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## Studies in Eusebius

E. G. Sihler

*Concordia Seminary, St. Louis*

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authorship. In the case of Ecclesiastes, for example, the abstract ending *uth* is one of the main philological arguments against the Solomonic authorship, the critical contention alleging that this ending is late. But since these claims have been advanced, new archeological discoveries have enlarged the comparative Semitic vocabulary, and it has become evident that these abstract endings, branded as signs of late authorship, occur in the Assyrian or Babylonian of the Code of Hammurabi and the Tel-el-Amarna letters, in the historical and omen inscriptions of Assyria, and in other records from the time of 2000 B. C.

Even more thoroughly has the similar theory involving nouns ending in *on* and *an* been scouted by the advances of Semitic linguistics. For the Babylonian, Assyrian, Arabic, and Aramaic can now be shown to have contained many words with these terminations.

As the field of literary attacks on the Hebrew of the Old Testament is surveyed from these various angles, one gains the conviction that in the coming years, as the conquest of Semitic philology increases, other assaults of the *Sprachbeweis* will be destined to similar frustration and that indeed the other contentions from comparative history and comparative religion, on which the subsequent article will dwell, are doomed to the same end.

W. A. MAIER.

(To be concluded.)

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## Studies in Eusebius.

(Concluded.)

Melito, bishop of Sardis, in a letter presented to Aurelius, called Christianity "the philosophy which began under Augustus." (Eusebius, IV, 26.) The narrative about the persecution in Gaul under Marcus Aurelius, in V, is among the most important in the *Church History* of the bishop of Caesarea, untainted by the flattery of his later references to Constantine. This persecution occurred in 177 A. D., especially in Lugdunum and Vienne on the Rhone. The report given by the churches there, sent to the churches in the provinces of Asia and Phrygia, is the longest citation in the whole history of Eusebius, and it seems to have been composed in Greek. One is almost compelled to infer that Greek was still the language in which Scripture was read in the services and perhaps also the language of the sermons. Irenaeus was trained in Asia Minor and wrote Greek. Socially even the Christians (Eusebius, V, 1) had become marked men, being excluded from the public baths and the market-place. The leaders of the Christians were fearless. The report quotes Rom. 8, 18 precisely: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to



be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (really to us: *εις ημας*). After suffering much from the mob in the streets, taunts, blows, stones, robbery, etc., the Christians were imprisoned until the proconsul arrived. Prominent among them was a young man, Vettius Epagathos,<sup>16)</sup> a fearless confessor. He was executed, "having followed the Lamb whithersoever it led." Some weakened in the persecution. All the most eminent members of the two churches were in time imprisoned. Some pagan domestic servants of Christians also were arrested, and these, fearing torture, lied to the Roman authorities, saying the Christians celebrated "Thyestian feasts and practised Oedipodean sexual cohabitings." Those lies stirred the community to fury. The time had come when the Lord's prediction came true (John 16, 2): "Every one who kills you will think that he is doing a service to God."<sup>17)</sup> Of those on whom the fury of the mob and of the authorities was particularly concentrated the report mentions particularly Sanctus, a deacon of Vienne, Maturus, recently baptized, Attalus, a native of Pergamos, one of the pillars of the church, and especially the maiden Blandina, servant of a Christian mistress. Blandina suffered every kind of torture from morning to night. "She grew new in her confession" (renewed her strength). She persisted, "I am a Christian, and no evil thing is done in our company." Sanctus answered none of the questions whatsoever; the only thing he said, in Latin, was, "I am a Christian." Finally the torturers applied glowing metal plates (*λεπιδας*) to the tenderest parts of his body. His whole body finally was "one great wound or swelling." Another martyr was the woman Biblias, who said, "How could the Christians eat little children since they do not even consume the blood of animals?"<sup>18)</sup> She was executed. Other tortures were inflicted in the prison; indeed, most of these martyrs were suffocated or strangled. The report further dwells on the death of Potheinos, a deacon of the church of Lugdunum; he was more than ninety years old. He was brought by soldiers before the tribunal of the Roman governor. The latter asked him who the God of the Christians was. Potheinos answered, "If you be worthy, you will learn it." After two days in prison he breathed his last. Those who denied were not discharged, but also imprisoned, not with the confessors, however, and were even taunted by the pagan mob as ignoble cowards. Among the last sufferings of Maturus and Sanctus was this: they were seated on a glowing iron seat, on which their bodies were literally fried; they were sacrificed, "becoming a spectacle (*θεαμα*) to the world." Blandina, fastened on a wooden frame, a kind of cross, was exposed to the beasts. As none of these would touch her, she was taken back to prison. Attalus

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16) Notice the Greek name.

