

A GAMBLER'S GUESS AT IT.

What are the stars but dice of God
Flung on the night's uncertain sod?

What is the stake He lays with Fate
But whether Life's for love or hate?

What if He loses to the Foe?
Forfeit to Fate we too must go.

What if He wins? Security
For all through all eternity.

SAVAGE LIFE AND CUSTOM.

BY EDWARD LAWRENCE.

XI. SAVAGE CHARACTER, AS SHOWN BY THEIR MANNERS,
MORALS AND PROVERBS.

NO account of savage life and custom would be complete without some notice of their moral characteristics. Savage ways are not our ways, neither are savage ethics our ethics. We have seen them practising cannibalism; offering up human sacrifices and putting to death their relations, and we are repeatedly assured that this is the natural condition of barbaric man. We have been told, over and over again, that races like the South Sea Islanders, live in a state of "revolting depravity"; that they are thieves and liars, and that their normal condition is one of "brutal licentiousness." The very expression "savage" is a synonym for all that is vile in human nature. Yet we have seen how very careful these wild people are in training their little children to ways which all of us deem to be right; are we then to draw the conclusion that all this education is thrown away when riper years are attained? Such an argument would be absurd, because it is obvious that for the training of the young by the ethical standards we have seen, there must be a body of public opinion which enforces that teaching and looks for good results to come therefrom for the benefit of the community.

To judge savages by the ethical code of an alien race is manifestly unfair and unjust: they, at least, have no two thousand years of Christian teaching behind them, and if it really be true that their social condition is one of utter depravity we must make allowances accordingly.

As an example of the moral status of savage peoples let us take the charges that have been made against the Society Islanders, referred to above, and let us remember at the same time, that we wish to know them as they were before the white man came.

Captain Charles Wilkes, of the United States Exploring Expedition, who visited Tahiti some seventy years ago, declares that notwithstanding innumerable opportunities they did not steal; that they were well-behaved and there was neither drunkenness nor rioting of any kind.

Take another example. In a work published not many years since the Fijians were declared to possess "all the vices of a barbarous people." The possession of *all* the vices of barbarism is an indictment serious enough to be laid to the credit of any race; we will therefore take our verdict from those who lived with them, in some instances for many years. "Kind and hospitable," one author calls them, "and exceedingly honest." Their chiefs are true gentlemen, in courtesy and politeness; the men are faithful, honest and kind, and would compare favorably "with the white savages of England." Parents are deeply attached to their children. One writer gives an instance where a native of these islands, on being told that Europeans accused them of being without natural affection denied it and said: "When leaving home all my thoughts are with my family, and I am never so happy as when I am under my own roof and have my wife and children around me. When a few days ago my youngest boy was ill, I sat up with him three nights. It would have broken my heart had he died." Yet this man had not heard of the name of Christ! Another authority assures us that they have a far greater show of courage, manliness, and even humanity than Europeans.

Captain Erskine, who visited the Fiji Islands in the middle of the nineteenth century, said that their love of personal cleanliness is not inferior to that of the more refined Polynesians, and that their delicacy in some other respects would certainly put most Europeans to the blush. Yet these people were cannibals!

We have been told that the Samoans live in a shocking state of moral degradation, but careful observers tell us that they are remarkable for their cleanliness, and that their habits of decency

are carried to a higher point than those of the most fastidious of civilized nations; they are kind and hospitable to a degree. One authority pronounces them the most polite people in the world, in their language and in their manners and customs. A man must not brag or boast. In addressing any one, he must always consider him as being entitled to the utmost respect. They never break their word, nor go from a promise. Nor is this the full measure of their "shocking moral degradation"—criminal assaults on little children are entirely unknown. Yet, according to official figures, during a period of ten years, there were twelve hundred known cases in England alone.

I have selected these three races because certain missionaries had laid to their charge accusations which careful observers declare to be false; but I could go on and give instance after instance where like charges have been made against other races, which are equally unfounded.

