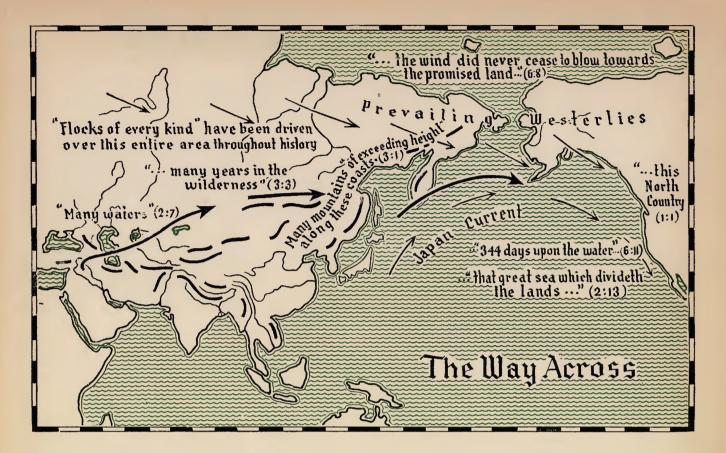


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### The World of the Jaredites, Part VI

Author(s): Hugh Nibley Source: *Improvement Era*, Vol. 55, No. 2 (February 1952), pp. 92–94, 98, 100, 102, 104–105 Published by: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints



#### Dear F.

Continuing the theme of my letter:

s to the fugitive who gathers forces in the wilderness by "drawing A off" people from his rival, in the first century there was Lu Fang, "the leader of a small military band, half soldiers, half bandits," who nearly won the Hunnish and Chinese empires for himself and would have done so had not some of his ambitious officers deserted him just as he had deserted others.<sup>85</sup> Having cheated his brother of the throne, Attila "hoped to subdue the entire world."" After Attila's death two of his descendants went out into the wilderness, and there gathered about them "armies of outcasts," each hoping in time to win back the world empire for himself.<sup>97</sup> You will remember that Genghis Khan\* lived for years as an outcast and a bandit as he gathered around him the forces that were to conquer all his rivals. At the time, and most of the time, all the princes of central Asia, "the leaders, the bagadurs and noyans, strove to become independent by attracting subjects and followers of their own."" The great rulers of Asia have regularly passed from the risky station of bandit chief to the hardly less

# THE WORLD OF

Part VI

By Hugh Nibley, Ph. D. ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, HISTORY AND RELIGION, BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

risky one of world monarch—and back again, in a world where "every man was filled with the desire to become an independent prince," and every independent prince to become lord of all.<sup>®</sup> Time and again "the boldest . . . adventurers flocked to the banner of the new and successful chieftain of the race," as in our own day the youth of all central Asia joined the fifteen-year-old Ma Chung-ying as he "calmly worked out a plan for the conquest of the whole world."<sup>100</sup>

Not only is the Jaredite practice of seeking to "draw off" followers to an army that builds its forces and bides its time in the wilderness in the best Asiatic tradition,<sup>101</sup> but also the method of doing it is likewise the usual one. Thus Akish bound his followers around the nucleus of his family (the Asiatic conquerors are fanatically family-conscious) by lav-

ish gifts, for "the people of Akish were desirous for gain, even as Akish was desirous for power; wherefore the sons of Akish did offer them money, by which means they drew away the more part of the people after them." (Ether 9:11.) It was the sons of Genghis Khan, you will remember, who did most of his campaigning for him, and from the very beginning the secret of his power was the huge heap of riches that always stood near his throne and from which, after the immemorial custom of the steppes, he rewarded all who joined him. $^{102}$  "The pattern of steppe imperialism" is ever the same, according to Vernadsky, beginning with "accumulated wealth in the hands of some able chieftain," which enables him to expand his popularity among neighboring clans."". The Jaredite pattern is well authenticated<sup>104</sup> and is nothing less THE IMPROVEMENT ERA

<sup>\*</sup>Variant spellings Jenghis Khan, Chingis Khan. 92

than "the ancient law" of the khans.104

But if the ambitious chieftain gains adherents by bribery, he keeps them by oaths. The oath is the cornerstone of the Asiatic state as of the Jaredite. Akish again furnishes an excellent example:

... Akish gathered in unto the house of Jared all his kinsfolk (this is always the first step with any Asiatic conqueror).

