

# LUCIFER.

## ON THE WATCH-TOWER.

ON November 17th the Theosophical Society completed twenty-one years of existence. During these one and twenty years it has had many difficulties to surmount, many trials to pass through and many struggles upward. Only one member of the Society has watched its growth from its birth onward, our President-Founder, Colonel H. S. Olcott, and it must be a matter of deep congratulation to him, as it is to the rest of the members who have a knowledge of its history, to know that it is entering on its twenty-second year of existence with renewed strength and vigour. Prior to reaching years of manhood it had to pass through a severe crisis, which for some time threatened it with a permanent disease. But once aware of the danger, it pulled itself sturdily together, and shook off the insidious attack; having thus bidden a long farewell to charlatanism and all its concomitants, it now enters on a new lease of life, of which the signs are every day more apparent in all its undertakings.

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“THY MONEY PERISH WITH THEE!”

In the United States of America, especially in Chicago, as we are informed by one of our correspondents, a roaring trade is being carried on in Prânâyâma (so-called) and various other Haṭha-yoga practices. Irresponsible people are selling these precious recipes for money, and thus ruining the health and prospects of hundreds. These “teachers” announce publicly, either through the press or by means of lectures, that they know a process by means of which abnormal powers can be acquired, such as the mind-control of others from a distance, by means of which large sums of money can

be gained in business, and so on. With these and such like promises and immoral baits, these charlatans are drawing crowds, to whom in exchange for a stipulated number of dollars they impart an abnormal process of breathing, the practice of which makes shipwreck of their victim's health. We are informed by a well-known lady-doctor at Chicago that in the course of two or three weeks she had met with no less than fifty or sixty patients suffering from lung-complaints and kindred diseases, as the result of practising the "yoga-breathing" recipes of these unscrupulous "teachers." A peculiarity of their system, and presumably one of the chief reasons for their large *clientèle*, is the doctrine that it does not matter whether one is moral or not, "yoga-breathing" will develop in him all the powers latent in man!

We are on the eve of an enormous recrudescence of charlatany of this kind in the West; for one man who has the will to climb the steep path of moral, intellectual and spiritual discipline, there are nine hundred and ninety-nine who will rush after the empty promises of braggarts. It is not infrequent, now-a-days, to be introduced to Mr. Hiram B. Jones, the "great occultist," or to find a scribbler in print speaking of Mr. Abner A. Smith as the "well-known occultist," or again to hear a chairman introducing a lecturer as Mr. Thaddæus M. Robinson, the "greatest living occultist of the century"! This only shows what a vulgar age we live in, and how easy it is to be a charlatan.

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#### ON THE BORDERS OF THE GOBI DESERT.

The Royal Geographical Society has published an account of a remarkable journey made last year by a Swede, Dr. Sven Hedin, through the Takla-Makan desert (Chinese Turkestan). He crossed this desert, which is a waste of sand, in twenty-three days, covering a distance of 286 miles. In a direct line the course would have been less than 200 miles, but our traveller had to take thousands of turns, threading his way between mounds of sand, some of which were 200 feet in height. It was a terrible journey; the sand was deep and the air filled with it, and he had at last to abandon most of his effects in his efforts to save the lives of men and animals.

The word Takla-Makan remains a mystery. Dr. Hedin says

that Petrovsky believes it to be the name of an ancient tribe which lived in this place. In some parts he heard the name Dekken-dikka (1,001) used; as it was generally believed that one thousand and one cities are buried under the sand, and many curious tales are related by people living on the borders of the desert who believe that the sand covers ruins and treasure.

He found small white shells, about one-third of an inch in diameter, and small pieces of oyster-like shells, which clearly proved that this part of the country in former years had been under water.

In some places the ground is covered with red-coloured *débris* and pieces of stone; these *débris*-covered patches seem to have the same effect on the sand as oil on a stormy sea—the mounds do not come near them.

The Russian Imperial Geographical Society has also received from the town of Kotan some news of Dr. Sven Hedin's scientific expedition.

The Swedish explorer left Kashgar on December 14th, 1895, and made his way by Yarkand and Karghalik to Khotan. Starting from the latter town, he spent nearly five months in exploring the surrounding country, and discovered the ruins of two ancient towns. One of these towns, which is of vast size, contains some remains of monuments, the architectural style of which seems to indicate that they are of Indian origin. Then crossing the desert as far as the banks of the Kiria-Daria, the expedition fell in with a small nomadic tribe to the north of this river, so isolated from the rest of mankind that its members did not know whether Yakub Bey still existed or whether they belonged to China.

