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CORRESPONDENCE.

"THE WIDOW'S SON."

To the Editor of FOLK-LORE.

SIR,—The frequency with which "The Widow's Son" appears as the hero of folk-tale and folk-song has often excited remark, and appears to require some explanation. This may, perhaps, be attempted in a comparison of the Greek songs and tales dealing with the exploits of this character.

THE ENCHANTED DEER.

(Passow, No. 576, *Greek Folk-songs*, p. 85.)

In this song a hero named Digenes is represented as possessing superhuman strength, and as having for his companions the Drako's son, and Tremantahielos, "who shakes the earth and kosmos".

THE DEATH OF DIGENES.

(Jeannaraki, No. 92.)

In this tristich all nature is represented as sympathetically affected by the death-throes of the hero.

DIGENES AND HIS MOTHER.

(Jeannaraki, No. 276.)

Digenes is here represented as a widow's son, who alone is valiant enough to accept the challenge of Charon to a wrestling-match, and who is vanquished only by trickery on the part of his opponent.

THE WIDOW'S SONS.

(Passow, No. 514, *Women of Turkey*, i, p. 129.)

These two heroes fight with, and slay a monster (Stoicheion) which has destroyed every champion hardy enough to attack it.

TSAMATHÒS AND HIS SON.

(Aravandinos, No. 460.)

A widow's son accepts the challenge of Tsamathòs, a super-human being who is represented as making the earth to tremble with his tread, and as bearing on his shoulder an uprooted tree, from the branches of which dangle wild beasts. The widow's son prevails against Tsamathòs, who begs him to desist and declare who are his parents. The youth replies that his mother was a widow when he was born, but that he resembles his father, and intends to surpass him in prowess. Tsamathòs goes with him to the house of the widow, and is by her poisoned at supper.

THE STORY OF THE BEARDLESS.

(Νισο-ἑλληνικά 'Ανάλεκτα, A. 10.)

In this story a widow's son, on questioning his mother concerning his father, is sent by her, according to the orders of the latter, to the distant city of which he is king.

As the name Διγενής signifies "of two races" or "species", it appears, I venture to think, highly probable that these stories of "Widows' Sons" may point to some such intercourse between higher and lower races as that suggested by Mr. Stuart-Glennie. Another allusion to difference of race is found in the "Beardless Man"—that is to say, a man with one of the most distinctive characteristics of the Mongolian and Negro, as distinguished from the White Races.

LUCY M. GARNETT.

GREEK FOLK-LORE.

To the Editor of FOLK-LORE.

SIR,—My attention has just been drawn to Mr. Sidney Hartland's "Report on Folk-tale Research", in the last number of FOLK-LORE, in which he remarks that I have failed to give the sources of some of the tales contained in *The Women of Turkey*. Will you allow me to say that

some of the stories were collected by myself, including that of the *pastourmd* specially referred to by Mr. Hartland, which I heard, with many others, from His Excellency Zohrah Bey? A variant of it may also be found in vol. xxviii of *Les Littératures populaires*. The Jewish stories of which the source is not given are from Frankl's *Jews in the East*, the references to which were, by some oversight, omitted. Two of them, however, "Oslemedai and King Solomon" and "Rabbi Ahiba", are, I believe, to be found in the *Talmud*.

L. M. GARNETT.

ETHNOLOGISTS v. ANTHROPOLOGISTS.

To the Editor of FOLK-LORE.

SIR,—I trust that I may be allowed to say—and with reference more particularly to p. 121 of Mr. Sidney Hartland's interesting "Report on Folk-tale Research"—that I think our terminology would be greatly improved if those Anthropologists who make much of the fact of the heterogeneity of human races were, as *Ethnologists*, distinguished from those who, like, for instance, Dr. Tylor, expressly ignore that fact, or deny its importance.

J. S. STUART-GLENNIE.

BRANCHOS.

To the Editor of FOLK-LORE.

