

Atlantis: The Antediluvian World

PART V. The Colonies Of Atlantis.

Chapter XI.

Atlantis Reconstructed.

The farther we go back in time toward the era of Atlantis, the more the evidences multiply that we are approaching the presence of a great, wise, civilized race. For instance, we find the Egyptians, Ethiopians, and Israelites, from the earliest ages, refusing to eat the flesh of swine. The Western nations departed from this rule, and in these modern days we are beginning to realize the dangers of this article of food, on account of the trichina contained in it; and when we turn to the Talmud, we are told that it was forbidden to the Jews, "because of a small insect which infests it."

The Egyptians, the Ethiopians, the Phoenicians, the Hebrews, and others of the ancient races, practised circumcision. It was probably resorted to in Atlantean days, and imposed as a religious duty, to arrest one of the most dreadful scourges of the human race—a scourge which continued to decimate the people of America, arrested their growth, and paralyzed their civilization. Circumcision stamped out the disease in Atlantis; we read of one Atlantean king, the Greek god Ouranos, who, in a time of plague, compelled his whole army and the armies of his allies to undergo the rite. The colonies that went out to Europe carried the practice but not the disease out of which it originated with them; and it was not until Columbus reopened communication with the infected people of the West India Islands that the scourge crossed the Atlantic and "turned Europe," as one has expressed it, "into a charnal-house."

Life-insurance statistics show, nowadays, that the average life and health of the Hebrew is much greater than that of other men; and he owes this to the retention of practices and beliefs imposed ten thousand years ago by the great, wise race of Atlantis.

Let us now, with all the facts before us, gleaned from various sources, reconstruct, as near as may be, the condition of the antediluvians.

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They dwelt upon a great island, near which were other smaller islands, probably east and west of them, forming stepping-stones, as it were, toward Europe and Africa in one direction, and the West India Islands and America in the other. There were volcanic mountains upon the main island, rising to a height of fifteen hundred feet, with their tops covered with perpetual snow. Below these were elevated table-lands, upon which were the royal establishments. Below these, again, was "the great plain of Atlantis." There were four rivers flowing north, south, east, and west from a central point. The climate was like that of the Azores, mild and pleasant; the soil volcanic and fertile, and suitable at its different elevations for the growth of the productions of the tropical and temperate zones.

The people represented at least two different races: a dark brown reddish race, akin to the Central Americans, the Berbers and the Egyptians; and a white race, like the Greeks, Goths, Celts, and Scandinavians. Various battles and struggles followed between the different peoples for supremacy. The darker race seems to have been, physically, a smaller race, with small hands; the lighter-colored race was much larger--hence the legends of the Titans and Giants. The Guanches of the Canary Islands were men of very great stature. As the works of the Bronze Age represent a small-handed race, and as the races who possessed the ships and gunpowder joined in the war against the Giants, we might conclude that the dark races were the more civilized, that they were the metal-workers and navigators.

The fact that the same opinions and customs exist on both sides of the ocean implies identity of origin; it might be argued that the fact that the explanation of many customs existing on both hemispheres is to be found only in America, implies that the primeval stock existed in America, the emigrating portion of the population carrying away the custom, but forgetting the reason for it. The fact that domestic cattle and the great cereals, wheat, oats, barley, and rye, are found in Europe and not in America, would imply that after population moved to Atlantis from America civilization was developed in Atlantis, and that in the later ages communication was closer and more constant between Atlantis and Europe than between Atlantis and America. In the case of the bulky domestic animals, it would be more difficult to transport them, in the open vessels of that day, from Atlantis across the wider expanse of sea to America, than it would be to carry them by way of the now submerged islands in front of the Mediterranean Sea to the coast of Spain. It may be, too, that the climate of Spain and Italy was better adapted to the growth of wheat, barley, oats and rye, than maize; while the drier

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atmosphere of America was better suited to the latter plant. Even now comparatively little wheat or barley is raised in Central America, Mexico, or Peru, and none on the low coasts of those countries; while a smaller quantity of maize, proportionately, is grown in Italy, Spain, and the rest of Western Europe, the rainy climate being unsuited to it. We have seen (p. 60, ante) that there is reason to believe that maize was known in a remote period in the drier regions of the Egyptians and Chinese.

As science has been able to reconstruct the history of the migrations of the Aryan race, by the words that exist or fail to appear in the kindred branches of that tongue, so the time will come when a careful comparison of words, customs, opinions, arts existing on the opposite sides of the Atlantic will furnish an approximate sketch of Atlantean history.