No man who knows anything about savages will consider them to be angels of light, but those serious indictments which have been repeatedly made against them in general cannot be sustained by the evidence now at our command—that is, at least, against the wild races unaffected by modern civilization. There are hundreds of tribes who neither steal nor quarrel, where no such thing as wilful murder is known, where the girls are chaste, where men and women remain faithful to each other for the term of their life, and where drunkenness and other vices are never heard of. Not so very long ago, the following incident occurred in a civilized country. A schoolboy, aged thirteen, shot another lad of the same age. They had quarreled over a game of cards and both were drunk. I have studied savages for over thirty years and am unable to recall any like case as happening with them.

But it may be said, this is all very well, but these very savages kill off their aged and their sick by cracking them on the head. Many tribes do kill off their old people—parents and others—but this is not done for those reasons which we place to their credit; the true reason being a religious one.

All savages believe in a future existence. If any person dies possessing any infirmity, that infirmity will be reproduced in the spiritual life, hence they wish to die before old age approaches. Captain Wilkes found in one large town in Fiji that there was not a single person over forty years of age: all had been killed off before their faculties began to wane. This may be "murder," but

it shows a real and a logical faith in a future life, which Christians themselves may *profess* but do not really *possess*.

In order to show that this high tone of morals and good manners is by no means an exception, I will quote the reports of scientific investigators who in recent years have made very careful inquiries as to the moral condition of some of the most "degraded" tribes on earth. Let us take the natives of the Andaman Islands first of all, who have been studied so minutely by Mr. E. H. Man, formerly assistant superintendent of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. In his report issued in 1883, he declares that they show the greatest care to the sick, aged, and helpless. There is no such thing as bigamy, polygamy, polyandry, or divorce. Conjugal fidelity is the rule, not the exception. If the treatment of women be a sure test of character, then "these savages are qualified to teach a valuable lesson to many of the fellow-countrymen of those who have hastily set them down as 'an anomalous race of the most degraded description.'"

Let us pass to the neighboring islands—the Nicobars.¹ These natives were visited by Dampier in 1688, who reported them to be a very honest, civil, harmless people, not addicted to quarreling, theft or murder. Two hundred years after Dampier's visit, Mr. W. L. Distant was informed by traders that they were very honest, faithfully fulfilling all their obligations, and looked upon unchastity as a very deadly sin.

Messrs. W. W. Skeat, M.A., and Charles O. Blagden, M.A., both formerly of the Federated Malay States Civil Service, in their monumental work on *The Pagan Races of the Malay Peninsula*, pronounce the Semangs and Sakois to be practically free from crime of any description—the greatest crime of all, "murder," being a *quantité négligeable*.

Another authority, Mr. F. W. Knocker, in a report on the hill-tribes of Sungei Ujong, Perak, says that during his long experience and close acquaintance with them they lived a strictly moral life, adultery and divorce are unknown. Apparently they have no inclination toward crime or immorality in any form; they possess no idea of warfare or racial strife and have a preference for a life of peace and seclusion.

Russel Wallace writing of the Dyaks of Borneo tells us that they possess a high moral character; they are truthful and honest to a remarkable degree; will not take the smallest thing belonging to a neighbor or to a European. Crimes of violence—except head-

¹ Compare Fig. 4 in *The Open Court*, Oct., 1918, p. 593.

hunting—are almost unknown; in twelve years there was only one case of murder, and that was committed by a stranger. Speaking of their sexual relations, Mr. Ling Roth, one of the greatest authorities, considers that morality half as good as theirs could not be found in England among an equal number of persons.

No natives have been more maligned than the aborigines of Australia. One writer declares that there is not a redeeming point in their whole character; Mr. W. D. Pitcairn, F.R.G.S., assures us that the natives of Queensland "are as dangerous as snakes in the grass and *like them, should be trodden underfoot.*"² On the other hand, Mr. Robert Christison, who probably had more to do with these people in their wild state than any other white man, found that conjugal and paternal affection were strongly developed in both sexes, and he emphatically declared that the bad character given to them by many settlers was the very reverse of the actual facts.

Sir William MacGregor, K.C.M.G., M.D., who was appointed administrator of British New Guinea in 1888, says that during his term of office in that country he never heard of a case of a criminal assault upon women, and that the natives in their domestic and family relations are about the most affectionate people on earth. Another authority declares they are a merry, jolly, happy folk, such as no Christian people are.