The nation which inhabited the shores of the once Great Sea which is now the Gobi Desert, was the parent of the *Âryan* race; who knows what discoveries time may have reserved for the twentieth century!

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#### DE DEFECTU MIRACULORUM.

Naples rejoices in the saintly patronage of an ancient worthy named Januarius, whose martyrdom tradition chronicles in the year 304. But pious posterity bottled off some of the saint's blood in the fifteenth century, and ever since then on January 19th, the holy relic bubbles away merrily, to assure the faithful of the vital interest the erstwhile thirteenth bishop of Benvenuto takes in their welfare.

Once the holy fluid refused to agitate itself when Napoleon took the city. Buonaparte, however, was not a man to be trifled

with ; his ultimatum was that the corpuscles should dance by twelve noon or the city be sacked. The corpuscles concluded that they would dance.

But it is difficult to keep the patent of a miracle of this kind. The following authentic narrative reached our editorial ears last week. A gentleman who traces his descent from Abraham was recently travelling in Spain ; in one of the old cathedrals the aged sacristan showed him a precious phial containing a few drops of the blood of Christ. The visitor was allowed to touch the sacred relic, for the usual consideration, and was gravely informed by the old fellow, that if by any chance a Jew should profane the holy vessel with his impious hand, the sacred blood of the Crucified immediately became agitated. "That is strange," said the visitor, as the aged legend-maker restored the phial to its jewelled receptacle, "I myself am a Jew." The guardian of the precious relic locked the door of the reliquary, and drawing the Hebrew gentleman mysteriously aside, after gazing cautiously around, whispered in his ear, "So am I."

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#### BIBLIOLATRY.

There is a syndicate of pious people called the British and Foreign Bible Society, who do not believe in the competency of God to carry out his own designs (according to their own hypothesis). The motto of the Society is the text "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." These good people accordingly turn out millions of Bibles a year in every tongue, "in order that it may be fulfilled as it is written." They are going to clinch *that* prophecy at any rate. What becomes of these hundreds of thousands of tons of printed paper, for it is certain that for one copy which finds a reader, nine hundred and ninety-nine go sorrowing, unnoticed and forlorn? A certain Mr. E. A. Brayley Hodgetts, who travelled across the Balkans, through Turkey, the Caucasus and Persia in 1895, in his recent volume *Round about Armenia*, tells us the fate of the Persian import. The British Consul at Tabriz is made responsible for the following conversation:

"Do you know what these are made of?" Mr. Wood asked me, as he handed me an ash-tray of papier-mâché. "They look like papier-mâché," I replied.

“So they are,” he said, “but they are made of British Bibles. You have no idea what a boon these Bibles are to the village industries of Persia.” I was very much amused at this statement, and naturally accepted it with the proverbial grain of salt: but I have since ascertained that Mr. Wood’s information was absolutely trustworthy.

The good Society is naturally very indignant at such a revelation, and writes to the papers that Tabriz is not in its district, but in that of the American Bible Society; besides Bibles cost from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d., and would be expensive as raw material! But we thought that the poor Heathen had the Bibles distributed to them without money and without price, and some wrong-headed statistician has calculated the average cost of a convert in the East at £10,000, part of which would pay for the distribution of many gratis Bibles.

This is all very comical; but at the same time it is very sad and shows how little civilized we are after all, as a mass, in matter of religion. The Bible is the evangelical person’s fetish. A bible is a sort of magical document, containing, as the old lady of the story phrased it, the “words of the blessed Lord himself.” For such good folk the Bible is *the only revelation* vouchsafed to man. Here we have the whole intoxication of plenary inspiration still in full activity, a superstition which still beclouds the brains of the majority of pious believers of this class. This superstition coupled with the other pleasing persuasion, that all Heathen are *ipso facto* damned, has given rise to the vast missionary activity of Anglo-Saxon Christendom, which chants as the battle-hymn of its invading hosts the self-righteous doggerel of a Heber who, while admiring the scenery of Ceylon, vilified the inhabitants because they did not believe in his particular book-idol.