17) The citations in the early Church, as a rule, agree very closely with our New Testament text.

18) Cf. Acts 15, 20.



was conducted around the amphitheater, a tablet preceding him on which was written in Latin: "This is Attalus, the Christian." When the governor heard that he was a Roman, he determined to await the official answer of the emperor. In this interval many of the non-confessors repented and gained new courage and bravely approached the tribunal once more. The answer of the emperor<sup>19)</sup> was this: Some (those who were Roman citizens) should be beheaded; those who denied should be discharged. The non-Roman confessors were condemned to be thrown to the wild beasts. Those who denied are called in the report persons "who had no wedding-garment" (Matt. 22, 11). A distinguished physician, Alexander, a Phrygian by birth, had nodded encouragement to those undergoing trial; the governor, noticing this through the outcry of the populace, condemned him to share the fate of Attalus. The latter, while being roasted on the glowing iron seat, said to the mob in Latin: "Behold, this is eating human beings,<sup>20)</sup> and that is what you are doing." Being asked what God's name was, he said, "God has not a name like a human being." Only one day was left of the gladiatorial shows, and there were brought forward Blandina and a youth of eighteen, Ponticus. He, cheered on by Blandina, expired first. She alone was left and died last, notwithstanding all the previous tortures she had endured, being tossed on the horns of a wild steer. — What was done with the corpses of the martyrs? Those strangled in prison were thrown to the dogs. The other physical remnants of the martyrs were guarded by soldiers. Various were the utterances of the pagans. Some said, "Where is now their God, and what did the worship profit them which they chose instead of their own lives?" A Christian burial was absolutely denied the martyrs, and the physical remnants were burned to ashes and cast into the Rhone. The pagans did this with taunts: "Now these martyrs will never see resurrection!" Those who survived or escaped with their lives refused, in the associations of the Christians, to be called martyrs; "we are only humble confessors." (Eusebius, V, 2.) In one of these official Christian reports it is said that they looked to the exemplar of St. Stephen, the protomartyr, who prayed (Acts 7, 60), "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."<sup>21)</sup> Col. 1, 18 our Lord is called "the First-born from the dead."

The churches in Gaul also, through the presbyter Irenaeus, sent to Rome, to Bishop Eleutherus, a list of martyrs: 1) of those who had been beheaded; 2) of those who had been thrown to the wild beasts;

19) The "philosopher" on the throne.

20) May I once more refer to the Christian apologist Minucius Felix (*From Augustus to Augustine*, p. 51), a careful study of whom will explain much of the wide-spread fury in the Roman Empire against the Christians.

21) The Greek corresponded precisely with our text. No classical text is to us so perfectly certified as the New Testament, to say nothing of the ever new finds of Egyptian papyri.



3) of those who had died in prison; 4) of the confessors who survived. (Eusebius, V, 4.)

The survey of the gospels as set down by Irenaeus should not be overlooked. (Eusebius, V, 8.) He says that Matthew wrote in Hebrew while Peter and Paul (?) in Rome were preaching the Gospel and laying the foundation (*θεμελιούστων*) of the Church. After their end, Mark, the disciple and interpreter (*ερμηνευτής*) of Peter, presented the preaching of Peter and gave it to us in writing (*εγγράφως*); and Luke, the follower of Paul, laid down in a book the gospel presented by him. "Then John, the disciple of the Lord who rested on His breast, also himself gave out the gospel, dwelling in Ephesus, in Asia" (the province). Irenaeus wrote five books, dwelling in the fifth on the Revelation of John and on the name of the Beast, Rev. 11, 7 and chaps. 13—20. John, says he, saw his vision near the end of the reign of Domitian. The Virgin Birth was denied by the Ebionites.

