

NAMES OF DEITY.

BY THE HON. WILLIS BREWER.

IN the November number of *The Open Court* Mr. C. A. Browne interests us with a discussion of the names the Greeks applied to Deity; citing the "Cratylus" of Plato on the subject, and rejecting the statement of Herodotus that the divine names used by the Greeks were nearly all derived from those of the Egyptians. Mr. Browne refers to my articles in *The Open Court* of May and August, and is not in accord with me, I regret to say, in sustaining the Greek traveler.

Philology is the least exact of sciences. For one, at least, I find it impossible to be positive in any discussion of it; hence I use the words "seems," "perhaps," "probably," at every step in its paths. I confess, however, to some amazement when I turn to the ponderous tomes of Webster and Worcester, there to find our modern languages mainly derived from Iran and the uplands of the Indus, with scarcely a single reference to the vernacular of peoples with whom quasi-modern tongues like the Greek and the Latin were in immediate contact; peoples on the Levant who as Egyptians and Chaldeo-Phoenicians were recognized by the Greeks and the Latins as the most learned of all the sons of men. But one is the more disposed to excuse these patient lexicographers when one finds that the laborious Gesenius is equally remiss as to the very ancient tongue spoken on the Nile and its influence on the neighboring Hebrew.

Few students of religious origins or ideas will deny the operation of those of Egypt upon the creeds of the West, and even upon Christianity. This operation did not cease with the overthrow of the ancient monarchy by Kambyses, and was largely expanded under the sway of the Ptolemys, Emperor Hadrian in the second century considering Christ and Serapis as the same. If, then, the religion of the Egyptians was so potential, so wide-spread; their learning

so universally confessed; why should we ignore all diffusion of their language?

Greek students, in their devotion to the genius of the Hellenic peoples, so thrilling and ennobling as its productions are to all the lofty of soul, seem often insensibly to install those peoples at the fountain sources of knowledge and culture. The fact must not be forgotten, however, that, apart from Homer and Hesiod (‘Hesi-it, Egyptian for “bard,” “singer”; ‘Hesid, Hebrew for “holy-one,” Ps. xvi. 10), the glory and grandeur of Greek genius was almost entirely enclosed within the two centuries between B. C. 500 and 300; a period which I take to cover the main part of Hebrew literary activity also. A thousand years before the older of these dates the eighteenth dynasty of Egypt had, from their lithograph evidences, raised that nation to the highest pinnacle of art and conquest. These evidences claim that they had taken Nineveh, the massive temples and colossi at Thebes were then upreared, and the lately-found tablets at Tel Amarnah show that Egyptian governors in the land of milk and metheglin were there ready to oppose the Jehoshua who about that time is said to have exterminated the Canaanites. This thousand years are as the time between the building of the Parthenon and the burning of the Alexandrian library; as the time between the Pandects of Justinian and the witch-burning in Massachusetts. What is the history of the naked savages of the Greek peninsula and their barbarous jargon when Thebes and her hundred gates were a wonder of the world?

That Egypt was in that era of her splendor, and for long before and after, a commercial and maritime center and power, there are many evidences to attest. In later times the pirates of Greece and Phœnicia seem to have made of the Uath-Ur or Mediterranean a name of dread; though this fact did not deter the fleet of King Necho from rounding the continent of Africa twenty centuries before the birth of Vasco di Gama. Whether a trader or one that was traded with, it seems impossible that such contact should have utterly failed to carry at least fragments of Egyptian dialect along the coasts and among the isles of the tideless sea; the Acheron of the Jews (Deut. xxxiv. 2) and of the classic myth, on an imitation of which the Egyptian dead were embarked in a Bari, whence I-Beria, and the town Brasiaë of the dead Semele in Laconia (Paus. 3:24) if not the Aron Barith of Hebrew ritual.

No doubt Phœnician traders supplied Greece and the West with Chaldean ideals to some extent, but there is no evidence of other contact, commercial or militant, of Babylon with European tribes

or towns. I am not aware that the Phœnicians used the name Marduk, the Akkadian "Sun-brilliance" or Amar-Atuki of F. Lenormant, and hence am unable to agree with Mr. Browne that Marduk is the name Mars of the Romans; and yet Mars as Grad-ivus is possibly Marduk as the Kurad or "warrior" in Chaldaic epic, the "Herad or "tremble" of the Hebrew (whence Herod), and probably the Egyptian "Her-at or third person of their triads; as, also, the name of Mars as Quir-in-us seems the Charun of the Etruscan abyss-world, the Greek pilot over the Styx (Setek is Egyptian for "concealed"), whose name is from the Egyptian "Heru or "Horus" who led the dead into the court of Asar or "Osir-is"; for, indeed, the Etruscan Charun was only an assistant of their Mant-us, chief god of the death realm, whose name suggests the Egyptian Amenti, and Aesar in Etruscan means "god."

With reference to the concept Pan, the Arcadian name of Deity, who is identified by Mr. Browne with the Ea-Bani of Chaldean story, I must say that the Greeks identified him with the deity of the town Apu or Apun in Egypt, which they called Pano-polis, and there the name of Deity was Amesu or Min or ^kHem, who seems a personification of fertile ^kHem or "Egypt," and who appears as "Ham the son of Noa^h in the Hebrew story, the one who exposed his drunken father the vine-planter; hence this Apun or Pan of rural Arcadia became, further north in Greece, Priapus, a name from P-Arep or "the Wine" in Egyptian, I should say; but I have suspected from the satyr figures of Pan that his name came from the Egyptian "the Ape" or P-Aan, symbol of Thoth, of whom the Chaldean Ea was a type; and it is curious that when Ja-Aakob ends his night wrestle, evidently with the satyr Æsav, who was being supplanted by a Tham or "perfect" man, the sun rose to Ja-Aakob as he passed over Penu-El, for from the "great and exceeding bitter cry" of Æsav (Gen. xxvii. 34) when he found himself supplanted by his Tham brother we may have the cry of Thom-as, "My Lord and my God!" when he realized Jesus as a new theocratic force; whence Plutarch in the second century perhaps got his story of the pilot Tham-us in the reign of Tiberius who was told by a mighty voice "Great Pan is dead!"—or these "co-incidences" seem meant to indicate a transition from a religion of beast symbols to one of revealed spiritual concepts, but I leave that question to the pontiffs.

