

recognised by the pagans as the author of their religious rites, and the interpreter of the gods. The distinguished Gesenius identifies him with the Babylonian Nebo, as the prophetic god; and a statement of Hyginus shows that he was known as the grand agent in that movement which produced the division of tongues. His words are these: "For many ages men lived under the government of Jove [evidently not the Roman Jupiter, but the Jehovah of the Hebrews], without cities and without laws, and all speaking one language. But after that Mercury interpreted the speeches of men (whence an interpreter is called Hermeneutes), the same individual distributed the nations. Then discord began."* Here there is a manifest enigma. How could Mercury or Hermes have any need to interpret the speeches of mankind when they "all spake one language"? To find out the meaning of this, we must go to the language of the Mysteries. Peresh, in Chaldee, signifies "to interpret;" but was pronounced by old Egyptians and by Greeks, and often by the Chaldees themselves, in the same way as "Peres," to "divide." Mercury, then, or Hermes, or Cush, "the son of Ham," was the "DIVIDER of the speeches of men." He, it would seem, had been the ringleader in the scheme for building the great city and tower of Babel; and, as the well-known title of Hermes,—the *interpreter* of the gods," would indicate, had encouraged them, in the name of God, to proceed in their presumptuous enterprise, and so had caused the language of men to be divided, and themselves to be scattered abroad on the face of the earth. Now look at the name of Belus or Bel, given to the father of Ninus, or Nimrod, in connection with this. While the Greek name Belus represented both the Baal and Bel of the Chaldees, these were nevertheless two entirely distinct titles. These titles were both alike often given to the same god, but they had totally different meanings. Baal, as we have already seen, signified "The Lord;" but Bel signified "The Confounder." When, then, we read that Belus, the father of Ninus, was he that built or founded Babylon, can there be a doubt, in what sense it was that the title of Belus was given to him? It must have been in the sense of Bel the "Confounder." And to this meaning of the name of the Babylonian Bel, there is a very distinct allusion in Jeremiah i. 2, where it is said "Bel is confounded," that is, "The Confounder is brought to confusion." That Cush was known to Pagan antiquity under the very character of Bel, "The Confounder," a statement of Ovid very clearly proves. The statement to which I refer is that in which Janus "the god of gods," † from whom all the other gods had their origin, ‡ is made to say of himself: "The ancients . . . called me Chaos." § Now, first this decisively shows that Chaos was known

* HYGINUS, *Fab.* 143, p. 114. Phoroneus is represented as king at this time.
 † Janus was so called in the most ancient hymns of the Sali.—MACROB., *Satur.*, lib. i. cap. 9, p. 54, col. 2, H.
 ‡ By Terentianus Maurus he is called "Principium Deorum."—BRYANT, vol. iii. p. 82.
 § *Me Chaos antiqui nam res sum prisca vocabant.*—*Fasti*, lib. i. v. 104. vol. iii. p. 19.

not merely as a *state* of confusion, but as the "god of confusion." But, secondly, who that is at all acquainted with the laws of Chaldaic pronunciation, does not know that Chaos is just one of the established forms of the name of Chūs or Cush? * Then, look at the symbol of Janus (see Fig. 7 †), whom "the ancients called Chaos," and it will be seen how exactly it tallies with the doings of Cush, when he is identified with Bel, "The Confounder." That symbol is a club; and the name of "a club" in Chaldee comes from the very word which signifies "to break in pieces, or scatter abroad." † He who caused the confusion of tongues was he who "broke" the previously united earth (Gen. xi. 1) "in pieces," and "scattered" the fragments abroad. How significant, then, as a symbol, is the club, as commemorating the work of Cush, as Bel, the "Confounder"? And that significance will be all the more apparent when the reader turns to the Hebrew of Gen. xi. 9, and finds that the very word from which a club derives its name is that which is employed when it is said, that in consequence of the confusion of tongues, the children of men were "scattered abroad on the face of all the earth." § The word there used for scattering abroad is Hephaitz, which, in the Greek form

Fig. 7.



becomes Hephaitz, ‖ and hence the origin of the well-known but little understood name of Hephæistos, as applied to Vulcan, "The father of the gods." ¶ Hephæistos is the name of the ringleader in the first

* The name of Cush is also Khūs, for *sh* frequently passes in Chaldee into *s* and *kh*, in pronunciation, legitimately becomes *Khawos*, or, without the digamma, *Khaos*.
 † From Sir WM. BETHAM'S *Etruscan Literature and Antiquities Investigated* Plate II., vol. ii. p. 120. 1842. The Etruscan name on the reverse of the above medal—*Bel-athri*, "Lord of spies," is probably given to Janus, in allusion to his well-known title "Janus Tuens," which may be rendered "Janus the Seer," or "All-seeing Janus."
 ‡ In Prov. xxv. 18, a maul or club is "Mephaitz." In Jer. li. 20, the same word, without the *Jod*, is evidently used for a *club* (though, in our version, it is rendered *battle-axe*); for the use of it is not to cut asunder, but to "break in pieces." See the whole passage.
 § Genesis xi. 9.
 ‖ There are many instances of a similar change. Thus *Botzra* becomes Greek, *Bostra*; and *Mitzraim*, *Mestram*. For last, see BUNSEN, vol. i. p. 606-609.