Many millions of pounds are spent on missions every year. Bible in hand the missionary goes forth to convert the Heathen, and all denominations of Christendom at home firmly believe that the said Heathen are being brought into the fold in sections. People who live in the East, however, have quite a different tale to tell, and laugh at the abortive efforts of the pious busybodies who are so anxious to provide the Heathen with copies of their idol as an infallible means of escape from hell, that they are totally blind to the fact that the great fetish itself is being pulled to pieces by their own medicine-men. Some of them, however, are now at last waking

up to the fact, and attempting the impossible task of putting Humpty Dumpty together again.

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“MADE IN GERMANY.”

The great schools of German criticism have done their work so admirably that English and American theologians have been forced to admit their main contentions, and thus we have with every year the development of a critical tendency which compels all honest investigators to bid a long farewell to the Bible as a book which can make any pretension to be other than a human document, or rather a most heterogeneous collection of human documents. All really educated people who have studied the subject have had this position forced upon them by incontrovertible evidence; but this class is naturally restricted, for so far the great works on the subject have been technical expositions written by specialists. Nevertheless the main points have been gradually filtering through into the more intelligent part of the popular mind, and to counteract the effect efforts have been made by the orthodox to minimize the shock, by half-hearted admissions in which the clear facts are obscured.

Even so, the evangelical conscience has been rudely disturbed from its hypnotic slumber, and waking up with no clear brain for argument it has raised the vague outcry “Theology made in Germany.” But our would-be theological protectionists now find that their foes are those of their own household, and the student of things religious is amused to find that a society is being formed to put Humpty Dumpty together again, and that its first resolution at its first meeting runs as follows:

That having learnt with the greatest alarm that certain clergy of the Church of England have proclaimed in public that the existence of a personal God can be no longer relied on as a truth divinely revealed; that the truth of almost every other article of the Christian faith is openly denied and set aside; that suggestions are made that the creeds and other Church formularies should be repeated in a new and false sense by the clergy and people in divine service; and further that opinions adverse to the truth and supremacy of the Christian revelation are taught from Church of England pulpits—this meeting of English Church people calls upon the entire Anglican episcopate assembled at Lambeth in 1897 to reaffirm as true and binding the whole Christian revelation contained in the creeds, and to condemn such teaching as opposed to it.

To the credit, however, of the Church of England, it should be stated that the meeting at St. James's Hall was very small, and broke up in some confusion. This gathering was especially indignant at such enlightened and broad-minded clerics as Canon Gore, Archdeacon Wilson and Dean Fremantle, the logical outcome of whose views is the decent interment of many disintegrating corpses, chief among which may be mentioned the *literal* belief in miracles, the resurrection, the atonement, the personality of God, eternal punishment, and many other once vigorous henchmen of bygone ecclesiasticism.

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#### THE TRANSMUTATION OF SCEPTICISM.

The relation of a magical story from a papyrus 5662 years old, induces a leader writer in the *Evening Standard* to take up quite a theosophical attitude, and pen a paragraph which is quite admirable as far as it goes. For many readers of LUCIFER, of course his remarks are about as aged as the papyrus itself, but we cannot expect the popular mind to work with the rapidity of that of the student. We must ever be content with the day of small things in matters concerning the public, and our day of small things has produced the following satisfactory paragraph :

It is not a little suggestive that every great civilization that has since arisen, attained its zenith, and decayed has left behind it . . . inexplicable records of mysterious powers claimed for certain special individuals. . . . It is to the specialist in all branches of knowledge we must turn for accurate appraisal of facts, and possibly the twentieth century may see a partial unravelment of this mysterious, occult phenomenon, which, like a thread of silver, is found universally interwoven with the history of the past. . . . Many intellects evidently possess an extraordinary power of visualization, and may be able so to transfer that power to another mind as to make him or her actually see, as if objectively, what has no existence except in the mind of the visualizer. This explanation may be very wide of the mark, but it is feasible as a working hypothesis, and has much in common with what the late Madam Blavatsky termed "glamour." . . . But . . . the belief in so-called magic by the Egyptians, Assyrians, Persians, Hindoos and Greek and Roman peoples remains an historical unexplained fact. What the nineteenth century has done in the domain of mechanical appliances we have seen. Could prejudice and ridicule have killed, surely ghosts, haunted houses, *et hoc genus omne*, should have disappeared years since, and become as extinct as the dodo. But if the twentieth century, as it promises to do, focusses its intellect less on

tabulation, classification, and nomenclature, and more exclusively on causation, many subjects that remain mysteries to us will become clear and explainable to our children.