In the reign of Commodus (180—192 A. D.) there began at Alexandria the Christian school, or college (*διδασκαλείον*), under Pantainos, which gained eminence through Origen and Clement of Alexandria, who was a pupil of Pantainos.

As to the list of bishops of Jerusalem, after the change by Hadrian into Aelia Capitolina a list of fifteen bishops is given. (Eusebius, V, 12.) None of them has a Hebrew name; they are all Greek or Latin; Narkissos was the thirtieth "after the apostles."

Some of Polycarp's memories of John were from direct association (Eusebius, V, 20), *οὐκ ἐν χάρτῃ*, "not on paper." That such records were treasured, goes without saying.

Even then a bishop of Rome, Victor (Eusebius, V, 24), at the time of the contention about the celebration of Easter, tried to assume autocratic power, threatening to excommunicate Eastern bishops who based their claim on ancient tradition. Irenaeus in Gaul, too, opposed Victor.

On the whole, Eusebius, in his outlook and record, follows the chronology of the emperors. After Commodus came Septimius Severus, whose arch is on the northerly end of the Forum Romanum.

At Rome there arose a new sect, led by a certain Artemon; these sects not only studied Aristotle, Euclid, Theophrastus, and Galen, the physician, but also disputed the texts of the New Testament, being thus precursors in the classic domain of higher criticism (Eusebius, V, 28) and calling Christ a mere man. Their own texts of the New Testament differed greatly from one another.

Eusebius begins Book VI by turning to Alexandria, where under Emperor Septimius Severus the father of Origen, Leonides, was beheaded. Eusebius then devotes much study to the childhood and youth of Origen, whom he admires and whom he strives to delineate from earliest childhood, when his father (chap. 2) was overjoyed because



of the eagerness of his gifted son in studying the Scriptures and of the searching spirit which he manifested; the study of Greek letters and philosophy came later. When his father died a martyr, Origen was about seventeen, and he had six younger brothers. His father's estate had been taken by the imperial fiscus. At this point a rich man undertook to support him. The Christian teachers, or catechists, had been driven from their work. (Eusebius, VI, 3.) This persecution came under Severus, when some pagans desired instruction in the Christian doctrine. One of these, Plutarch, eventually became a Christian and a martyr; his brother Heraclas later became bishop of Alexandria. At eighteen he came to be the teacher of the catechetical school. The attendance he gave to the martyrs was so earnest and so conspicuous that the mob of Alexandria almost stoned him. His pupils were very numerous. In all this he was under the authority of Bishop Demetrius. Finally selling his classical library, he lived on four obols a day (about 3 cents in our money) and led an extremely ascetic life, having not even two tunics, according to Matt. 10, 9; no shoes, no wine, etc. Eusebius says he gained more pupils by his living than by his teaching. Some of these became martyrs under Septimius Severus.

Potamiaina and her mother were burned at the stake in Alexandria (Eusebius, VI, 5); a soldier, Basileides, was beheaded. Caracalla succeeded his father Septimius Severus in 211 A. D. (Eusebius, VI, 8.) Clement says (Eusebius, VI, 14) that John made a "spiritual gospel."

Much of what Eusebius has given to posterity here consists in lists of writings of Christian bishops, which, however, we must pass over as well as the slurs against Origen by the Neoplatonist Porphyry, the pupil and biographer of Plotinus. (Eusebius, VI, 19.) We also learn of the Hebrew erudition of Origen. The ever-repeated data of the canon of the New Testament by Origen (Eusebius, VI, 25) may lead us to the reflection that this was necessary because of the incessant production of fictitious books and the urgent need of sharp discrimination against the Gnostics. (Eusebius, VI, 25.) We also notice that the claim for the preeminence of Peter, based on Matt. 16, 18, was wide-spread; and he cites John 21, 25: if one were to write the deeds of Christ in detail, "the world could not hold the books written."

It may be worth while to present the reasons why Origen did not believe that Paul wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews: "That the type of style of the epistle written to the Hebrews has not the peculiarity of the language of the apostle, which evidently is that of a layman, that is, the style; but that in the composition of the style it is more Greek, every one who knows how to judge differences of style would admit. And again, that the thoughts of the epistle are wonderful and not



inferior to the confessedly apostolic writings, this, too, any one attentive to apostolic reading would admit." There were some who assigned the epistle to Clement of Rome or to Luke. Even bishops listened to the lectures of Origen, such as Alexander of Jerusalem and Theoktistos of Caesarea. (Eusebius, VI, 27.)