. . . and . . . they all sware unto him, by the God of heaven, and also by the heavens, and also by the earth, and by their heads, that whoso should vary from the assistance which Akish desired should lose his head.

And Akish did administer unto them the oaths which were given by them of old who also sought power, which had been handed down even from Cain. (Ether 8:13-15.)

Note that these terrible oaths are traced back explicitly to the Old World. The very oldest texts in "the oldest language in the world," according to Hommel, are incantations "having the stereotyped conclusion: 'let it be sworn (or conjured) by the name of heaven, let it be sworn by the name of earth!' """ From the flood of documents that have come

# THE JAREDITES

forth of recent years to teach us the ways of men at the dawn of history, it is apparent that oaths, conspiracies, and combinations were the established order of things from the beginning. What better illustration of this could one ask than the great Babylonian New Year's hymn, the "Enuma Elish," in which Tiamat, aiming at the rule of the universe, "draws off" the gods to her side, so that "they conspire unceasingly night and day" against the rightful ruler, and "gather themselves together in a host to make battle." When he heard the news, the true king sat upon his throne "grim and silent, without saying a word, . . . " then "He smote his thigh, he bit his lips, controlled his voice," and finally gave the order to assemble his army--which by formal acclamation took the oath of eternal allegiance to its leader Marduk.105 This story which goes back to the beginning of things (the actual text comes from the first Babylonian dynasty)<sup>108</sup> is no mere primitive fantasy: It is the authentic and familiar picture of the great Khan who learns that a relative and a rival

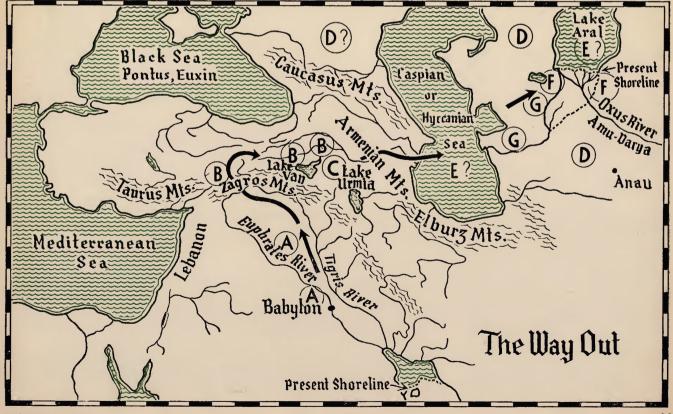
is raising an army against him in the wilderness.

The story of the rise and career of any great conqueror is a long catalog of terrible oaths taken and broken, the most solemn of these being scaled by the drinking of blood, as when "the King of the Commains had the Emperor of Constantinople and his (Continued on following page)

#### THE WAY OUT

#### Key:

- A. The Land of Shinear, where the Great Tower was. (P. Dhorme, in "Rev. Biblique" 1928, 509-511). Ether 1:33.
  B. "The valley which was northward" (2:1). (The northern headwaters of the Euphrates "command a hub of radiating valleys and travel routes, to which the Euphrates owes its impor-tance as a highway of commercial and military penetration." A. Moret, "Hist. de l'Orient" I, 306). C. "And the name of the valley was Nim-
- rod" (2:1). Nimrod country: home of Nimrod place-names and legends. (N. Emin).
- D. "That quarter where there never had man been" (2:5). Anau, once thought man been (215). Analy, once inought to be the oldest city in the world, was originally built in a wilderness.
  E. "The sea in the wilderness" (2:7). Both the Aral and Caspian Seas were much be were in a winder the more than the sease of the sease o
- larger in ancient times than they are
- today. F. "Many waters" (2:6). The Turanian plain was anciently full of lakes, marshes, and streams. The Oxus Delta was a vast lake.
- G. Ancient course of the Oxus (as recently as the time of Alexander), now dried up.



