood the social life of savage peoples.

One of the many methods of obtaining food is by means of the blow-pipe or blow-gun. This weapon is met with in South America, Borneo, Ceylon, Bengal, and the Malay Peninsula. It usually consists of a tube of bamboo some six to eight feet in length, from which poisoned darts are blown by means of the mouth (Fig. 18).

With such a simple weapon the wild races of the Malay Peninsula will not hesitate to attack and kill such great game as the

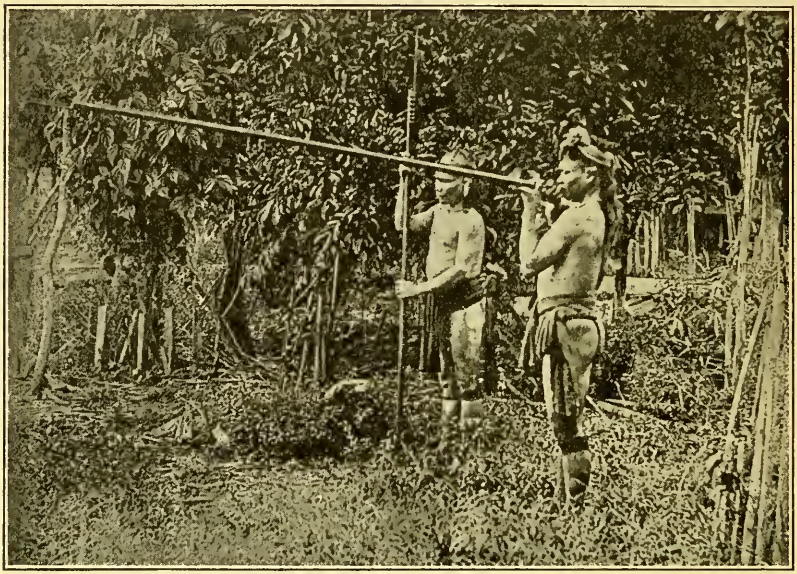

Fig. 18. KENYAHS OF BORNEO, SHOOTING BY MEANS OF THE BLOW-PIPE.

The cloth bandage worn around the loins is made of bark. (Photo by Dr. C. G. Seligmann, *Journal Anth. Inst.*, 1902.)

leopard, the elephant, and the tiger, seldom wasting a dart in so doing.

On one occasion, to test the skill of the Kenyahs, a traveler placed a potato at a distance of fifty paces; out of ten darts, six reached the mark.

One of the most familiar weapons is the bow and arrow (Fig. 19). It is by no means known to all savage tribes, for instance it is absent in parts of South America and Africa and is quite unknown in Australia. Even as regards members of the same race, it

is known to some and quite unknown to others. The use of the bow therefore, as General Pitt-Rivers points out, does not correspond to the distribution of races, as it is, for example, not known to the New Caledonians who are of the same Papuan race as the inhabitants of New Guinea.

Many of the jungle-tribes of India are skilful and intrepid hunters, never stirring without their bows and arrows. The bow itself consists of a strong mountain-bamboo which no Hindu lowlander can bend. Sir William Hunter says of the Santals that the

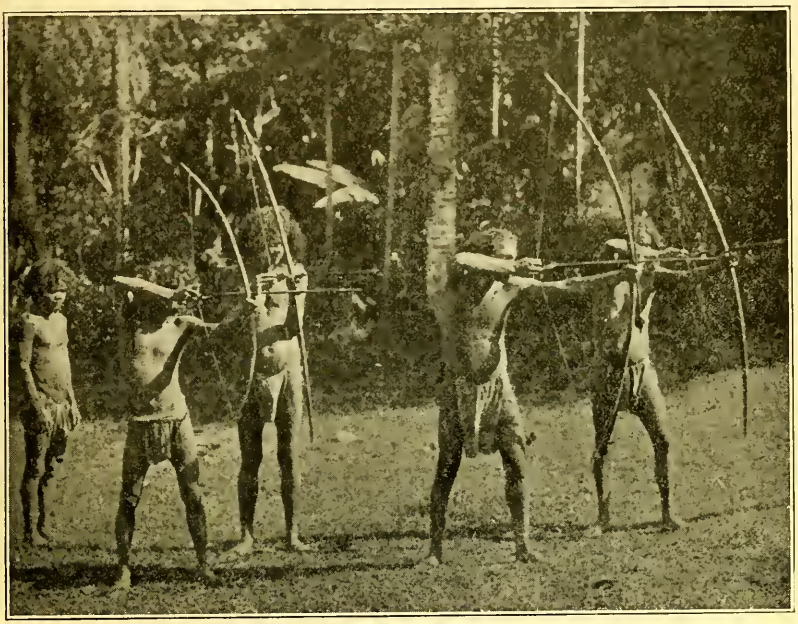

Fig. 19. VEDDAH BOWMEN.