The people had attained a high position as agriculturists. The presence of the plough in Egypt and Peru implies that they possessed that implement. And as the horns and ox-head of Baal show the esteem in which cattle were held among them, we may suppose that they had passed the stage in which the plough was drawn by men, as in Peru and Egypt in ancient times, and in Sweden during the Historical Period, and that it was drawn by oxen or horses. They first domesticated the horse, hence the association of Poseidon or Neptune, a sea-god, with horses; hence the race-courses for horses described by Plato. They possessed sheep, and manufactured woollen goods; they also had goats, dogs, and swine. They raised cotton and made cotton goods; they probably cultivated maize, wheat, oats, barley, rye, tobacco, hemp, and flax, and possibly potatoes; they built aqueducts and practised irrigation; they were architects, sculptors, and engravers; they possessed an alphabet; they worked in tin, copper, bronze, silver, gold, and iron.

During the vast period of their duration, as peace and agriculture caused their population to increase to overflowing, they spread out in colonies east and west to the ends of the earth. This was not the work of a few years, but of many centuries; and the relations between these colonies may have been something like the relation between the different colonies that in a later age were established by the Phœnicians, the Greeks, and the Romans; there was an intermingling with the more ancient races, the *autochthones* of the different lands where they settled; and the same crossing of stocks, which we know to have been continued all through the Historical Period, must have been going on for thousands of years, whereby new races and new dialects were formed; and the result of all this has been that the smaller races of

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antiquity have grown larger, while all the complexions shade into each other, so that we can pass from the whitest to the darkest by insensible degrees.

In some respects the Atlanteans exhibited conditions similar to those of the British Islands: there were the same, and even greater, race differences in the population; the same plantation of colonies in Europe, Asia, and America; the same carrying of civilization to the ends of the earth. We have seen colonies from Great Britain going out in the third and fifth centuries to settle on the shores of France, in Brittany, representing one of the nationalities and languages of the mother-country--a race Atlantean in origin. In the same way we may suppose Hamitic emigrations to have gone out from Atlantis to Syria, Egypt, and the Barbary States. If we could imagine Highland Scotch, Welsh, Cornish, and Irish populations emigrating en masse from England in later times, and carrying to their new lands the civilization of England, with peculiar languages not English, we would have a state of things probably more like the migrations which took place from Atlantis. England, with a civilization Atlantean in origin, peopled by races from the same source, is repeating in these modern times the empire of Zeus and Chronos; and, just as we have seen Troy, Egypt, and Greece warring against the parent race, so in later days we have seen Brittany and the United States separating themselves from England, the race characteristics remaining after the governmental connection had ceased.

In religion the Atlanteans had reached all the great thoughts which underlie our modern creeds. They had attained to the conception of one universal, omnipotent, great First Cause. We find the worship of this One God in Peru and in early Egypt. They looked upon the sun as the mighty emblem, type, and instrumentality of this One God. Such a conception could only have come with civilization. It is not until these later days that science has realized the utter dependence of all earthly life upon the sun's rays:

"All applications of animal power may be regarded as derived directly or indirectly from the static chemical power of the vegetable substance by which the various organisms and their capabilities are sustained; and this power, in turn, from the kinetic action of the sun's rays.

"Winds and ocean currents, hailstorms and rain, sliding glaciers, flowing rivers, and falling cascades are the direct offspring of solar heat. All our machinery, therefore, whether driven by the windmill or the water-wheel, by horse-power or by steam--all the results of electrical and electro-magnetic

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changes--our telegraphs, our clocks, and our watches, all are wound up primarily by the sun.

"The sun is the great source of energy in almost all terrestrial phenomena. From the meteorological to the geographical, from the geological to the biological, in the expenditure and conversion of molecular movements, derived from the sun's rays, must be sought the motive power of all this infinitely varied phantasmagoria."

But the people of Atlantis had gone farther; they believed that the soul of man was immortal, and that he would live again in his material body; in other words, they believed in "the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting." They accordingly embalmed their dead.

The Duke of Argyll ("The Unity of Nature") says:

"We have found in the most ancient records of the Aryan language proof that the indications of religious thought are higher, simpler, and purer as we go back in time, until at last, in the very oldest compositions of human speech which have come down to us, we find the Divine Being spoken of in the sublime language which forms the opening of the Lord's Prayer. The date in absolute chronology of the oldest Vedic literature does not seem to be known. Professor Max Müller, however, considers that it may possibly take us back 5000 years. . . . All we can see with certainty is that the earliest inventions of mankind are the most wonderful that the race has ever made. . . . The first use of fire, and the discovery of the methods by which it can be kindled; the domestication of wild animals; and, above all, the processes by which the various cereals were first developed out of some wild grasses--these are all discoveries with which, in ingenuity and in importance, no subsequent discoveries may compare. They are all unknown to history--all lost in the light of an effulgent dawn."