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#### THE WORLD OF THE JAREDITES

(Continued from preceding page) people to be blooded, and each drank alternately of the other's blood...."107 The annals of the Assyrians conduct us, as does the study of the oldest languages of Asia, into a world of oaths and covenants.<sup>108</sup> And why should this be so? The explanation is simple, for the purpose of the oath is to bind. (The Egyptian word for oath, to give one example, is simply ankh, originally a knot. In a world of vast open spaces and limited population, where wandering nomads may take independence for themselves by hunting beasts or driving cattle over limitless grasslands, how can men be bound to any spot or leader? They must be tied by oaths, because there is no other way of binding them. Of course every effort was made to make the oath as binding, that is, as terrible as possible, and of course such oaths were broken whenever convenient. The ease with which one could pass from one camp to another put every king on his guard, so that Asiatic kingship is at all times enveloped in a stifling-and very Jareditish-atmosphere of suspicion and intrigue. Mithra rules, says the Avesta, by virtue of his ten thousand spies, which make him alone of all kings undeceivable.<sup>100</sup> This is the institution of "the King's eyes" and "the King's ears," perfected in Persia and inherited by the monarchs of many lands. The success of any conspiracy against watchful royalty depends therefore on secrecy and surprise before all else, and so we have as the unfailing adjunct and nemesis of Asiatic kingship the secret society, investing all life with a paralyzing sense of insecurity, as Hoernes notes, and overthrowing dynasties and empires in a single night.<sup>110</sup> Asia's gift to the world has many times saved the world from Asia's rule, for how many a Persian, Hunnish, or Mongol conqueror has had to turn his back on the West just as he stood on the verge of world conquest, to quench the fires of rebellion set by the secret conspiracies of his relatives behind his back! The normal constitution of Asiatic empire, write Huart and Delaporte, is "despotism tempered by dethronement and assassination, in which the clergy play the leading role.""

For better or for worse, every ruler of the steppes, however great 94 his personal power and prestige, has to reckon on the presence of a class of ambitious and powerful priests--usually shamans. Even Genghis Khan, the mightiest of them all, was nearly pushed from his throne by an ambitious high priest, and at the dawn of history more than one such high priest seized the rule for himself.<sup>111</sup> The case of the brother of Shared whose "high priest murdered him as he sat upon his throne" (*Ibid.*, 14:9) is, then, thoroughly typical, and that by no mere coincidence, for we are told not only that the system was inherited "from them of old" and perpetuated by the same methods-secret societies, family compacts, bribes, oaths, etc.-as in the Old World, but we are also given a clear image of the physical background of the whole thing.

We are told for example, how a son of King Akish, enraged at his father for the inhuman death of his brother by starvation (how typical), went out and joined the growing hosts of the deposed King Omer, who, since he had been overthrown by a "secret combination of Akish and his friends," had been dwelling in tents and gathering strength for a comeback. (Ibid., Ch. 9.) Note the apparent fluidity of Jaredite society-the possibility of large parties of people wandering here and there over a sparsely-settled continent. Note also how closely conditions in "this north country" duplicate those prevailing in the same latitudes on the other side of the world, where much the same landscape also prevails. This, we will see later, is very significant, for it plainly points to the possible origin of much of the Indian way of life among the hunters and nomads of Asia at a very early date-the very thesis that has so often been thrown up as the strongest argument against the Book of Mormon is first propounded by the Book of Mormon itself! But more of this later.

#### A World of Jails

The Jaredites, like their Asiatic relatives (and unlike the Nephites), were thorough-going monarchists, and their monarchy is the well-known Asiatic despotism lacking none of the trimmings. Take the four verses that describe the reign of Riplakish, Ether 10:5-8. Here, I submit, is the perfect thumbnail portrait of an

Asiatic tyrant; the lechery and cruelty, the magnificence and the oppression are all there. That sort of thing was well-known in Joseph Smith's day—after all *Hajji Baba* came out in 1824—but the Book of Ether goes far beyond the conventional picture to show us institutions quite alien to the experience of western people.

Such is the practice, mentioned many times in the book, of keeping a king prisoner throughout his entire lifetime, allowing him to beget and rear a family in captivity, even though the sons thus brought up would be almost sure to seek vengeance for their parent and power for themselves upon coming of age. Thus Kib was taken captive by his own son, begot yet other children in captivity, and died of old age, still a prisoner. To avenge Kib, his son Shule overcame the unfilial Corihor whom, however, he allowed to continue in power in the kingdom! Shule in turn was taken prisoner by Corihor's son Noah, only to be kidnapped from his prison and restored to power by his own sons. And so on: "Seth . . . did dwell in captivity all his days. . . . Moron dwelt in captivity all the remainder of his days; and he begat Coriantor. And it came to pass that Coriantor dwelt in captivity all his days and . . . begat Ether, and he died, having dwelt in captivity all his days.""