The Veddahs use only the axe and arrow. They will skin a stag very skilfully by means of an arrow-blade only. (Photo by Skene of Colombo. By permission of the Baptist Missionary Society.)

difficulty of shooting with their arrows can only be appreciated by those who have tried, yet few English sportsmen, provided with the latest improvement in firearms, could show a better bag of small game from the jungle than these savages who are equipped solely with rude weapons.

Various methods and devices are in vogue to obtain the produce of the river and the sea. Fish-spears and poisons, knives and nets, hooks and traps, are all more or less brought into requisition.

Throughout the whole course of the great Congo River, fish-traps of elaborate and ingenious construction are used to catch fish. These traps are cone-shaped baskets varying in length from six to twelve feet by two to seven feet in diameter. They are fitted inside with another cone-shaped arrangement which, while allowing the fish free access, effectually prevents their escape. The traps are weighted with stones and dropped into the river with the opening upstream. Each tribe along the river-banks has its own particular method which is never imitated or copied by its neighbors.

Fig. 20. FISHERMEN OF NEW IRELAND.

These baskets are anchored out in deep water, another basket containing stones being used as an anchor to keep the fish-basket in position. (From Meyer's and Parkinson's *Album von Papua-Typen.*)

Similar baskets for trapping fish are made in Melanesia, notably in New Britain and New Ireland (Fig. 20).

While making these traps, superstition as usual plays an important part. No fisherman, while making the basket, may have anything to do with women, and this abstinence must be continued not only until the fish are caught but until they are finally disposed of by being eaten. Breaking this rule would entail bad luck; even if the fish themselves were to hear the name of the fisherman men-

tioned, they would work against him and so prevent him being successful in his catch.

In Fiji, the natives fear to offend the water-spirits, so they pass by in silence with heads uncovered and on no account will they allow any food or even a portion of their clothing to fall into the water.

When the Lao hunter starts for the chase he tells his wife not to cut her hair or oil her body while he is absent; should she cut her hair the elephant would burst his bonds, and if she oiled herself the animal would slip through them.

The Eskimos, when hunting bears, do their best to deceive their prey. They pretend to be friendly and make believe that they are following some other animal; they then take their quarry unawares. Animals can in the ordinary way understand what is said to them, hence it is not uncommon for the hunters to speak a secret language among themselves in order that their prey may not understand or be on guard. In other cases the hunter will politely ask the animal to come and be shot, making the prayerful request that it will not be angry.

Sometimes a sort of pantomime will be acted—the hunters dress themselves in the skin of a bear and imitate its actions; this is supposed to have a magnetic or magical influence which will help the capture. The Bushmen of South Africa when hunting the hippopotamus, dress themselves with the head and hide of an antelope over their shoulders and imitate the movements of that animal in order to deceive their quarry.

To prevent suffering any ill effects of their hunt, the Zulus tie a knot in the tail of the animal they have killed—this will prevent them having the stomach-ache when they partake of its flesh!

Pottery-Making.

"Women," says a leading American authority—Dr. Otis Mason—"were the first ceramic artisans and developed all the technique, the forms, and the uses of pottery."

Pottery-making is almost exclusively the employment of women in America and Oceania; while in Africa either the women or the men may do the work. The art is quite unknown to certain races, like the Australians, the Fuegians, the islanders of Torres Straits, and the wild tribes of the Malay Peninsula. Large shells are used as cooking-vessels by the islanders of Torres straits, while bamboo canes and wooden bowls cut from the solid block supply all the needs of the aborigines of the Malay Peninsula.

In Central Africa, the women not only make saucepans and wine-pots but also fire-pans and hearths for carrying fire for cooking-purposes while traveling in canoes. Notwithstanding the fact that the wheel is quite unknown, these articles are generally perfect in shape and are often finished and glazed with gum copal.

The best pottery of Oceania is made in the Fiji Islands, where

Fig. 21. WOMEN MAKING POTS, ISLAND OF TAMARA, NEW GUINEA.

The women are holding a round stone in the left hand and a small piece of wood in the right. These are the sole implements of the lady potters. The coconut-shells near-by contain water to moisten the clay. Notice the ornaments on the ladies arms, neck, and in their ears. The woman in the foreground is wearing two pairs of human ribs in memory of a dead relative. (From Meyer's and Parkinson's *Album von Papua-Typen.*)

red and black ware, of great variety and excellent workmanship is made, as usual by the women. Cooking-pots are to be found in every house, artistically worked with primitive implements as if turned with the wheel.

