

**THE LEGENDS OF THE OLD
TESTAMENT: TRACED TO
THEIR APPARENT
PRIMITIVE SOURCES**

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The Legends of the Old Testament: Traced to Their Apparent Primitive Sources by Thomas Lumisden Strange

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THOMAS LUMISDEN STRANGE

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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THE LEGENDS
OF
THE OLD TESTAMENT,
TRACED TO THEIR APPARENT PRIMITIVE
SOURCES.

BY
THOMAS LUMISDEN STRANGE,
LATE A JUDGE OF THE HIGH COURT OF MADRAS.

LONDON :
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1874.

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etc.

"Man can invent nothing in science or religion but falsehood; and all truths which he discovers are but facts or laws which have emanated from the Creator."—Aphorism by Mr Nott, *Types of Mankind*.

Recd. April 22, 1875.

23,341.

P R E F A C E.

THE present work is in continuation of one which I have put forth entitled, "The Bible; is it the Word of God?" I then examined the ordinarily asserted supports to the Bible being a revelation from a divine source, entering into the history of its canon, and sifting the pretensions raised in its pages to that miraculous agency which is offered as the signet of its authority. This led me over the alleged miracles and prophecies, and the superhuman history of Jesus.

The work I now presume to offer is an endeavour to test the assumed revelations by tracing the prominent legends of the old Testament to their apparent true sources. The channel through which these are presented to us is the Jewish people, a race whose nationality, long held down under foreign domination, was put an end to more than 1700 years ago. As far as the records at our command serve us, it is clear that in some remote antiquity the ancient Aryans, occupying it is believed the region of Bactria, were the disseminators of the arts of life and of religious conceptions over extensive portions of the globe. They became specially represented in India, but also deeply influenced other lands, prominently Persia and Europe. After their settlements had become consolidated in India, the commerce exercised by their stock there implanted served to spread the current of

instruction, partially at all events, to Egypt and Chaldea. I discuss the literature, religion, and vast antiquity of this people, and indicate their footprints in the language, mythologies, and customs, of the various nations indoctrinated by them. The Eastern Aryans were apparently in advance of all other known people, not only in antiquity, but in natural acuteness and fertility of intellect. They were characterized by strong religious fervour, which led them ever in pursuit of fresh food for its maintenance. They had also no small sense of poetic feeling. They started fairly, as all must do when their minds open upon the testimonies of the universal architect, undisturbed by human inventions. They saw him as the friend of all, accessible to all everywhere. But on this sure ground, in time, they ceased to retain their footing, and giving way to imaginings, fell at length under the teachings and rule of an astute priesthood. These diverted and misled them with a continual supply of religious fables, and brought them into bondage to themselves by means of a complicated and exacting ritual. With these elements the then corrupted Aryans invaded their less competent neighbours, and the poison set on foot had rapid circulation. Fiction is more attractive to the childlike than sober reality, and in the infancy of nations the eastern stories were readily accepted and took root and flourished.

Such are the facts before us necessary to be understood in judging of the Biblical representations. Whatever is found composed of like materials, shaped into the same forms, must be reasonably ascribable to a like origin. One set of statements can be referable to no

better source than the perversities of the human intellect, and another parallel set of statements, formed upon the same moulds, have reached us by direct transmission from a celestial quarter. And if the human teachings first appeared by a decidedly preponderating antiquity, and were current on all sides round the field from whence the alleged divine revelations have come, it is obvious that the independent origin of the latter cannot be allowed. The appeal to the evidence of the facts in nature, and the universal sense of right and wrong implanted in the human heart, should be equally decisive in leading us to distinguish between the allegations of erring man, and the operations of an infallible Creator.

GREAT MALVERN, *May* 1874.

