

**MICAH, THE PRIEST-
MAKER. A HANDBOOK
ON RITUALISM; PP. 2-228**

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Micah, the Priest-Maker. A Handbook on Ritualism; pp. 2-228 by T. Binney

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PREFATORY NOTE.



FOR what might have properly appeared here, in respect to the nature and object of this small volume, the reader is referred to what he will find on page 212.

T. B.

At the same time, while we read what it is shocking to contemplate in the conduct of the people, we meet with statements and incidents which shew the action of the religious instinct, though it expresses itself in forms rude and erroneous.

This last remark is illustrated by the history of Micah, whose words have just been read. He was a man in good circumstances, and old enough to be the father of grown-up sons. His mother, however, would seem to have lived with him, or he with her,—either would be according to Eastern custom. The mother had contrived to save a considerable sum—eleven hundred talents of silver, not less, perhaps, than about £140 of our money. This treasure, Micah appears to have stolen, or at least to have got hold of and concealed. When the money was missed, the woman gave way to passionate imprecations. She “cursed” about it; and probably cursed the thief, ignorant that she was calling down vengeance on her son. It might be, that this rather frightened the man, and moved him to confess what he had done. He acknowledged that the silver was “with him,” and produced and restored it. His mother then “blessed” him in the name of Jehovah, and informed him that she had “wholly dedicated the silver to the Lord,” on his

behalf, "to make for him a graven and a molten image." She carried out her purpose by giving to the founder part at least of the restored property, that the images might be made. When made, they were added to other things of the same sort, in what might be called their domestic chapel, or family sanctuary ;—for Micah "had a house of gods, and made an ephod, and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest."

It so happened, however, that a Levite, in search of some professional employment, came that way, and Micah offered to take him into his house,—to give him lodging and stipend, clothing and food, in return for his services, if he would consent to be to him "a father and a priest." The proposal was accepted. The Levite was content. He had no scruple about undertaking the duties of a function which did not belong to him ; and Micah, who had already consecrated one priest, thought himself competent to consecrate another. The whole thing was irregular. It was a violation of the original Hebrew constitution, as set forth in the Divine law. When, however, Micah had set up his images and teraphim, and had arrayed the stranger in a linen ephod—a sacerdotal vestment—he was so delighted with the whole arrangement, that he exclaimed,