

The Open Court

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and the
Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea

Editor: DR. PAUL CARUS.

Associates: { E. C. HEGELER.
MARY CARUS.

VOL. XXIII. (No. 2.)

FEBRUARY, 1909.

NO. 633

CONTENTS:

	PAGE
<i>Frontispiece.</i> Charles Darwin.	
<i>Healing by Conjuraton in Ancient Babylon</i> (Illustrated). EDITOR	65
<i>The Modern Gandhara</i> (Illustrated). THOMAS P. HUGHES	75
<i>An Episode in the Life of a Medium</i> (With Editorial Comment). GEORGE C. BARTLETT	79
<i>The Necromancy of Numbers and Letters.</i> H. R. EVANS	85
<i>Reminiscences of a Famous Magician.</i> H. J. BURLINGAME	96
<i>Poetry Dictated by Voices</i> (With Editorial Comment). R. C. COCKERILL	107
<i>Revelations of an Ex-Medium.</i> Communicated by the EDITOR	111
<i>Names of Deity.</i> WILLIS BREWER	119
<i>The Darwin and Lincoln Centennial.</i>	124
<i>Mr. Leubuscher's Statement Concerning De Medici</i>	126
<i>Book Reviews and Notes</i>	127

CHICAGO

The Open Court Publishing Company

LONDON: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd.

Per copy, 10 cents (sixpence). Yearly, \$1.00 (in the U.P.U., 5s. 6d.).

Entered as Second-Class Matter March 26, 1897, at the Post Office at Chicago, Ill. under Act of March 3, 1879.
Copyright by The Open Court Publishing Company, 1909.

10 Cents Per Copy

\$1.00 Per Year

The Open Court

An Illustrated Monthly Magazine

Devoted to the Science of Religion, The Religion of Science
and the Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea.

Science is slowly but surely transforming the world. Science is knowledge verified; it is Truth proved; and Truth will always conquer in the end. The power of Science is irresistible. Science is the still small voice; it is not profane, it is sacred; it is not human, it is superhuman; Science is a divine revelation.

Convinced of the religious significance of Science, *The Open Court* believes that there is a holiness in scientific truth which is not as yet recognised in its full significance either by scientists or religious leaders. The scientific spirit, if it but be a genuine devotion to Truth, contains a remedy for many ills; it leads the way of conservative progress and comes not to destroy but to fulfil.

The Open Court on the one hand is devoted to the *Science of Religion*; it investigates the religious problems in the domain of philosophy, psychology, and history; and on the other hand advocates the *Religion of Science*. It believes that Science can work out a reform within the Churches that will preserve of religion all that is true, and good, and wholesome.

60 Cents per copy

\$2.00 per Year

THE MONIST

The Monist is a Quarterly Magazine, devoted to the Philosophy of Science. Each copy contains 160 pages; original articles, correspondence from foreign countries, discussions, and book reviews.

The Monist Advocates the Philosophy of Science

which is an application of the scientific method to philosophy.

The old philosophical systems were mere air-castles (constructions of abstract theories,) built in the realm of pure thought. The Philosophy of Science is a systematisation of positive facts; it takes experience as its foundation, and uses the systematised formal relations of experience (mathematics, logic, etc.) as its method. It is opposed on the one hand to the dogmatism of groundless *a priori* assumptions, and on the other hand to the scepticism of negation which finds expression in the agnostic tendencies of to-day.

Monism Means a Unitary World-Conception

There may be different aspects and even contrasts, diverse views and opposite standpoints, but there can never be contradiction in truth.