It seems to us a perfectly ridiculous system, yet it is in accordance with the immemorial Asiatic usage. Thus when the brothers Baidu and Kaijatu disputed the throne of Asia, the advisers of the latter when he gained ascendency declared: "It is right that he should be *yoked under service*, and that he should be kept in bondage for the whole period of his life, so that his hand can never be stretched out to kill or commit any injury."

In the Book of Ether King Hearthom . . . "served many years in captivity." (*Ibid.*, 10:30; King Levi the same, *Ibid.*, 10:15.) Kaijatu failed to heed the advice, to his regret, for presently his brother staged a coup and put *him* in a tower for the rest of his days.<sup>113</sup>

Benjamin of Tudela tells how the khalif—the spiritual ruler of all western Asia—arranged for "the brothers (Continued on page 98)





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### THE WORLD OF THE JAREDITES

(Continued from page 94)

and other members of the khalif's family" to live a life of ease, luxury, and security: "every one of them possesses a palace within that of the khalif, but they are all fettered by chains of iron, and a special officer is appointed over every household to prevent their rising in rebellion against the great king.""

Genghis Khan during his earlier career was put in stocks and carried about with the court of a rival prince as a permanent prisoner; his escape was considered superhuman. His descendant, Tamerlane, and his wife were also made permanent prisoners and kept in a cowshed by a rival ruler.<sup>115</sup>

In an emergency the shah of Persia was unable to come to the same Tamerlane's aid as an ally because, he exclaimed, "his nephew Mansur had robbed him of his army and thrown him into prison"<sup>118</sup>—yet he was able to write letters.<sup>117</sup>

When Izzudin overcame his brother Alluddin in their fight for the Seljuk empire, he locked him up in prison; but when at the end of seven years Izzudin died, his brother was immediately released and put on the throne without a dissenting voice he had been kept behind bars all that time just as a precaution!<sup>47</sup>

It was the custom of Turkish kings, as has been recently shown, to allow their defeated rivals to sit upon their thrones by day but lock them up in iron cages for the night!<sup>106</sup>

These lords of the steppes, like the Mameluke ruler who brought an upstart general to heel by having him hauled to court in a cage,<sup>110</sup> were following in the footsteps of much earlier kings. Sennacherib reports of no less a rival than the king of Babylon that "they threw him fettered into a cage and brought him before me. I tied him up in the middle gate of Nineveh, like a pig."<sup>120</sup> And of the king of Arabia he says: "I put him into a kennel. With jackals and dogs I tied him up and made him guard the gate in Nineveh. . . . "<sup>201</sup>

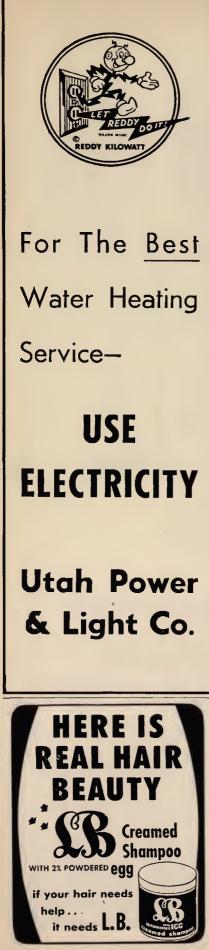
Moving back to the earliest records of all, we find a large class of legends all over the ancient world telling how the victorious god in the beginning bound and imprisoned his rebellious relatives, not killing them since they partook of his own divine nature—the earliest myths of Zeus and Osiris at once spring to mind. But the actual carrying out of the practice in history as described in the Book of Ether comes as a surprise.