James Chalmers, the lamented veteran missionary, tells us that the children in New Guinea³ are far happier than most children in Great Britain, and that he has seen the fifth commandment more honored in that savage land than he has on many occasions in England; not even a man of middle life will undertake anything without his parents' consent.

I could quote, almost unceasingly, other testimonials as to the moral condition of these "degraded savages" of the South Sea Islands, but I think that the foregoing evidence taken from various sources, is in itself sufficient to prove that the beastish state in which these Papuans and Polynesians are supposed to live is but one of those silly superstitions which the white man loves to believe with pharisaical self-satisfaction.

Turning from Polynesia to the North American continent, let us now examine the character of that "wild beast," the red Indian. It is hardly necessary to remind American readers of the colors in which the red man has usually been painted. Brutality, cruelty, and inhumanity of all descriptions have been laid to his charge, but

² Italics are mine.

³ Compare Fig. 8 in *The Open Court*, Oct., 1918, p. 599.

can any man who has attempted to get at the truth of these accusations, disagree with America's historian (George Bancroft) when he pertinently says: "We call them cruel, yet they never invented the thumb-screw, or the boot, or the rack, or broke on the wheel, or exiled bands of their nations for opinion's sake; and never protected the monopoly of a medicine-man by the gallows or the block or by fire."⁴

Who ever knew one of these "wild beasts" to tell a lie or break his plighted word? Mr. James McLaughlin, formerly agent to the Sioux, after thirty-eight years of personal experience with the "red devils," assures us that there were Indians whose loyalty to their pledged word was so strong and dependable that they were ready, not only to dare the opprobrium of their own people, but to defy the powers of the unseen and the unknown world.⁵

Cadwallader Colden, in his *History of the Five Indian Nations*, published in 1747, wrote that the British in 1664 entered into a friendship with these Indians which had continued without the least breach to his own day, and adds significantly that history "cannot give an instance of the most Christian or most Catholic kings observing a treaty so strictly, and for so long a time as these barbarians, as they are called, have done."⁶

Old warriors always exhorted the lads to speak the truth, and never to betray their friends, and to hold falsehood to be more mean and contemptible than stealing.

Lieut. Col. Dodge, U.S.A., has testified that, with all his extensive experience of the Indian, he has never seen a drunken woman among them; Captain J. G. Bourke, another U. S. army officer, speaking of their kindness to strangers says: "Hospitality, open-handed, uncalculating hospitality, is a characteristic of all the American Indians."

The high repute of American Indian girls for modesty and chastity is well known to most of us. Perhaps no story could prove better what they are willing to suffer, including death, in defense of their virtue than the following account of a Yucatan girl which Herbert Howe Bancroft unearthed from old Spanish records. Alonzo Lopez de Avila, during the war against a native chief, took prisoner a very beautiful girl. "Struck by her beauty, the captor endeavored

⁴ *History of the Colonization of the United States*, Boston, 1841, Vol. III, pp. 301f.

⁵ *My Friend the Indian*, 1910.

⁶ Reprint (Vol. I, p. 19) published by the New Amsterdam Book Co., New York, 1902.

by all means to gratify his desires, but in vain. She had promised her warrior-husband, who during those perilous times was constantly face to face with death, that none but he should call her wife; how then, while perhaps he yet lived, could she become another's mistress? But such arguments could not quench the Spaniard's lust, and as she remained steadfast he ordered her to be cast among the bloodhounds who devoured her—a martyr at the hands of the men who pretended to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified.⁷

If we pursue our investigations into the Dark Continent, we meet like results. There we find immodesty and indelicacy of manner to be unknown; dignity, simplicity, honor, chastity, obedience, respect and veneration for old age to be the virtues esteemed by these backward races. The unaffected black is a gentleman, who expects you to be a gentleman too.

It may be accepted as indisputable that the savage in general is a law-abiding member of the community, who neither steals nor murders, nor commits many of those crimes which so frequently happen in civilized societies. There are many tribes where faithless wives are almost unknown, and where chastity and sobriety hold high place.