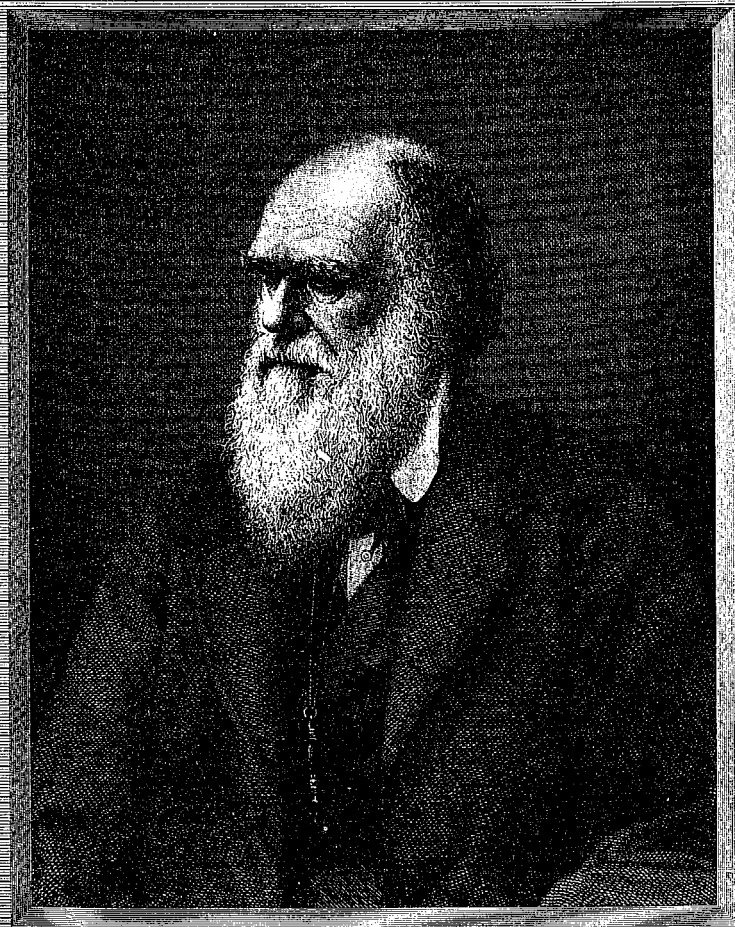
Monism is not a one-substance theory, be it materialistic or spiritualistic or agnostic; it means simply and solely *consistency*.

All truths form one consistent system, and any dualism of irreconcilable statements indicates that there is a problem to be solved; there must be fault somewhere either in our reasoning or in our knowledge of facts. Science always implies Monism, i. e., a unitary world conception.

Illustrated Catalogue and sample copies free.

The Open Court Publishing Co.

378 Wabash Avenue, Chicago



Charles Darwin.

Frontispiece to The Open Court.

THE OPEN COURT

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and
the Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea.

VOL. XXIII. (No. 2.)

FEBRUARY, 1909.

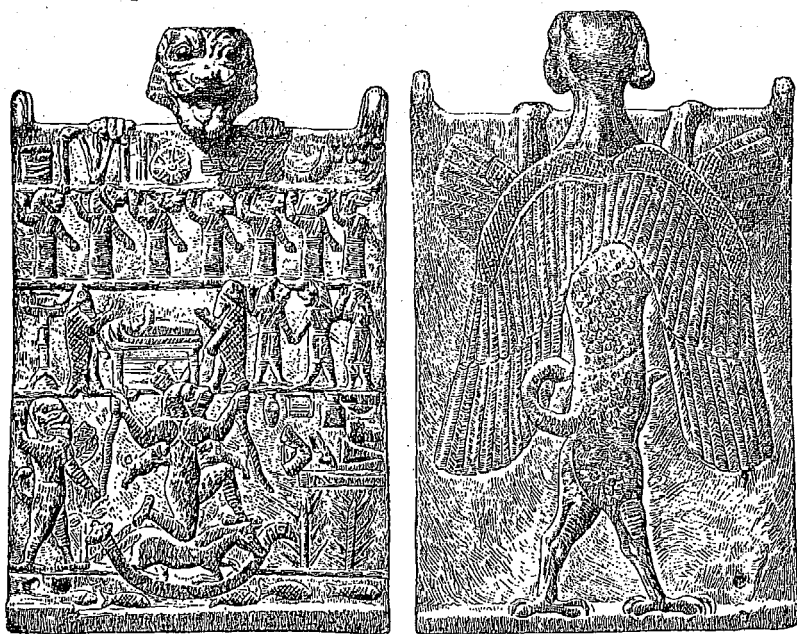
NO. 633.