Related to the permanent confinement of kings is the institution of forced labor in prisons. Riplakish "... did obtain all his fine work; yea, even his fine gold he did cause to be refined in prison; and all manner of fine workmanship he did cause to be wrought in prison." (Ibid., 10:7.) Work in prison was the alternative to the paying of ruinous taxes. (Ibid., 10:6.) Much the same system was used by the Assyrians from the beginning; thus Tiglath Pileser III: "I laid tribute and taxes upon them . . . their horses, their mules, their camels, their cattle and their sheep and workmen without number I carried away.... All the skilled artisans I shrewdly used to best advantage."122 "Feudal dues, forced labor, and overseers I imposed upon the land of Nairi."123 Even kings are made to serve, as Hearthom did: "Their kings, their rulers, I brought into submission to my feet and imposed taskwork."124

Later rulers of Asia kept up the tradition: the Scythians considered all people their slaves, and their Parthian successors bound these slaves down on huge work farms.125 While in Western Asia, Alaric and Attila treated all men as their bound serfs,<sup>120</sup> in eastern Asia the Wei kept a million captives working for a hundred years in caves to produce "all manner of fine workmanship."<sup>127</sup> Each relative of the Great Khan "received a certain number of skilled workmen, artisans, artists, and so on, who were at his entire disposal and whom he made settle where he liked."128 Tamerlane kept such artists, especially goldsmiths and glassworkers, for himself, forcing them to settle in prison camps at Samarkand in much the way Assur-Nazir Pal bound the Amorite workers three thousand years before.129

Even in our own day the *ja lama* forced everyone who fell into his power, "Tibetan officials, Mongol pilgrims, lamas, Chinese traders, Kirghiz headmen," as well as an innumerable host of soldiers and peasants "to work erecting buildings and constructing towers and walls" to his glory.<sup>130</sup>

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#### THE WORLD OF THE JAREDITES

(Continued from page 98)

We must not overlook the ambitious building programs of the Jaredite kings, for nothing is more typical of the earliest rulers of the East, where even the prehistoric creation legends "harp upon building with a notable persistence."<sup>1151</sup> Coriantumr "... did build many mighty cities" (*Ibid.*, 9:23), the magnificent Ripla-kish "... did build many spacious buildings" (*Ibid.*, 10:5), and Morianton "... built up many cities, and the people became exceeding rich . . . in buildings." (Ibid., 10:12.) It is a strange thing that warlike and no-

madic kings should have a passion for building, but it is a fact in Asia as in America: "Cities sprang up like mushrooms in honor of the ruling khan, most of them remaining unfinished and falling speedily into decay. Armies of handicraftsmen would be assembled for the purpose (another Jaredite practice) . . . then the khan would perish and of the intended glory nothing would remain but a heap of ruins. . . . ""132 I think I have given the true explanation of this phenomenon in a recent article,183 but what I want to call (Continued on page 102)

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#### The World of the Jaredites (Continued from page 100)

attention to here is the exact resemblance of the Jaredite practice to that in the Old World.

The particular care bestowed upon the royal throne in Ether's account (*Ibid.*, 10:6) is another authentic touch. The plan of the royal thronc was said to have been revealed to Gudea, the ancient patesi of Lagash, from heaven, and at all times there was a widespread belief in Asia that there could be only one true throne in the world and that any unauthorized person who attempted to sit upon it would suffer grave injury.184

(To be continued)

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<sup>95</sup>Ibid., pp. 224-6.

<sup>60</sup>Jordanes, Hist. Goth. c. 35.

<sup>97</sup>They were Dinzio (Jordanes, c. 53), and Mundo (id. c. 58).

98Vladimirtsov, The Life of Chingis-Khan, p. 3.

99 Aqserayi, Seljuk History (ed. Isiltan),

p. 88. <sup>100</sup>The first quotation from Ed. Creasy, *Turks*, p. 5, the History of the Ottoman Turks, p. 5, the second from Sven Hedin, The Flight of Big Horse trs. F. H. Lyon, (N.Y., Dutton: 1936) p. 16. Cf. M. Cable, The Gobi Desert, pp. 222ff.

<sup>101</sup>See below, note.

<sup>102</sup>F. E. A. Krause, Cingis Han (Heidel-berg, 1922), p. 13; Menander Protector, De legat. Roman. ad gentes, Chap. viii (Migne Patrol. Graec., Vol. 113, col. 888), beheld five hundred wagons full of gold, silver, and silken garments that followed the court of the Great Khan in the sixth century. The strictly mercenary nature of the whole business is well described by Peter Patrick in 230 A. D. (in PG 113, 665f) and Priscus, in 449 A.D. (Ibid., Cols. 748f, 752).

