

had recently intended to have published some articles which I had prepared on the connection of the Pleiades with primitive ideas as to Paradise, but it seemed prudent to defer doing so, and to bring out the whole subject in one volume. To show, however, how widely spread these traditions as to the Pleiades are, I may attempt to give the information which Dr. Tylor invites, as to the myth of the lost Pleiad being a heritage among savages. Those stars are only apparently six, yet all the world over, among civilised and savage races, in Europe, in India, China, Japan, America, and Africa, this diminutive star group is not merely regarded as seven stars, but what is still more surprising, as "*The Seven Stars*," though the far brighter seven stars of the Great Bear might seem to deserve the title.

There are various myths to account for the missing Pleiad, but one I think will suffice to show that the Australians did not borrow the idea from Europeans.

Once asked a native of the Gold Coast, a negro Hercules in strength, who had therefore been christened (probably by some pious naval officer) *Fivehorsepower*, whether he knew anything of the stars. "No!" he replied, "I know nuffin about de stars." "But don't you know anything of 'the seven stars'?" "Oh yes, of course," he answered; "every nigger knows de seben stars." "Why do you call them seven?" I asked him; "can you count seven stars?" "No," he replied, "you count one, two, three, four, five, six; then todder one hide herself, no let you count her." There is also a savage tradition, which I can recollect, that the Pleiades are young women, six of whom are very beautiful, but the seventh is so plain that she conceals herself from sight.

Some tribes of the Australians dance in honour of the Pleiades, because "they are very good to the black fellows." Was this borrowed through Europeans from "the sweet influences of the Pleiades" which Job celebrates?

Ask a negro in the Southern States to look through a telescope, and he will invariably turn it towards the Pleiades, "for they are berry good to the darkies." The natives of America, both North and South, regard the Pleiades as beneficent stars, and dance in their honour. "Oh what do we owe to thee!" is the grateful salutation of one tribe. Whence then did this arise? It was not merely because those stars announced spring, and were "stars of rain," or because they were "for signs, and for seasons, and days, and years," but also because they were connected with the idea of Paradise and the abode of the Deity. The problematical theory of Moedler, that Alcyone, the brightest of the Pleiades, is the central sun of the universe, is most interesting on account of the singular fact that such was actually the belief of early ages. I have within the past year found unexpected, and I think conclusive, proofs that the name *Alcyone* (or rather, *Alkyone*), meaning a centre, pivot, or turning-point, was not given without some reason to that star, for the ancients in very remote ages undoubtedly believed that it was the centre of the universe, and that Paradise, the primæval home of our race and the abode of the Deity and of the spirits of the dead, was in the Pleiades, traces of which ideas we even find among savages.

The *Alkyonic Lake*, the waters of which led to the world of spirits, must have meant simply "the waters of death" leading to Alkyone or Paradise, and reminds us of Ulysses' voyage to the abodes of the dead and to the Gardens of Alkynōōs.

With the Pleiades, too, sacred birds (birds of paradise) were connected. In my journal of researches (1863) I expressed my conviction that *Manu* (a word meaning, in the Indian Archipelago, a fowl or bird) would be found to have been connected with the Pleiades. I have been recently gratified at finding that in far-distant Samoa there is a sacred bird called, not *Manu-ali*, the royal bird, as some European writers have assumed, but *Manu-lii*, the bird of the Pleiades.

What a singular link we have here between the folk-lore of these savages and that of the Old World, for to this very day, from Britain to Japan, the Pleiades are popularly known as "the hen" or "hen and her chickens."

In Mexico the beautiful kingfisher was a sacred bird. May not the name of the same bird in Greece have been a survival of similar ideas, as it was called the *Halcyon*, i.e. belonging to Alcyone, or a bird of paradise?

The bright sunny days, too, at the end of autumn, that shining season of the Pleiades, called in America the Indian summer, were *Halcyon* days among the Greeks, which we should now render heavenly days.