Copyright by The Open Court Publishing Company, 1909.

HEALING BY CONJURATION IN ANCIENT BABYLON.

BY THE EDITOR.

ONE of the most interesting monuments of Babylonian antiquity is a little bronze plaque, held in the paws of a monster and representing on the front side some scenes which are not



CONJURATION TABLET TO CURE FEVER PATIENTS.

easily interpreted. When discovered the little tablet was regarded as containing a description of the soul's descent to the underworld,

corner bearing a lamp, sacred to the god Nusku. At either end of the couch stands a priest or conjurer dressed in a fish skin. We know that the fish was an emblem of the god Ea (the second person of the Babylonian trinity) whose home is the ocean, and who is supposed to be endowed with magic powers.

On the top of this scene we see seven figures which are at once recognizable as the seven evil spritis called in Babylonian *utukke*



DEMONS FIGHTING EACH OTHER.

In the British Museum.

limnuti, i. e., the bad demons. They are frequently enumerated and are always seven, although their names are sometimes different. Every one of them bears the epithet *limnu* "evil" and they stand in contrast to the seven good spirits whose constellation is the Pleiades, the seven stars. In a text (published in C. T. XVI, 44 "K" 83,

lines 85 ff.) the questions are raised, Where were they born and where do they grow up? The answer reads as follows:

"The Seven were born on the mountains of the west,
the Seven grew up on the mountain of the east;
in the hollow of the earth they sit around,
in the deserts of the earth they are housed (?).
In heaven and on earth they are not found out, they are covered
with the glamor of fright,
among the wise gods they are not known,
their name existed neither in heaven nor on earth;
the seven roam in the mountains of the West,
the seven enjoy (?) themselves upon the mountains of the East;
in the hollow of the earth they creep about;
in the waste places of the earth they make their abode (?),
in all possible things they remain unknown, in heaven and on
earth they can not be found out."

Similar texts show the seven demons to be formidable spirits with animal heads. We read for instance (in C. T. XVI, 19 Ut. limn. XVI, 13 ff. Frank *loc. cit.*, pp. 22-23):

"Of the seven the first one is a powerful (?) south wind...;
The second is a dragon (?) whose open jaws no [mouth
equals?]
the third is a panther, terrible are his jaws, [he knows no pity],
the fourth one is a frightful *shibbu*-snake...
the fifth is a horrible *appu* who would never turn back,
the sixth is an aggressive... who against God and King [ad-
vances?],
the seventh one is a terrible cloud-burst, that..."

The seven evil spirits attack different parts of the body. We read in C. T. XVII, 9 (Frank, *loc. cit.*, p. 32) the following text:

"Ashakku attacks the head of man,
Namtaru attacks the throat of man,
the wicked Utukku attacks his neck,
the wicked Alu attacks his breast,
the wicked Etimmu attacks his belly,
the wicked Gallu attacks his hand,
the wicked Ilu* attacks his foot."

We observe here as elsewhere the significance of the number seven as a magic number, and in conjuration its use occurs again

* *Ilu* means "god."

and again. There is one conjuration which invokes the seven evil spirits seven times. It reads thus (Frank, p. 16):

"Seven gods of the wide heavens,
seven gods of the wide country,
seven violent (?) gods,
seven gods of might,
seven evil gods,
seven evil Labartus,
seven evil fever-Labartus."

Labartu is the goddess of fever, but here the word is used as a collective term, a kind of family name, for the seven evil demons are the brothers of Labartu. From the tablets called Labartu-texts we can form a conception of the character and appearance of Labartu. She is called the daughter of Anu, and the seven evil spirits are also called the sons of Anu. But for further identification we find also the expression "sister of the storm gods" which is another name for the seven evil spirits. She is described as pale, and carrying "serpents in her hands."