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### THE INDIAN FAMINE.

The following notice has already appeared in *The Vâhan* and has met with a prompt and generous response.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the famine area in India already involves a population numbering millions. The price of food is, in some districts, trebled; and the wide-reaching disaster is aggravated by the fact that no less than eighty per cent. of the teeming population of India is agricultural, and depends for its livelihood solely on the crops. The spring crop partially failed; the autumn crop has entirely failed. And though some rain has at last fallen and the Government will see to it that no one actually dies of starvation until the next crop is sown and reaped, hundreds of thousands are ruined and destitute. It is no part of the Government to do more than save them from actual death, the rest must depend on private generosity.

Six months ago Mrs. Besant appealed in the public press for help, and was the means of keeping alive a number of the starving, but uncomplaining, ryots. At that time the famine area was very restricted, but since then the terrible pest has increased its territories with leaps and bounds. At the recent Convention of the Indian Section a call for help was immediately responded to by a collection of upwards of 2,000 rupees. Committees have been organised by our members, and strenuous efforts are being made to try and bring comfort and relief to as many sufferers as possible.

It would of course be absurd for us to imagine that we can do anything but help as best we may in such a calamity. All we can do is to assist the authorities who are straining every nerve to cope with the disaster. But our own people on the spot have the wretchedness under their eyes, and must perforce set their hands instantly to the task. Let us then help them. This is no national question, and Russia has already set the example by opening large subscription lists. The members of the Theosophical Society are not blessed with a superfluity of this world's wealth, but in such a case we can all ask our friends and acquaintances and strangers for a dole; people who would give nothing to Theosophy, not even a kind word, will give to the Famine Fund when they know that we can get the money distributed where it is most wanted. A very little goes a long way in India. A halfpenny a day per head will not only keep body and soul together, but provide a sufficiency. Millions of halfpennies are needed, however.

Mrs. Besant has already made a second appeal in the press, and in order to co-operate with the praiseworthy efforts of our friends and colleagues in India, donations will be most gratefully received by the writer and forwarded to Benares.

G. R. S. MEAD.

## THEOSOPHICAL ASCETICISM.

IN the earlier days of the Society a heading such as this would have excited a certain amount of remark amongst our readers. In any rebellion against a religious organization of any kind, the reaction against asceticism in particular is usually early and conspicuous. Mahommed's doctrine is especially strong that "there is no monkery in El Islam," and the same is the case with all the subsequent attempts at the reformation of Christianity, from the Albigenses down to the latest government efforts to improve religion by Act of Parliament in France, Austria, or Italy. It is not therefore to be wondered at that a good deal was talked and even printed in the early numbers of LUCIFER which we now feel to have been somewhat extravagant. The recent publication of Mrs. Besant's very remarkable series of lectures on "Man and his Bodies" has, in this respect, made an epoch in Theosophical teaching. In these she lays down, not indeed for the first time, but at considerable length and with all that beauty of language and wealth of illustration which characterizes her public speaking at its best, a doctrine to which hardly any other name can be given than that which I have placed at the head of this article. As has come about so many times before, "the whirligig of time has brought its revenges." There is no school of asceticism (not even the Haṭha Yoga school of India) more extravagant, if one may be allowed the word, than that which sprang up in the Moslem world almost before the Prophet had passed from this life; and in every Western system before long the Spirit has sternly reasserted its rights against the Flesh. The quaint vagaries of "Mrs. Grundy" in England are but blind and ignorant attempts to realize the great Truth, instinctively felt, that in the partnership of body and soul, *one*, and that the higher one, must hold the reins steadily against all the resistance of the lower; nay, the prone submission of the average English man and woman

to "the proprieties," to "what will people say?" is not *all* foolish, but has its noble side. It would be well for many of us if we could mould our lives as faithfully and continuously to the higher Ideal we set before ourselves as "people in society" do to theirs. *Our* sins are sins against knowledge.