The persecution under Emperor Maximinus Thrax (235—238 A. D.) was noted by Origen in his book on *Martyrdom*, and he marked the time in Book 22 of his *Exegesis of John*, in various letters. (Eusebius, VI, 28.)

The productivity of Origen was astounding: thus on the first third of Isaiah he wrote twenty-two tomes. Merely to enumerate all his writings would require a separate study. (Eusebius, VI, 32.) Pamphilus, the predecessor of Eusebius at Caesarea, seems to have gathered a wonderful library, out of which the *Church History* of Eusebius was eventually compounded. Marcus Julius Philippus, "Philip the Arab," emperor from 244 to 249 A. D., was reputed a Christian (Eusebius, VI, 34) — "there is a tradition" (*κατέχει λόγος*). But he had brought about the assassination of Gordianus. ("In no part of his public life, not even on his coins, has he left the least trace of his Christianity." Neander, I, 126.)

It was at this time that Origen wrote his treatise *Against Celsus*, the contemporary of Marcus Aurelius.

Under Emperor Decius (249 A. D.), even Origen suffered; he had to wear an iron collar, and his feet were put into the stocks. (Eusebius, VI, 39.)

The sufferings of Christians under Decius at Alexandria are discussed with every detail by a contemporary, Dionysius (Eusebius, VI, 41), during the persecution. Origen died 253 A. D., under Gallus, in his sixty-ninth year, at Tyre, where he was buried (Eusebius, VII, 1).

Repeatedly we observe that bishops were elected by the people (*ζευγοτονία*, VII, 9), also, that candidates for Baptism were examined, questions and answers being uttered before the congregation. Here, too, we learn of the Eucharist. Dionysius admitted a communicant who had recanted his heresy and wrote about it as follows: "When he had listened to the Eucharist [the liturgy introducing it], and had joined in uttering the amen [of the congregation], and had approached the table, and had stretched out his hand to receive the holy food, and had received it, and had shared at the proper time in the body and blood of our Lord."

Regarding the persecution under Valerian I must limit myself to a few points. (Eusebius, VII, 11.) When Dionysius at Alexandria was called upon by the Roman official Aemilianus to abandon his faith, he answered with the words of Acts 5, 29 (Dionysius farther on cited from the official minutes of the trial). Aemilianus said to the



Christians brought before his tribunal: "The emperor will spare you if you will turn to that which is according to nature and worship the gods who save their throne." To me it seems that a flood of light is thrown on the whole question why the Christians were persecuted: political loyalty was taken to be bound up with the acceptance of the Roman gods. Conformity was now demanded. What a change since Augustus!

Gallienus, son of Valerian, who lingered in Persian captivity, issued an edict (255—256 A. D. or so) stopping the persecution, which Eusebius presents in a translation from the original Latin. I present it in English: "The Emperor Caesar Publius Licinius Gallienus, Pius, Felix, Augustus, to Dionysius, and Pinnas, and Demetrius, and the other bishops: I have ordered that the benefaction of my gift shall be spread abroad through all the world; that they shall withdraw from the places of worship. And therefore you, too, may avail yourselves of the general tenor of my decree, so that no one shall trouble you. And this, which by measure of possibility can be carried out by you, has now long ago been granted by me. And therefore Aurelius Quirinius, who is in charge of the greatest matter, will observe the tenor of my grant." In another decree bishops were permitted to recover the places of the "so-called cemeteries."

Still (Eusebius, VII, 15) at Caesarea a military officer, Marinus, was executed because he refused to sacrifice to the emperors. (Neander, I, 140, calls him Marius.) The chair, or "throne," of James, the first bishop of Jerusalem, was still preserved in the time of Eusebius. (VII, 19.) Tertullian relates a similar habit in the churches of his own time in *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*.