The top line of the relief presents symbols of gods which, beginning at the left, appear as follows:

We see first a crown ornamented with horns which seems to be the emblem of Anu, the god of heaven. The next symbol is a ram's head on a staff which represents Ea, the god of the water. The third emblem showing three diverging rods represents the thunder-bolt of Adad, the god of thunder-storms. Next follow the lance of Marduk the slayer of Tiamat, and the double rod of Nabu, the god of writing and of measuring. In the center directly under the head of the monster we see the three symbols which are never missing in any invocation of the gods. These are the eight-rayed star of Istar, i. e., Venus, the morning star; the winged solar disk which is the emblem of Shamash, the sungod; and the crescent, the symbol of the moon-god. The seven dots in the right corner are the seven stars of the Pleiades, or the seven good spirits.

One of the texts (C. T. XVII, 4 ff., Tab. N. quoted by Frank, *loc. cit.*, pp. 59-60) will throw some light upon our tablet. It reads:

"A kurkizannu swine [thou shalt slaughter]...
the head of the sick....

His [the swine's] heart tear out...

Upon the diseased man's....[place it.]

His [the swine's] blood smear (?) on the side of the bed.....

Dissect the pig into its members,

spread them over the diseased man.

This same person purify with the consecrated water of Apsu,
and cleanse him;

then let the censer and the torch be brought to him,
leavened (?) loaves, twice seven, place at the *kamu*-door,
offer the swine as a substitute for him (the patient)
flesh in the place of his (the patient's) flesh, blood in the place
of his (the patient's) blood, offer it, let them [the demons]
take it.

The heart [of the swine] which thou hast placed upon the
patient,
in the place of his heart, offer it; let them take it."

Food and drink are offered to Labartu and a pot of seed as well as a flask filled with oil is also mentioned. The ritual of the Labartu texts also mentions the hide of a horse, and in some of the texts (See Frank, *loc. cit.*, p. 78) we find a request to make an ass of clay. We do not know what connection the ass has with Labartu, but she must stand in some mystical relation to this animal for it is stated that she has the teeth of an ass. In some representations we find Labartu kneeling on the ass, who in his turn kneels in a ship. In other pictures she stands directly in the ship.

The ship is also mentioned in the Labartu texts. In one of them we read that a sailing vessel was especially made for her, and here the suggestion was made that Labartu should leave in a ship. While Labartu is said to live in the mountains she is also mentioned as coming out of the reeds, and in our relief we notice the reeds which grow on the bank of the river. In one of our texts we read of the Ulai River and the seas.

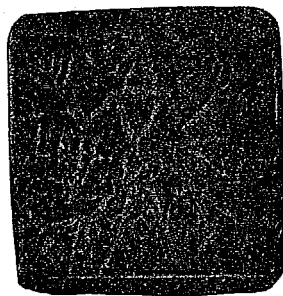
The animals mentioned in connection with Labartu are the dog and the swine. Some of the Labartu illustrations are too indistinct to form a definite idea of the cubs she suckles, but Layard's Labartu Relief shows plainly that they are a dog and a pig. In one place mention is made that the heart of a swine is placed in her mouth. The group in the lower part of the tablet takes most space and its interpretation has presented many difficulties, but since the Labartu texts have been discovered and deciphered we can with certainty identify the monster in the center with Labartu, the deadly fever demon.

It is probable that the several limbs in the upper corner of this lower group represent offerings made to Labartu. They are most likely the limbs of an animal, offered to her in substitution for the

diseased limbs of the patient, and among them we see also two vessels, a vase, and a kind of flask which may very well represent a pot of seed and a flask of oil, as mentioned in the texts. The monster behind Labartu in the left corner has not yet been identified. He looks somewhat like the scorpion-men which guard the horizon. We do not know enough to explain his presence in this connection. Dr. Frank (*loc. cit.*, p. 84) believes him to be Lilu who is frequently mentioned in connection with Labartu, but so long as we do not know more about Lilu we have simply a nameless figure without any definite meaning. Whether he is a spirit who helps to send Labartu off on the river and thus forms part of



LABARTU RELIEF.
After Layard's *Culte de Vénus*.



LABARTU AMULET
In the deClercq collection, Paris,

the conjuration or whether he belongs to Labartu's retinue, it is difficult to say. The former seems the more probable since the scorpion-tailed demon remains on the shore. He appears to have a lion's head and his feet are the claws of an eagle or some other bird-of-prey.

