



Myths Legends of Babylonia Assyria (Classic Reprint)

Lewis Spence

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Excerpt from Myths Legends of Babylonia Assyria


The purpose of this book is to provide not only a popular account of the religion and mythology of ancient of Babylonia and Assyria, but to extract and present to the reader the treasures of romance latent in the subject, the peculiar richness of which has been recognized since the early days of archaeological effort in Chaldea. Unfortunately, with few exceptions, writers who have made the field a special study have rarely been able to triumph over the limitations which so often obtrude in works of scholarship and research. It is true that the pages of Rawlinson, Smith, Layard, and Sayce are enlivened at intervals with pictures of Assyrian splendour and Babylonian glory - gleams which escape as the curtains which veil the wondrous past are partially lifted - but such glimpses are only interludes in lengthy disquisitions which too often must be tedious for the general reader.

It was such a consideration which prompted the preparation of this volume. Might not a book be written which should contain the pure gold of Babylonian romance freed from the darker ore of antiquarian research? So far, so good. But gold in the pure state is notoriously unserviceable, and an alloy which renders it of greater utility may detract nothing from its brilliance. Romance or no romance, in these days it will not do to furnish stories of the gods without attempting some definition of their nature and origin. For more than ever before romance and knowledge are a necessary blend in the making of a satisfactory book on mythology.

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