Dionysius (VII, 24) tells of Nepos, who used the Apocalypse to found a sect of his own, for Chiliasm. It was a time of material ease and luxury. Dionysius held a three-day conference with those affected by this doctrine and brought them to see their error. He adds his view or remarks on John's gospel, his first epistle, and the Apocalypse, speaking in great detail on authenticity and authorship.

The figure and ambition of Paul of Samosata. The excommunication of this worldly and unchristian bishop of Antioch was at last accomplished after the accession of Aurelianus, 276 A. D. The trial was conducted largely by a synod, or council, of bishops, but the finer work was done by Malchion, head of the "Greek schools" at Antioch (Eusebius, VII, 29) and also by a presbyter of the church at Antioch. The record made by stenographers (*ταχυγράφοι*) was preserved. Paul, the bishop (Eusebius, VII, 30), had become rich through fees and gifts, had surrounded himself with pomp, held a scepter, was proud, arrogant, and worldly, removed hymns that were sung in honor of Christ, made "an income" of religion (1 Tim. 6, 5), dismissed one woman (his wife), and now had two other handsome ones in his house-



hold. The members had to appeal to the secular government to remove him from the bishop's house. (*On the Manicheans*; Eusebius, VIII, 31.)

From this point on, say from Aurelianus onward, Eusebius begins to write of incidents in his own life. In all fairness we may infer that, if he took such pains to use documents of the first order for the period from the apostles down, then this last period was set down with the same scrupulous regard for truth.

In an anticipatory phrase Eusebius designates the period of Emperor Diocletian that of "the siege of the churches." (From now on Eusebius introduces such a multitude of persons and characters that we must be careful to limit ourselves to the more important; whom to select is not easy. Scholars, naturally, appeal to him very much.) It was at the time of Bishop Tyrannos that this "siege of the churches" "flourished" (*ἵκμασεν*). He gives a succinct survey of episcopal successions up to Diocletian's persecution, which was felt everywhere as the greatest of all, "the persecution of our own time." Speaking of Hermon, bishop of Jerusalem: "He received the apostolic chair, which is still preserved there." Tertullian referred to this conservative habit of the churches which I have referred to above.

Eusebius sums up the seven books preceding the eighth as "the succession to the apostles." And this term is significant—not so much the adherence of Christians to the Bible as the framework of a sacerdotal system and tradition was his chief interest; not so much the priesthood of *all* Christians as presented 1 Pet. 2, 9.

Many servants at Diocletian's court were Christians. There were fine churches also and large ones, "houses of prayer (*προσκυτηριαί*), in all the cities." Gibbon's computation that the Christians composed but one-twentieth of the total population is, on the very face of it, absurd. But much worldliness had crept in, says Eusebius—jealousy, backbiting, bitterness, hypocrisy, and insincerity; "our shepherds were inflamed with love of autocratic power." Repeatedly the bishop of Caesarea called the persecution a "divine judgment." (VIII, 1.) His design (VIII, 2) was that his narrative should be "useful" to his own and to future generations of Christians.

The persecution began in the army (chap. 4); many withdrew from military service or were degraded to the ranks. (It was in 303 A. D.) Both Diocletian and Galerius were then at Nicomedia and issued their edict there.

Among the first sufferers were courtiers and pages. They were ordered to sacrifice. Too often flogging followed, after which vinegar and salt were applied to the wounds, and finally the martyr was placed on a metal brazier, made glowing, until he expired. Such was the fate of Peter, one of the imperial pages (chap. 6). Others were strangled. The bishop of Nicomedia was beheaded. The ashes of



those burned were thrown into the water that their tombs might not be honored. The prisons were filling with bishops, presbyters, deacons, readers, and exorcists. The provinces of Africa and Mauretania and the Thebaid district in Egypt suffered especially.

What happened in the great commercial city of Tyre (chap. 7) Eusebius witnessed himself, probably in the amphitheater, when wild beasts, also steers and boars, were let loose against the Christians. In the end they were all dispatched with the sword and their bodies thrown into the sea to prevent their being given a Christian burial. In the Thebaid of Egypt peculiar forms of torture were employed: the bodies were scraped with potsherds and drawn upward by the feet, even those of women; others were torn apart by tree-tops drawn together and then loosened (chap. 9). This went on for years. Sometimes ten were executed, at other times more than twenty or thirty, even sixty. Eusebius personally visited these regions and made inquiries on the spot.