With the Papuans of to-day (Fig. 21) the art is not equal to that which formerly prevailed in New Guinea, if one is to judge

from the fragments which have been unearthed there in large quantities during recent years.

Warriors and Warfare.

It has been frequently asserted that the normal condition of savage life is one of incessant warfare, and the "ferocious" acts of savage warriors are continually held up as example of their moral depravity.

Thus Dr. Steinmetz, after "careful" investigation, sums up the result in the following words: "We have been able definitely to discover that savages probably after the very earliest stage were bloodthirsty and waged their wars in the cruelest way and with an immense loss of life."

Notwithstanding the dogmatic form in which that conclusion is couched, it may safely be said that no data exist which justify such far-reaching assertions. We are now intimately acquainted with the life history of many of the lowest races on earth; in no single instance does there exist such a condition of warfare, nor the cruel practices so frequently laid to the savage's charge.

Such hostilities as do exist are primarily acts of personal revenge or family feud. As regards neighboring tribes, the savage is not aggressive; he simply acts on the defensive. Savages do not make war to acquire territory, though they may defend their own. Like all animals—wild and domesticated—they resent outside intrusion, hence they frequently kill castaways or members of other tribes who enter their domain. They are careful not to infringe the territorial rights of their neighbors, who on their part recognize the just claims of others.

Even the weapons used by many tribes were not intended in the first instance for killing human beings, but for the chase. Thus the Baris on the Nile use the same weapons for war as for hunting; in the South Seas weapons of warfare are quite unknown to some tribes, the only implements used being spears for catching fish.

Prof. Baldwin Spencer and the late J. F. Gillen—who was for many years sub-protector of the aborigines of South Australia—together the greatest authorities on the Australian blacks, declare as the result of their long and continuous investigations, the assertion that the tribes are constantly hostile to each other and continually at war, is the reverse of the truth. These authorities are supported by other writers who are intimately acquainted with the social life and condition of these tribes.

Mr. F. W. Knocher of the Perak State Museum, tells us that

the hill-tribes of Perak are the most peaceful and peace-loving people on earth and have no ideas of warfare or social strife. The same may be said of the Veddahs, Tamils, and numerous other races whose position in the scale of civilization is the very lowest. Many instances go to show that savages practise toward their enemies acts which we acclaim by our term "humanity."

Not only do they respect the lives of women and children but, as frequently happens, the tombs of their enemies as well. Thus it is asserted of the Nagas that they bestow as much care on the tombs of foes who have fallen near their villages, as on those of their own warriors. The Samoans considered it cowardly to kill a woman. Bonwick asserts of the now extinct Tasmanians that, notwithstanding the provocation received by them at the hands of the colonists, it was seldom that a white woman or child was killed. Again, in 1844, during an attack on Kororareka, the Maoris refrained from destroying the chapels or the houses of the clergy. It is only as uncivilized races are brought into contact with outside influences that the martial side of their character is developed; hence the growth, during the nineteenth century, of the warrior caste among certain races of Africa, like the Zulus, Masai, and other tribes (see frontispiece). It is probable that during the many wars between civilized nations, no instance of an enemy's generosity could be pointed out which compares with the following acts performed by a then race of cannibals.

During one of England's colonial wars, on the bayonetted body of the Maori chief Henare Taratoa, an order of the day was found which ended in Maori with the words: "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." It happened a few days before that several wounded English officers were left inside the Maori redoubt. Henare Taratoa himself tended them all night and one officer who lay dying made a request for water. There was none in the Maori redoubt; the nearest was three miles away, but there was water in the British lines. So this "savage" chief, risking his own life, crept past the sentries, filled a calabash and with it returned to his dying enemy!

On another occasion, during the fighting in 1863, several large canoes were seen by the British coming down the river from Meri-Meri, with a white flag flying. On being detained these canoes were found to contain a large quantity of potatoes and several milch goats, and were sent as a present to the hostile commander—General Cameron—and his troops, as the Maori chief had heard that the general and his men were short of provisions, so in

obedience to the Scriptural injunction, "If thine enemy hunger, give him meat; if he thirst, give him drink," the chiefs had sent their presents.

Christian civilization may point to a long and glorious history, can it point to nobler acts on the field of battle than these?

While warfare in its modern sense is quite foreign to the real savage, certain acts of an hostile character do take place at various times. These are not acts of conquest, but have their origin in superstition and religious custom.