<sup>103</sup>Vernadsky, Ancient Russia, p. 80.

<sup>104</sup>According to Odoric of Pordennone, Ch. 18 (p. 249f in M. Komroff, Contemporaries of Marco Polo), "the ancient law" of the Khans is, "Thou shalt not appear in my presence with an empty hand," the corollary being that "No Mongol, this day, entered the tent of his ruler without being richly rewarded." (Prawdin, loc. cit.) Bar Hebraeus (ed. Budge, I, 505) tells how when Baidu the Mongol wanted to supplant his brother on the throne of Asia "he made men rich with gifts and he made men splendid with royal apparel, and so bound them to him." Innumerable parallels might be cited.

<sup>104a</sup>F. Hommel, Ethnologie und Geogra-phie des alten Orients, pp. 22-23.

<sup>105</sup>I am following the text of R. Labat, Le Poeme Babylonien de la Creation. (Paris, Maisonneuve, 935).

108*Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>107</sup>Memoirs of John Lord de Joinville (Trs. Thos. Johnes, 1807) I, 204. The whole history of Jenghiz Khan is a long succession of terrible oaths, the most solemn being taken by a bag full of blood, to follow

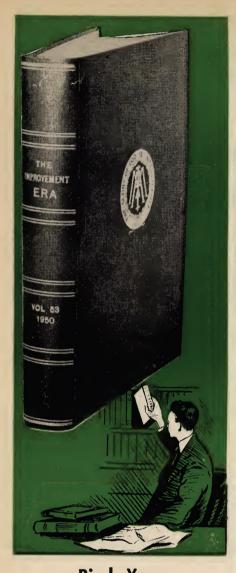
> (Continued on page 104) THE IMPROVEMENT ERA





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#### THE WORLD OF THE JAREDITES

(Continued from page 102)

F. E. A. Krause, Cingis Han . . . , pp. 17f, 23f, etc. Herodotus, History IV, 66, describes the blood-drinking oaths of the Scythians two thousands years earlier.

<sup>108</sup>M. Hoernes, Natur- und Urgeschichte des Menschen (Vienna, 1909) I, 582.

<sup>160</sup>Jas. Darmesteter, *The Zend-Avesta* (Oxford, 1895) II, 135, 140, 145.

<sup>110</sup>Hoernes, op. cit. II, 418. The reader is reminded that fellowships and secret societies have always been the foundation of Asiatic government and religion, whether shamanistic (e.g. the Bon), lamist, or Buddhist.

<sup>110</sup><sup>n</sup>L'Iran Antique, p. 399.

<sup>111</sup>I have a long note on this subject in my article "Sparsiones," in The Classical Journal XL (1945), 526, n. 70.

<sup>112</sup>Ether 10:14, 31; 11:9, 19, 23; 7:7; 8:3-4; 10:15, 30; 11:18.

<sup>113</sup>Bar Hebraeus, Chronography (Budge I, 495, 500).

<sup>114</sup>Benjamin of Tudela, Travels, Ch. 56 (in ed. Asher I, 95); cf. id. c. 96: following a rebellion "it was decreed, that all the members of the Khalif's family should be chained, in order to prevent their rebellious intentions. Every one of them, however,

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resides in his palace. . . . They eat and drink and lead a merry life."

<sup>115</sup>Prawdin, Mongol Empire, p. 424. <sup>116</sup>Ibid., p. 448.

<sup>117</sup>Aqserayi, Seljuk Hist., ed. Isiltan, p. 41f.

For some picturesque dethronements, see Bar Hebraeus, op. cit. I, 178, 147, 163, 176. <sup>118</sup>N. Martinovitch, "Another Turkish Iron

Cage," in *Inl. Amer. Oriental Soc.* 62 (1942), p. 140f, citing a number of instances.

<sup>119</sup>Bar Hebraeus (Budge), I, 471.

<sup>120</sup>Luckenbill, Ancient Records II, 155 (No. 350).

<sup>121</sup>*Ibid.* II, 314 (No. 819).