But though it is being recognized that *some* kind of repression of the desires of *kâma* is absolutely necessary to spiritual progress—to enable us to hasten the slow process of evolution through the ages—some of us are still in the grasp of the error, so universal amongst beginners of every kind, that what *we* are learning must be new to all the world beside. Dazzled by the light of the new knowledge which is being given to us (a knowledge which for the first time enables us to understand clearly, as it were in a map, the path our Christian masters of the spiritual life trod so faithfully in their comparative ignorance), we are apt to think and speak as if the asceticism of all who have lived before us must have been worthless; forgetting that

—though to know is more  
Than diligence, yet worship better is  
Than knowing, and renouncing better still.

And this last, the path of renunciation, "near to which dwelleth Eternal Peace" was emphatically the path they trod themselves and taught their disciples.

These thoughts are suggested by a book lately published, *The Monastic Life*, being the eighth volume of the "Formation of Christendom," by Thomas W. Allies. The book itself is a useful summary, very beautifully written (of course from the Roman Catholic side), of the history of the Church from the Fathers of the Desert to Charlemagne. It is a favourable time for the Catholic view, for at that particular period civilization was confined to the Church, and *its* progress was that of the whole Western world. And its weapon of attack upon the savagery around it was essentially the ascetic life. Time after time has it been proved by experience that a parochial system of clergy, whilst all that is needed in times when law and order rule, is utterly insufficient to cope with disorder—is in such case broken down even before its flock give way. For a delicate and sympathetic study of *how* this comes about, we need only turn to Manzoni's *Promessi Sposi*, a book which gives more

understanding of the life of the Middle Ages than all the formal treatises on the subject. There you will see how came about the abject submission of the parson to the squire, which remained as a tradition in the English country parts till the beginning of this century; and how the only men who could stand against the mingled force and fraud of those who rose to secular power in troubled times were the members of some vast organization of which they were only the units, their separate lives of no consequence even to themselves; who could not be terrified, because they feared nothing, nor be killed off, for they were innumerable—in a word, monks and friars. And it is the absolutely insuperable barrier to the avarice, lust, and cruelty of the secular lords provided by the Benedictines in early times and the Dominicans and Franciscans at a later date, when these orders were in their full glory, which has laid the foundation of the traditional hatred of all government officials to the religious orders to this very day.

So much we must grant to Mr. Allies; the question whether because the Church was thus needful in earlier times, her methods must be the only ones allowed now; or whether as “the Law was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ,” so too the Church has done *her* work as schoolmaster, and brought us to the point where we must leave school and live our own life and no longer hers, is one which would take us too far from our present subject; it *may* be that both sides take the answer too much for granted. But in reading the eloquent pages in which he recounts, from contemporary sources, the life of St. Antony, the great type of the Fathers of the Desert, though himself but the most brilliant star of a whole galaxy of eminent saints, it occurred to me that to attempt to transfer something of this noble figure to our pages might be more useful than to make a formal review of the book; and might perhaps enable those of us who have not come into the Society in *our* way to understand the painful jar which certain loose modes of speaking give to those who have been brought up to hold such men in a reverence of which nothing we have learnt as Theosophists has tended to make us feel in the least ashamed.

The *facts* of his life are few and simple, notwithstanding the stirring times in which he lived. Born in A.D. 250, he lived through the Pagan persecutions, and was a man of sixty-three when

Constantine gave legal recognition to the Christian faith. His life extended through a great part of the Arian troubles, in which he took a leading part in defence of St. Athanasius; and in spite of his ascetic life he was 106 years old at his death. In that century was comprised the rise and fall of the system of the Desert Fathers. How keenly they felt the degradation of each successive generation of their followers is told in many a witty saying and many a serious lamentation. Of the first, we may give a story from our own reading. A young monk, visited by an elder, showed him with great pride a copy of the Gospels written out with his own hand. The father looked at it, sighed, and at last said, "*Our* fathers practised the Divine Law; *we* at least learnt it by heart; but *you* have written it out and put it away on a shelf!" But of St. Antony there is only one voice—like this. "A young monk asked an elder, 'Why do the devils torment me thus?' And he was answered, 'The devils torment you? Oh, no, it is with the evil of our own hearts *we* have to fight—it is only such men as Antony who fight with devils!'"