SIR,—Perhaps the following parallel may interest your readers. I do not think it has been previously pointed out:—*Conon* (in Photius, *Bibliotheca*, § 33, p. 136—ed. Bekker, 1824): ὡς ὁ Σμικρός τινος τῶν ἐν Μιλησίοις ἐνδόξων θυγατέρα γαμεῖ, καὶ αὕτη τίκτουσα ὀρᾷ ὄψιν, τὸν ἥλιον αὐτῇ διὰ τοῦ στόματος εἰσδύντα διὰ τῆς γαστρὸς καὶ τῶν αἰδοίων διεξελθεῖν καὶ ἦν τὸ ὄραμα τοῖς μάντεσιν ἀγαθὸν καὶ ἔτεκε

κόρον, Βράγχον ἀπὸ τοῦ ὀνείρου καλέσασα, ὅτι ὁ ἥλιος αὐτῆς διὰ τοῦ βράγχου διεξῆλθε.

I have found a close parallel to this in a note of Liebrecht's (Gervasius von Tilbury, ed. F. Liebrecht, Hanover, 1856, p. 72); "Mirkond rapporte suivant les traditions des peuples de la Scythie que cette princesse [nämlich Alankava ou Alancova, fille de Gioubiné, fils de Bolduz, roi des Mongols de la dynastie ou famille de Kiot] étant éveillée dans sa chambre, pendant la nuit, une grande lumière l'investit tout d'un coup, lui entra dans le corps par la bouche. Ce phénomène ayant peu après disparu, Alancava se trouva fort surprise de cette apparition: mais elle le fut encore beaucoup plus, lorsqu'elle s'aperçut qu'elle était grosse, sans qu'elle eût connu aucun homme. Le trouble que lui causa cet événement, lui fit aussitôt convoquer une assemblée de ses sujets, qui étaient tous très persuadés de sa sagesse: cependant comme elle les trouva fort étonnés de la nouveauté de ce fait, et qu'ils en parlaient diversement entr'eux, Alankava, pour dissiper tous les soupçons que l'on pouvait former contre son honnêteté, fit venir les principaux d'entr'eux et les enfermant dans sa chambre, les rendit témoins oculaires de ce qui s'y passait toutes les nuits. . . . Enfin, le terme de cette grossesse étant arrivé, elle accoucha de trois enfants. Le premier fut nommé Boukoun Cabaki, duquel les Tartares nommés Cabakin et Kapgiak sont descendus. Le second eut nom Bouskin Salegi, duquel les Selgiucides ont tiré leur origine; et le troisième fut appelé Bouzangir, lequel est reconnu pour un des arculs de Geughiskan et de Tamerlan." "Khondemir ajoute à cette narration, que la merveille qui arriva dans la grossesse d'Alankava, est la même qui s'est rencontrée dans celle de Miriam, mère d'Issa."—*D'Herbelot, s. v. Alankava.*

The phenomenon is exactly the same in both cases. Legends of sun-impregnation are well known: it would be superfluous to give instances. J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (1890), ii, 225 ff., gives several examples. He

connects the taboo laid on girls at puberty, which forbids them to see the sun, with this belief, and so explains the myth of Danaë, comparing it especially with a parallel in Siberian legend, given by Radloff, *Der türk. Stämme Süd-Siberiens*, iii, 82 sq.

Frazer also cites Gonzenbach, *Sicilianische Märchen*, No. 28 ; Bastian, *Die Völker des ostl. Asien*, i, 416 ; vi, 25 ; Turner, *Samoa*, p. 200 ; *Panjab Notes and Queries*, ii, No. 797, for sun-impregnation. Traces of the belief exist in the ceremonial of marriage (Frazer, *l. c.* ; in the old Hindoo marriages, the bride on the previous day was made to look upon the sun ; and among the Turks of Siberia, in Iran, and Central Asia, the young couple are led out of their hut on the morning after marriage to greet the rising sun, whose beams are believed to ensure fertility ; quoting Vambéry, *Das Türken Volk*, p. 112 ; Monier Williams, *Religious Life and Thought in India*, p. 354 ; *Trans. of the Ethnological Society*, iii, 327). May not our proverb, "Blest is the bride on whom the sun doth shine" (Herrick), go back to a like belief ?

I have not been able to find other instances in which the sunbeam enters the mouth. A beam came out of Charles the Great's mouth, and illumined his head (Grimm, *D. M.*, Eng. trans., p. 323, according to a story in the *Galien restore*). Liebrecht (*l. c.*) compares with the Alankava story the passage of Pliny (xxxvi, 70, 204, Detlefsen) describing the birth of Servius Tullius as connected with the sacred fire on the hearth (so *Dion. Halic.*, 4, 2).

A. E. CRAWLEY.