<sup>1218</sup>A. B. Cook's Zeus, and C. J. Gadd, *Ideas of Divine Rule in the Ancient East* (London, Br. Acad., 1948), treat this subject at length.

<sup>122</sup>Luckenbill, op. cit. I, 271, 288.

<sup>128</sup>Ibid. I, 182.

<sup>124</sup>*Ibid.* I, 50.

<sup>125</sup>McGovern, Early Empires of Cent. As., p. 73. Cf. Herodotus, Hist. IV, 20.

<sup>128</sup>Claudian, Bellum Geticum, 11. 364-8; Jordanes, Gothic Wars, Ch. 52.

<sup>127</sup>H. Haslund, Men and Gods in Mongolia, p. 4.

<sup>128</sup>Vladimirstov, Chingis-Khan, p. 147f, cf. p. 76. The theory is that "the conquered are the property of the conqueror, who is the lawful master of them, of their lands, of their goods, of their wives, and of their children. We have the right to do what we will with our own," Creasy, Ottoman Turks, p. 21; cf. the Grand Khan as quoted by Marco Polo II, 21: "I subdued you by the power of my sword, and consequently whatever you possess belongs by right to me," pp. 131, 142, 175, 476. <sup>129</sup>M. Prawdin, Mongol Empire, pp. 131,

<sup>129</sup>M. Prawdin, Mongol Empire, pp. 131, 142, 175, 476. Luckenbill, Ancient Records I, 182 (No. 502).

<sup>130</sup>G. N. Roerich, Trails to Inmost Asia, p. 233.

<sup>131</sup>Prawdin, op. cit., p. 374.

<sup>181</sup>Gadd, Ideas of Divine Rule, p. 6.

<sup>132</sup>Prawdin, op. cit., p. 374.

<sup>130</sup>Under the subtitle "Mountain and Palace," in Western Political Quarterly IV (1951), 235-8. No empire was possible without a palace and city at its center; see the Book of Jubilees IV, 9; VII, 14. In the most ancient times "every king built himself a new residence" upon mounting the throne, says Ed. Meyer, Geschichte des Altertums I. 2.-145, for the custom was "that every king possess his own 'city'..."

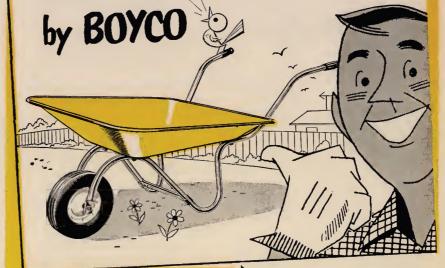
<sup>134</sup>A. Wünsche, Salomons Thron und Hippodrom (Ex Oriente Lux II, 3), pp. 9ff, 22-25. Tha'labi, Qissat al-Anbiya, p. 11ff.

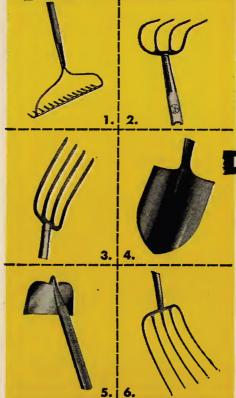
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STATES

#### THE POPPY BARROW

The new light-weight Poppy Barrow weighs so little, carries so much that you'll whisk through your spring gardening more easily than you thought possible! It carries four flats of seedlings at once—or 3 cu. ft. of topsoil, has a ballbearing wheel for effortless rolling, and a wide rubber tire that won't mark your lawn.Sturdy, all-steel construction; wideset legs resist tipping. Stores in only 2'x2' floor space.

#### **BOYCO GARDEN TOOLS**

1. Scientifically-balanced rake takes a load off your hands. Long-lasting ash handle, solid-forged head.

2. Cultivator has sharp, forged steel points for easy working of soil.

**3.** Spading fork is springy, rugged and *sharp*-goes into ground effortlessly.

4. Digging is simpler with this sharp, high-carbon steel shovel. Has springy ash handle.

5. This Boyco hoe is a weeding wizard because it has a sharp, rugged solid-forged head.

**6.** Sturdy, heat-treated manure fork lasts a lifetime. Fine for turning compost, spreading mulch.