A number of similar representations have been discovered but the plate here reproduced is the best preserved. Dr. Karl Frank publishes another one which in all essentials represents the same events and differs only in details.

The lionheaded monster with serpents in her hands and cubs at her breasts is also represented in a relief published by Layard in his *Culte de Vénus*, Plate XVII, the original copy of which, however, has been lost.

A little tablet of apparently very ancient origin is so similar in appearance that we must look upon it as representing the same kind of a demon. It consists of outlines only but shows the two cubs plainly. The one is like a dog, the other too indistinct for recognition. The snakes are missing, unless we identify them with two curved lines above the monster's outstretched hands.

Conjuration for the sake of healing the patient is done mainly through the ceremony of laying on of hands. We read for instance in the texts that the priest says: "In laying my hand upon the head of the sick" (*loc. cit.*, p. 41), and also "when pronouncing over the sick the conjuration." In addition, however, there are many detailed symbols used for the exorcism of demons. The priests carry birds in their hands and they swing a whip. Censers are put up and torches are lit.

The following text (C. T., XVI, 28 Ut. Limm. tablet "B" 63 ff.—Frank, *loc. cit.*, pp. 38-39) offers us an insight into these ceremonies. We read:

"Seven censers, according to the holy command he (Ea) has given into my hands,

The raven, the watch(?)-bird of the gods, I hold in my right hand,

the falcon, the soaring (?) bird, I pass over thy diseased face with my left;

in the red garment of reverence I dress myself for thy sake,
in the red coat, the coat of splendor, I clothe my purified body for thee.

The *khulu* I hang upon the lintel (?) of the door,

the shoot of a *baltu* plant I hang upon a peg.

With the lash I beat thy body like a stubborn (?) ass."

In summing up the results of these facts we come to the conclusion that the tablet is a talisman made to protect a patient against the fever demon. It presents the sick man on his couch with the officiating conjurers dressed in fish skins. On the top line the gods are represented in a similar way as on *kudurru*s, and the seven evil spirits are arrayed against the fever demon. The latter departs from the sick man in a boat on the river.

The whole conception here represented is characteristic of the

Babylonian religion in a certain phase of its development. It is the idea of magic which cured diseases by casting out demons and through the assistance of other demons forcing them to turn back and spare their victim.

Any one reared in the atmosphere of scientific thought will find it difficult to understand what an important part at a certain phase of history the notion of magic must have played in the religious development of mankind. Yet we possess the historical evidence, and the belief in magic is still lingering with us, for it has left its traces in our religious dogmas, traditions, and institutions; indeed it celebrates its revival in Christian science, faith cure and mental healing.

Some of the ancient Babylonian notions of magic and with them the ancient method of healing by the laying on of hands were preserved down to the time of the Christian era. We read in the Acts of the Apostles viii. 8; in Mark vi. 5; vii. 32; xvi. 18; in Luke iv. 40 etc. that the sick are cured by the laying on of hands, and we can not doubt that the laying on of hands as still practiced in the several Christian churches for the ordination of priests, in baptism, and in the confirmation ritual, and generally for blessing, signifies in its original meaning a mystical transfer of spirit from one person to another. It is thought to be not merely an emblematic act, conveying a spiritual meaning, but the communication of a mysterious power, and assuredly we cannot deny that ideas are potent actualities. Thus we can readily understand that, whenever believed in, they possess a certain power. As the ceremony of ordination conveys the power to perform certain priestly functions recognized by the Church, so in ancient Babylon the impressive ritual of healing in spite of the many superstitious notions connected therewith, may frequently have had the desired result upon the patient who believed in its efficacy.

It appears that in past ages misfortunes and diseases have done much to make people religious, and magical conjurations of the goddess of fever as well as of the spirits of the ailments of the several parts of the body (seven in number) were resorted to in ancient Babylon as a well-recommended cure in cases of illness. What a gulf between then and now, and yet we can trace step by step the progress made from the ancient magical medicine to modern therapeutics, which having reached at last a scientific conception of the nature of life and its functions on the basis of an accumulated experience of generation after generation, adapts the medical treatment to a diagnosis of the disease.