The savage places very little value on his own life or the life of others. Death itself has little terror for him, but superstition which dominates his whole career leads him to the performance of certain acts which we deem cruel. Like his more civilized brother, he is concerned about his welfare in the present world as well as in the next, hence he will raid his neighbors to capture their heads so that his harvest will be plentiful, sickness be diverted, and that he may likewise possess slaves in the world to come.

Thus it was the custom of the Lhota Nāga of Northeast India —according to an official report issued some years since—to cut off the head, hands, and feet of any one they met without any provocation or personal enmity, solely to stick in the field and thereby insure a good crop of grain.

For the same reason the Bontocs of Luzon obtain a head for every farm, at the time of planting and sowing. These heads were exposed on trees in the villages and afterwards kept as relics when the flesh had decayed.

The Dyaks of Borneo have a feast at each head-taking; lavish endearing terms upon the head and thrust food into its mouth. The spirit-power of the deceased, acting through its head, will cause the rice to grow abundantly, the forests to teem with game, women will be fruitful, general health and happiness will abound.

When Dyaks go head-hunting they take special measures to secure the souls of their enemies and render them harmless before they attempt to kill their bodies. For this purpose they build an immature hut, in which some food is placed. The leader of the expedition sits near the hut and addresses the spirits of his own kinsmen whom the enemy have beheaded, and asks the spirits to come to their village where food is abundant. By this means they believe they can deceive the souls of their enemies and induce them also to come to the spot; then, all of a sudden, hidden warriors leap forth, make a supposed attack, and kill the enemy souls. No

danger is now to be apprehended; they sally forth and attack the bodies of the men whose souls have already been destroyed.

In Celebes the wives of the head-hunters must observe certain rules during the absence of the men. They must keep their houses tidy; they must not quit them at night; nor may they sew any garments, because, when the spirits of the head-hunters return, they must find everything in proper order.

Fig. 23. LARGE CANOE—WITHOUT OUTRIGGER—OF BUKA, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

Some of these canoes are nearly sixty feet long by three and one half feet wide. They are made of pieces of wood fastened together; are very elegant in appearance, and ornamented with mother of pearl The Buka Islanders have been considered to be the finest specimens of manhood in the South Seas. (From Meyer's and Parkinson's *Album von Papua-Typen.*)

With the Dyaks and Solomon Islanders head-hunting is an absorbing passion; on a single expedition no less than sixty heads are sometimes taken. For this purpose canoes (Fig. 23) frequently capable of holding seventy men are fitted out.

At the launching of a canoe, two skulls of enemies were set up on a post, the canoe houses were likewise decorated with them,

the scalps and hair were put on a coconut mat and hung in the common hall.

When a canoe was built in the Fiji Islands, a man was killed, and when launched, human bodies were used as rollers to aid its passage to the sea.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

SEMITES, HEBREWS, ISRAELITES, JEWS.

BY PAUL HAUPT.

THERE seems to be a certain haziness in many minds, even among specialists, as to the difference between Semites, Hebrews, Israelites, and Jews. These four terms are often regarded as synonymous. The *Century Dictionary* defines *Jew* as a Hebrew, an Israelite; *Israelite* as a Hebrew, a Jew; and *Hebrew* as an Israelite, a Jew. *Anti-Semitic* is often used for *anti-Jewish,* although the anti-Semites have no antagonism to the Arabs who are more Semitic than the Jews.

In his review of Dr. S. Maybaum's book on the development of the ancient Israelitish priesthood, published in the *Göttinger Gelehrte Anzeigen* at the beginning of 1881 and afterward reprinted in the first volume of his *Mitteilungen* (Göttingen, 1884), p. 55, Paul de Lagarde called Semites, Hebrews, Israelites, Jews a *descending scale.* I do not endorse this statement, but Lagarde recognized at least that there was a difference between Semites, Hebrews, Israelites, and Jews.

There were no Jews before the return from the Babylonian Captivity in 538 B. C. Eduard Meyer said at the beginning of his monograph on the Aramaic papyri of Elephantine that Judaism was a creation of the Persian empire.[1] We possess now a decree of Darius II, written in the year 419, which sets forth the regulations concerning the Feast of Unleavened Bread; these were intended, not only for the Jewish colony of Elephantine in Egypt, but for all the Jews in the Persian empire (cf. *op. cit.,* p. 96). The Pentateuch was made the standard of the restored community in Jerusalem under the auspices of the Persian empire. The law which Ezra brought from Babylonia in 458, was the Priestly Code, but the Torah which was proclaimed at the great public meeting convened by

[1] Eduard Meyer, *Der Papyrusfund von Elephantine* (Leipsic, 1912), p. 1.