Here is his commencement, in the words of Athanasius. "At the death of his parents he was left alone at eighteen or twenty years of age with a very young sister. Before six months were over, going as usual to the Church, and collecting his own mind, he thought as he walked how the Apostles left everything and followed the Saviour, . . . and how great was the hope laid up for them in heaven. As these thoughts were in his mind he entered the church, and heard the Gospel read in the which the Lord said to the rich man, 'If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, follow Me.' And Antony, as if receiving this message from God, and as if the reading had been for him, going straight out of the church gave away to the village his ancestral property, 300 acres of rich, good land; that he and his sister might be free from all claim from them. All his other goods he likewise sold and gave the proceeds to the poor, keeping a little for his sister. Entering the church another time, he heard in the Gospel the Lord saying, 'Be not solicitous for the morrow.' Not enduring to wait any longer, he went out and gave the rest away, (putting his sister into a house of virgins to be brought up,) and devoted himself to the ascetic life. The next fourteen years was a time of increasing severity of life, in which he practised the

virtues of all he saw around him, cherishing the continence of one, the kindness of another, the prayerfulness of a third; he fasted, he lay on the ground; above all he cherished piety towards Christ and charity towards others. They esteemed him a special friend of God. After living for long shut in a tomb, when about thirty-five he retired to the desert, taking with him bread for six months, and found an old ruin with a spring beside it in which he dwelt alone for twenty years. His friends often tried to see him, but he would not open to them. They heard at the door strange noises, as of a multitude fighting within, and in their terror cried out to Antony. He would come near the door, and tell them to fear nothing; and they heard him singing 'Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered!' At the end of this time his friends broke open the door and Antony came forth unchanged. They noted that he had not grown rough and uncouth in his long solitude, but was amiable and gracious of speech to all—that his inactive life had not produced obesity, nor his fastings and diabolic conflicts made him meagre. His mind, said they, was pure, neither dissolved by pleasure nor affected by depression, the sight of a multitude did not disturb him, nor their greetings rejoice him. He was as a man altogether even, ruled by reason, standing in his native steadfastness. The Lord healed by him many that appeared before him suffering in their bodies, liberated others from devils, and bestowed grace on Antony's speech. He consoled many in their sorrow; he restored the friendship of others."

Is it not like a page from the Song Celestial? Would Kṛiṣṇa havē hesitated to recognize in Antony, thus coming like a Master from his retreat, the true Sage—the Muni of whom he gives so many descriptions? And now, in this too like a true Master, he begins to teach, and for fifty years more his counsels and exhortations are the spring of life all through the desert, then multitudinous with the servants of God. That he exhorted them to remember the charity of Christ and the loving kindness of God instead of speaking of the Masters or the Higher Self as we should, is but a matter of words. *All* sacrifice rises to the true God, as Kṛiṣṇa himself tells Arjuna; because we know now *Who* it is whom we have, in St. Paul's words, "ignorantly worshipped," it needs not that we should regard one single aspiration to communion with the Infinite God—one thought

of love towards that Word—the Light that lighteth every man who comes into the world, whom we called Jesus Christ—as wasted. It is not the disparagement, but the reward of our old Christian devotion that we can *now* “add to our faith knowledge—and to knowledge, experience; and to experience, *Wisdom.*”

Let us, to complete the brief outline of what may be read in its full extent and perfect beauty in Mr. Allies' pages, add a few sentences of what Antony taught. Is there not to be felt in them an echo of the ancient wisdom of Egypt; nay, more than a reminder of the way the Masters speak to their pupils to-day? He says (we take only a passage here and there, as our space permits): “After beginning you must not give way in your labours, nor say it is a long time since we began to be ascetics—rather, as if every day were the first, increase your willingness; for all our time is nothing put beside eternal life. So, my children, let us not faint, nor think we are a long time about it, or are doing something great; for ‘the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us.’ Nor looking on the world, should we think we have renounced something great, for the compass of the earth is very small to the whole compass of heaven, and if all the earth is not worthy of heaven, he who gives up a few acres is as one who leaves nothing. . . . Especially let every one consider himself to be the Lord's servant, and one who owes service to his Master; and as the servant would not dare to say, ‘As I worked yesterday, I will not work to-day,’ but day after day labours to please his Lord, so we labour.

“Virtue is not far from us, nor exists outside of us. The thing is in ourselves, and the matter is easy if we have only the will. For virtue is the natural intelligence of the soul. And in its natural condition the soul was made beautiful and very upright.