Even if the theory of prehistoric astronomers and of some

modern men of science, that the Pleiades are the centre of the universe, should prove to have been unfounded, I am persuaded that the day is coming when the learned will admit that those stars are the "central sun" of the religions, calendars, myths, traditions, and symbolism of early ages—an era, however, so marvellously remote, that investigations respecting it bear the same relation to the study of anthropology and to the science of religion that palæontology does to natural history.

I shall be greatly disappointed if I cannot satisfy even so cautious and careful an observer as Dr. Tylor, that there is a mass of original and primitive traditions as to the Pleiades among isolated savages in various quarters of the globe.

In the meantime, until these conclusions are submitted in a proper and scientific shape to the learned, Dr. Tylor is perfectly justified in adopting the prudent legal maxim, *De non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est ratio*.

I may however invite his attention to Mr. Ernest de Bunsen's recent work on the Pleiades—"The Pleiades and the Zodiac," published in German (Berlin, 1879), and his recent learned work, the "Angel Messiah." The former he has kindly dedicated to me as the pioneer in this new and difficult field of research.

R. G. HALIBURTON

#### The Pronunciation of Deaf-mutes who have been Taught to Articulate

IN NATURE (vol. xxv. p. 72) it is reported that at the last meeting of the French Academy M. Hébert made some observations to show that deaf-mutes who have been taught to articulate speak with the accent of their native district. This curious circumstance, which was contested by M. Blanchard, has already been recorded. One case is given in an old number of the *Philosophical Transactions*, No. 312. About the age of seventeen a young man, a congenital deaf-mute, was twice attacked by fever. "Some weeks after recovery he perceived a motion of some kind in his brain, which was very uneasy to him, and afterwards he began to hear, and, in process of time, to understand speech. This naturally disposed him to imitate what he heard, and to attempt to speak. The servants were much annoyed to hear him. He was not distinctly understood, however, for some weeks; but is now understood tolerably well. But what is singular is that he retains the Highland accent, just as Highlanders do who are advanced to his age before they begin to learn the English tongue. He cannot speak any Erse or Irish, for it was in the Lowlands he first heard and spoke." The curious circumstance of his possession of the Highland accent is confirmed by the testimony of similar phenomena in the deaf and dumb schools of Spain. "One fact," says Ticknor, "I witnessed, and knew therefore personally, which is extremely curious. Not one of the pupils, of course, can ever have heard a human sound, and all their knowledge and practice in speaking must come from their imitation of the visible mechanical movement of the lips and other organs of enunciation by their teachers, who were all Castilians, yet each speaks clearly and decidedly, and with the accent of the province from which he comes, so that I could instantly distinguish the Catalonians and Biscayans and Castilians, whilst others, more practised in Spanish, felt the Malagan and Andalusian tones" ("Life and Journals of George of Ticknor," vol. i. p. 196, London, 1876). A similar case has been mentioned to me by Mr. J. J. Alley of Manchester. E. R. became deaf and dumb at a very early age, and did not talk until he was about seventeen, when he was taught articulation by Mr. Alley. He speaks with the accent of his native county of Stafford. These facts are cited in my paper on "The Education of the Deaf and Dumb," in the "Companion to the Almanac" for 1880.

WILLIAM E. A. AXON

#### Tanganyika Shells

IN the *Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond.* for May, 1881, pp. 558-561 Mr. Edgar A. Smith has described two new species of shell from Lake Tanganyika, Africa, for which he has proposed the new generic name of *Paramadania*. These forms are, without doubt, generically identical with the *Pyrgulifera humerosa* of Meek (see U.S. Geol. Sur. 40th Parallel, by Clarence King, v. l. iv. p. 176, pl. xvii. Figs. 19 and 19a), which antedates Mr. Smith's name by at least five years. Mr. Meek's species has hitherto been the only known member of the genus, either fossil or recent, and was only known to occur in the strata of the