Some Christians came forward voluntarily, worshipping the Triune God, singing psalms at the end. Some of those brought before the tribunals of heathen judges were distinguished by wealth, birth, and culture, *e. g.*, Philoromos, who had held a high position in the department of finance, and Phileas, the bishop of Thmuis. A simple denial of Christ would have saved these two. Both were beheaded.

The last message of Bishop Phileas to his church at Alexandria is given in full by Eusebius (chap. 10), including the citation from Phil. 2, 6. They were made to suffer even while being examined by the Roman official. If they merely "touched" the pagan sacrifice, they were freed. The bishop in his letter quoted also the First Commandment as strengthening the Christians in their refusal. A small town in Phrygia, the inhabitants of which were all Christian, was burned, men, women, and children, by Roman legionaries (chap. 11). In some cases Christian women were threatened with having their daughters thrown into houses of prostitution (chap. 12).

Eusebius calls it all a truceless war (*πόλεμον ἄσπονδον*) of the Roman government against the Christians (chap. 13). Diocletian retired to private life, and Galerius in the East and Constantius in the West became Augusti. The latter contented himself with destroying Christian chapels and churches. (At this point Eusebius reveals his flattery of Constantine.) Maxentius (in Italy, the new Caesar), from political motives, assumed for a while protection of the Christian religion, while Maximinus Daza, the new Caesar in the East, almost outdid Galerius as to acts of cruelty (chap. 14). In the eighth year of the persecution (310 and 311 A. D.) a change for the better seemed to come (chap. 16). Galerius began to suffer from an awful disease, of "worms," while his body exhaled an intolerable stench (cf. Lactantius, *De Mortibus Persecutorum*), and he then issued the edict to stop the



persecution. Eusebius, chap. 17, presents it as translated by himself from the Latin. (Cf. *From Augustus to Augustine*, pp. 186—188.)

Of Books IX and X, which contain some repetitions, I will limit myself to the selection of several points particularly instructive to a modern student of church history. I now turn to X, 2 ff.: the rebuilding of churches, sometimes with financial aid given by the government. Eusebius took particular pains to transcribe such decrees from Latin to Greek (chap. 2).

The finest of these rebuilt churches (chap. 4) was that at Tyre in Phœnicia. The joy it gave the Christians to possess this church reminded them of the joy of the Jews when the Temple at Jerusalem had been rebuilt after the Babylonian captivity. One seems almost to hear a sermon in this church and a vivid expression of Christian faith, especially the words of praise. "But the second cause of our blessing, the Introducer of the knowledge of God, the Teacher of the true worship of God, the Destroyer of the impious, the Slayer of tyrants, the Regulator of life, Jesus, the Savior of us that had been despaired of, let us extol Him while naming Him, because He, being the only (*μονότατος*) perfect (*παναγαθός*) Son, in the expression of the paternal kindness to mankind, assuming (*ὑποδύς*) our nature, prostrate below in destruction, like the best of physicians, on account of the salvation of the suffering ones He beholds dreadful things, He gathers personal sorrow for the troubles of others, He Himself saved not only those who were diseased nor only those oppressed with awful ulcers and wounds actually festering, but from the very caverns of death." Scriptural allusions are often interwoven with this discourse: "Looking down upon the living temple of us all and gazing upon the house of living and well-established stones [a temple], well and safely built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the Corner-stone, whom rejected not only they of the ancient and no longer existing architecture [the Jews], but also the modern average mankind, being evil builders of evil [structures]. But the Father both then and now, having approved then and now, has established Him as the Head of the corner of this our common church."

The new edifice faced the rising sun. There were four transverse colonnades, with an open view to the sky in the middle. Cedars of Lebanon were used for some of the woodwork. The altar was in the center of the church, surrounded by a network of wooden structures. The ceiling was of marble. The baptistery was outside of the church proper.

The decree of Constantine and Licinius for freedom of worship is presented in a version from the Latin (X, 5), with the allusion to the Decree of Milan, 313 A. D., and now directing the restoration of the church property to the Christians on the part of the Roman officials, without demanding payment on the part of the Christians.

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E. G. SIHLER.