In studying these moral characteristics, it cannot be pointed out too often that nowhere do we meet with any set code or standard which is capable of being applied to savage tribes in general. What is right conduct with one tribe may be criminal in another. Thus, as I have shown, the Fijians kill off their relatives before senility approaches, and they themselves expect to be likewise killed when the time comes; whereas tribes like the Andamanese take every care of their old people. It is not the act itself by which we must judge, but the motive which occasions that act. It is a commonplace for us to meet with such anomalies everywhere in the social life of uncultured races.

I have already quoted Dr. A. C. Haddon's description of the natives of the Torres Straits.⁸ Dealing with the rules imparted to the youths by the "old men" he gives us the following:

"You no steal.

"If you see food belong another man, you no take it.

"If any one asks for food, or water, or anything, you give something; if you have a little, you give a little; if you have plenty, give half.

⁷ *Native Races of the Pacific States*, Vol. II, p. 186.

⁸ Compare *The Open Court*, Nov., 1918, p. 667.

"Look after your mother and father; never mind if you and your wife go without.

"Don't speak bad word to mother.

"If your brother is going out to fight, you help him; don't let him go first, go together."

It is often extremely difficult to get at the real inwardness of the savage mind. Savages often do, and often think, just the opposite to what we ourselves do under similar circumstances; but, for my part, I consider that nothing reveals better how really human they are, than their wise sayings and proverbs. I select a few of these out of a great number, and think all will agree that they illustrate better than anything else the real philosophy of savage peoples.

POLYNESIA.

"Who is the strongest of servants?"—Fire.

"What fire is the hardest to put out?"—Thought.

"What beats a drum at one end and dances at the other?"—A dog barking and wagging his tail for joy.

Samoan: "Stones decay, but words never decay."

Fijian: "Oh, what a valiant man you are who beat your wife, but dare not go to war!"

"If you have a great canoe, great will be your labor too,"—
i. e., wealth brings care.

CENTRAL AFRICA.

"The Big Eye"—i. e., avarice.

"Wisdom is not in the eye, but in the head."

"If a woman speaks two words, take one and leave the other"—
i. e., believe one half she says.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Kaffir: "Who is it that stands and never sits?"—A tree.

"One does not become great by claiming greatness."

EAST AFRICA.

Nyamwezi: "A liar's road is a short one."

WEST AFRICA.

Ashanti: "A poor man has no friend."

Wolof: "Liars, however numerous, will be caught by Truth when it rises up."

Yoruba: "Wherever a man goes to dwell his character goes with him."

"A mourner mourns and goes on her way, but one who ponders over sad memories mourns without ceasing."

"The wisdom of this year will be as folly in another."

"Full-belly child says to hungry-belly child, keep good heart."

Here we have examples from Polynesia and all parts of Africa; the meanings are so very obvious that no explanation is required. They are characteristically human and might be adopted and acted upon by other races which think themselves far in advance of savagery.

[TO BE CONCLUDED.]

THE ORIGIN OF JUDEO-CHRISTIAN WORSHIP.¹

BY MAXIMILIAN J. RUDWIN.

THE liturgy of the church is, as a matter of fact, an outgrowth of the liturgy of the synagogue. The earliest church service naturally was a synagogue service Christianized. The first Christian congregations, composed, chiefly, of Jews, retained the synagogue service in its main features. The Temple ritual, on the other hand, had very little direct influence on the church ritual. Prayer wholly divorced from the sacerdotal and sacrificial elements, as we find it in the church, is once and for all a heritage of the synagogue and not of the Temple. When the Exilic pseudo-Isaiah, who was of universalistic tendencies, says in the name of God: "For mine house shall be an house of prayer for all nations,"² he refers to the synagogue and not to the Temple. For the house of prayer in the Exilic and post-Exilic periods was the synagogue and not the Temple. But how did prayer come to take the place of sacrifice in Judea? The origin of Jewish prayer still lies in utter darkness. Between the sacrifices of the Temple and the prayers of the synagogue there yawns a chasm which all investigation has not yet

¹ This paper is a summary of a prize essay written ten years ago when the present writer was pursuing his studies in Biblical literature and comparative religion.

² Is. lvi. 7.