I am not at one with Mr. Browne as to De-Metef. He says this is a form of the Chaldean Tiamat. From Berosus to Delitzsch junior all agree that Tiamat was the sea; the Tehom or "deep" (Gen. i. 2). Now the identity of De-Meter with the Sicilian Ceres

tends to show she was an earth goddess. Hence I must support my view that De Meter is the Egyptian Te-Mut-Ur or "the great Mother," though I recognize the Greek word Meter or "mother," yet doubt the usual explanation of De as Gea or "earth," and prefer the Egyptian Ta, which means "Earth" as well as the feminine definite article, since the letters T and D in Egyptian are the same. Besides, the mysteries at Elu-Isis are admittedly those of Isis, the sorrowing and wandering; the Naa-Ami of the ancient shrine Beth Lechem, for Naa means a "wanderer" in both Hebrew and Egyptian (comp. "fugitive," Gen. iv. 12), as Ruu or Ruu-th also means in Egyptian; and as Ha-Gar she was worshiped in north Arabia long before He-Jira was associated with "the Flight" of Mo-c-Hammed, while her son I-Shem-aa-El would mean in Egyptian "great-nomad-God" since Shem means "to go"; and so Ra-hel means in Arabic to "migrate," and she died near Beth Lechem in birth throes with Beni-Amin or "son-of-my-nurse," as Naa-Ami was Aman of Ruth's child; and Naa-Am-ah is made daughter of Malech (for which "Lamech" seems to me error of a letter transposed) in one place and wife of El-Melech in another place; but she was also called Mara, Egyptian for "beloved," and it was a happy thought when the two prologue chapters of the Matthew and the Luke were prefixed as to another wandering mother. But Le-h-Em as "shining-mother" might seem athwart this view if Ha-Gar had not the well La-h-ai Roi or "shining eyes," the Le-h-i or "rays" (not "jaw-bone") of Shimesh-on, the Al-La-h (not "Allah") or "the Shining" to whom the Moslems yet kneel at sunrise and at sunset; but perhaps Le-h-Am only means "mother-of-the-Shining," as Isis of Horus, Latona of Apollo, Myrrha of Adonis, etc., all of whom with De-Meter are the local of the same general concept.

The "Cratylus" excerpt, cited by the learned Mr. Browne, is a play on words and phrases, and exhibits the flexibility of the Greek tongue. The Athenians were as the Parisians of our day, they wished to be wise but preferred to be witty. Their poets and sophists had been telling ugly stories about the celestials before the time of Plato, and Aristophanes is as flippant as Voltaire. This irreverence strewed Greece with ruined fanes and broken altars as shown in the invaluable itinerary of Pausanias. Plato was not meaning to be serious. The revival in the second century was not perhaps due to the "Unknown God" of Paul, whose altars were found by Pausanias in other places than Athens, but from Apuleius we find that it was due to the Egyptian cults, and he was initiated into the mysteries of

Anubis as well as those of Isis and Osiris, with which initiations his polished intellect was profoundly impressed.

The Hebrew writers, as Shemites, are more serious. Save the Jonah, which I take to be a satire on the Noah Deluge—Jon-ah meaning "dove" and "wine," and its reverse being the Greek form ha-Noi, while the dove was emblem of Assyria and the goddess Semiramis, and Nin was the fish-god—save this, I say, their humor is rather confined, restricted to double meanings. But little reliance can be placed on the derivation of their proper names; even Josephus rejecting that given of Mosheh, which may be Egyptian Mo^hu or "anointed," but also probably Masha as the "balance" with which Thoth weighed hearts; and the son of Æsculapios was Macha-on, while the Shekel in Æskulapios means in Hebrew to "weigh," and the identity of Thoth and Æsculapius is usually recognized; and yet the reverse of M-S^h-eh is ha-S^h-m or "the Name," and Egyptians were forbidden to utter the name of Thoth as well as that of Osiris, as Jews are commanded not to utter the S^hem of Jehoah "to the S^have."

It is doubtless true, however, as one may infer from Mr. Browne's article, that names of Deity are often those of some attribute expressed in the home language, but the contrary is also true. Sometimes the name is meant as a translation, as in English versions the Hebrew name Adon is invariably rendered "lord," but the Egyptian officer Aden was not of the highest rank, though Aten was the "disk" of the sun, while the Chaldean word Addin is rendered "time," "year." And so Jehoah or Joh is usually rendered "Lord" in English with the explanation of Ehich as "I am" (An-a or "Me am" in Egyptian) before our eyes, and which Ehich is understood to be a form of Iehoah, or vice versa. But the Mediterranean peoples have done well to preserve an ancient Egyptian word in this connection, and a Dai or "adorer" of Daa or the "giver" transmits to us Deus and Dieu and divine, with all the variations of this important term. And yet Heaven forbid that I should say aught of this subject in a positive way, for, if philology can be considered a science at all, I repeat that it is the most inexact of sciences; but a rule that might assist to guide us in the study is that of the proximity of peoples as well as the consonance of words, etc.