

going to sleepe he fixed in the ground, and at his waking found it had grown a large tree. They affirm that the wood of its decoction cures sundry diseases." (*Evelyn's Diary*, October, 1644.)—H. C.]

In the usual form of the mediæval legend, Adam, drawing near his end, sends Seth to the gate of Paradise, to seek the promised Oil of Mercy. The Angel allows Seth to put his head in at the gate. Doing so (as an old English version gives it)—

— "he saw a fair Well,
Of whom all the waters on earth cometh, as the Book us doth tell ;
Over the Well stood a Tree, with bowës broad and lere
Ac it *ne bare leaf ne rind*, but as it for-olded were ;
A nadder it had beclipt about, all naked withouten skin,
That was the Tree and the Nadder that first made Adam do sin !"

The Adder or Serpent is coiled about the denuded stem ; the upper branches reach to heaven, and bear at the top a new-born wailing infant, swathed in linen, whilst (here we quote a French version)—

"Les larmes qui de lui issoient
Contreval l'Arbre en avaloient ;
Adonc regarda l'enfant Seth
Tout contreval de L'ARBRE SECQ ;
Les rachines qui le tenoient
Jusques en Enfer s'en aloient,
Les larmes qui de lui issirent
Jusques dedans Enfer cheïrent."

The Angel gives Seth three kernels from the fruit of the Tree. Seth returns home and finds his father dead. He buries him in *the valley of Hebron*, and places the three grains under his tongue. A triple shoot springs up of Cedar, Cypress, and Pine, symbolising the three Persons of the Trinity. The three eventually unite into one stem, and this tree survives in various forms, and through various adventures in connection with the Scripture History, till it is found at the bottom of the Pool of Bethesda, to which it had imparted healing Virtue, and is taken thence to form the Cross on which Our Lord suffered.

The English version quoted above is from a MS. of the 14th century in the Bodleian, published by Dr. Morris in his collection of *Legends of the Holy Rood*. I have modernised the spelling of the lines quoted, without altering the words. The French citation is from a MS. in the Vienna Library, from which extracts are given by Sign. Adolfo Mussafia in his curious and learned tract (*Sulla Legenda del Legno della Croce*, Vienna, 1870), which gives a full account of the fundamental legend and its numerous variations. The examination of these two works, particularly Sign. Mussafia's, gives an astonishing impression of the copiousness with which such Christian Mythology, as it may fairly be called, was diffused and multiplied. There are in the paper referred to notices of between fifty and sixty different *works* (not MSS. or *copies* of works merely) containing this legend in various European languages.

(*Santarem*, III. 380, II. 348 ; *Ouseley*, I. 359 *seqq.* and 391 ; *Herodotus*, VII. 31 ; *Pliny*, XII. 5 ; *Chardin*, VII. 410, VIII. 44 and 426 ; *Fabricius*, *Vet. Test. Pseud.* I. 80 *seqq.* ; *Cathay*, p. 365 ; *Beal's Fah-Hian*, 72 and 78 ; *Pèlerins Bouddhistes*, II. 292 ; *Della Valle*, II. 276-277.)

He who injured the holy tree of Bostam, we are told, perished the same day : a general belief in regard to those *Trees of Grace*, of which we have already seen instances in regard to the sacred trees of Zoroaster and the Oak of Hebron. We find the same belief in Eastern Africa, where certain trees, regarded by the natives with superstitious reverence, which they express by driving in votive nails and suspending rags, are known to the European residents by the vulgar name of *Devil Trees*.