The Atlanteans possessed an established order of priests; their religious worship was pure and simple. They lived under a kingly government; they had their courts, their judges, their records, their monuments covered with inscriptions, their mines, their founderies, their workshops, their looms, their grist-mills, their boats and sailing-vessels, their highways, aqueducts, wharves, docks, and canals. They had processions, banners, and triumphal arches for their kings and heroes; they built pyramids, temples, round-towers, and obelisks; they practised religious ablutions; they knew the use of the magnet

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and of gunpowder. In short, they were in the enjoyment of a civilization nearly as high as our own, lacking only the printing-press, and those inventions in which steam, electricity, and magnetism are used. We are told that Deva-Nahusha visited his colonies in Farther India. An empire which reached from the Andes to Hindostan, if not to China, must have been magnificent indeed. In 'its markets must have met the maize of the Mississippi Valley, the copper of Lake Superior, the gold and silver of Peru and Mexico, the spices of India, the tin of Wales and Cornwall, the bronze of Iberia, the amber of the Baltic, the wheat and barley of Greece, Italy, and Switzerland.

It is not surprising that when this mighty nation sank beneath the waves, in the midst of terrible convulsions, with all its millions of people, the event left an everlasting impression upon the imagination of mankind. Let us suppose that Great Britain should to-morrow meet with a similar fate. What a wild consternation would fall upon her colonies and upon the whole human family! The world might relapse into barbarism, deep and almost universal. William the Conqueror, Richard Cœur de Lion, Alfred the Great, Cromwell, and Victoria might survive only as the gods or demons of later races; but the memory of the cataclysm in which the centre of a universal empire instantaneously went down to death would never be forgotten; it would survive in fragments, more or less complete, in every land on earth; it would outlive the memory of a thousand lesser convulsions of nature; it would survive dynasties, nations, creeds, and languages; it would never be forgotten while man continued to inhabit the face of the globe.

Science has but commenced its work of reconstructing the past and rehabilitating the ancient peoples, and surely there is no study which appeals more strongly to the imagination than that of this drowned nation, the true antediluvians. They were the founders of nearly all our arts and sciences; they were the parents of our fundamental beliefs; they were the first civilizers, the first navigators, the first merchants, the first colonizers of the earth; their civilization was old when Egypt was young, and they had passed away thousands of years before Babylon, Rome, or London were dreamed of. This lost people were our ancestors, their blood flows in our veins; the words we use every day were heard, in their primitive form, in their cities, courts, and temples. Every line of race and thought, of blood and belief, leads back to them.

Nor is it impossible that the nations of the earth may yet employ their idle navies in bringing to the light of day some of the relics of this buried people.

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Portions of the island lie but a few hundred fathoms beneath the sea; and if expeditions have been sent out from time to time in the past, to resurrect from the depths of the ocean sunken treasure-ships with a few thousand doubloons bidden in their cabins, why should not an attempt be made to reach the buried wonders of Atlantis? A single engraved tablet dredged up from Plato's island would be worth more to science, would more strike the imagination of mankind, than all the gold of Peru, all the monuments of Egypt, and all the terra-cotta fragments gathered from the great libraries of Chaldea.

May not the so-called "Phoenician coins" found on Corvo, one of the Azores, be of Atlantean origin? Is it probable that that great race, pre-eminent as a founder of colonies, could have visited those islands within the Historical Period, and have left them unpeopled, as they were when discovered by the Portuguese?

We are but beginning to understand the past: one hundred years ago the world knew nothing of Pompeii or Herculaneum; nothing of the lingual tie that binds together the Indo-European nations; nothing of the significance of the vast volume of inscriptions upon the tombs and temples of Egypt; nothing of the meaning of the arrow-headed inscriptions of Babylon; nothing of the marvellous civilizations revealed in the remains of Yucatan, Mexico, and Peru. We are on the threshold. Scientific investigation is advancing with giant strides. Who shall say that one hundred years from now the great museums of the world may not be adorned with gems, statues, arms, and implements from Atlantis, while the libraries of the world shall contain translations of its inscriptions, throwing new light upon all the past history of the human race, and all the great problems which now perplex the thinkers of our day?