“We have terrible and crafty enemies. Great is their multitude in the air about us. Large is the difference between them. Much might be said of their nature, but what is now needful for us, is only to know their insidious designs against ourselves. For this we need to gain the gift of discerning spirits, that we may know of them—how some are less bad, and some worse, how each of them employs himself, and how each is overcome and cast out. When they do not succeed in deceiving the heart by evil thoughts, they try to alarm. They

assume the shapes of women, wild beasts, reptiles, huge bodies, armies. But all these appearances are nothing, and quickly disappear, especially if you guard yourself by faith and the sign of the cross. . . . We should follow steadfastly our own ascetic purpose and not be deceived by them, but we should not fear them, though they seem to assault us, even if they threaten us with death. For they are powerless, and can do nothing but threaten.”\*

I wish I could quote the whole chapter, in which he speaks from his own long experience. Here is his practical method of treating apparitions: “When any appearance takes place do not fall prostrate in fear, but ask first confidently ‘Who art thou, and whence comest thou?’ And if it be a vision of saints, they satisfy you, and change your fear into joy. If it be diabolical, it at once becomes weak, finding in your question the mark of a tranquil and well established mind.”

But we must end with the words of the chronicler as to the results of Antony’s teaching. “In these words of his” (says the writer) “all took delight. The love of virtue grew in one man, another was aroused from his neglect, others had false opinions corrected. So there came to be monasteries in the mountains, like tents filled with divine choirs; they sang psalms, they studied, they fasted, they prayed, they exulted over the hope of things to come, they gave alms, they had charity and agreement with each other. Here you might see a country where piety and justice reigned—a multitude of societies and the mind of all bent upon goodness.”

A teacher such as even these few words exhibit is surely one whom any one might be proud to reckon in his spiritual ancestry. There remains only the question why such love and power worked no redemption for the world. It is not hard for an occultist to answer. With all its beauty, such a life, utterly free from self as it seems at first sight, is selfish in the Masters’ sense; it provides no means of performing the one duty laid on men—the helping forward of the evolution of the world. When the crowds in the Nitrian desert left their hermitages to interfere with the world’s life, they

\* I think those who know the elementals by experience, as in the “Astral Adventure” not long ago published in LUCIFER, would warn us that it is only such as Antony who could venture to say so much as this. They are by no means powerless against an ordinary untrained, irresolute soul, such as belongs to most of us; very far otherwise.

did nothing but mischief. Before long they were swept away by the invader's sword; with all their goodness, a failure in the higher sense. A race of men took their place, who, living as roughly, and praying as devoutly as they, yet turned their hard hands to the labour of clearing the forests, of planting and building; in later times to be known as Benedictine monks. They multiplied and flourished, because wherever they went the wildernesses were reclaimed, towns grew up, commerce, so long broken up by the barbarian rule, revived; because they did the work required by the new civilization, then just dawning; keeping up their prayer and their asceticism all the while. It is true there *are* times when men must go into solitude—the Yogin into the forest or to shut himself in his underground cell—the Christian ascetic to his Chartreuse or La Trappe; but the hard truth must be spoken, that if this solitude is more than a training—a necessary retirement into a Pythagorean noviciate of silence in order to gain the power of effective speech, in order to return the better able to push on the slow wheels of the world's advance; if it becomes a life to be lived till death for the "saving of the soul" or for any selfish advance of our own personality, it is a fatal error. The light is given to us that we too may be saviours of the world to the full measure of our powers. The Egyptian monks had cut themselves off from the movement of the great world *for* which they should have lived, even though like Jagannâth's car it had crushed them beneath its wheels; and as with the useless tribes of Australia and America, each generation dwindled and degraded to utter extinction. The same has been the fate of many a mystic order and sect since their times, and all the marvellous beauty of their lives and writings has not saved them.

To close with one more word on our original subject. One of the best statements of the principles of the true ascetic life is an article in the first volume of LUCIFER (p. 476), entitled "The Three Wishes." The author does not take the physiological point of view from which Mrs. Besant treats it, but speaks of it as a portion of the struggle for the abolition of the personal self which in one shape or another forms the whole exercise of the beginner's life. And her warning is one which many of us in our time have needed. What the neophyte does, she says, by becoming a neophyte, is simply to enter a forcing house. Change, disillusionment, disheartenment,

despair, will crowd upon him by invitation; for his wish is to learn his lessons quickly. And as he turns these evils out, they will probably be replaced by others worse than themselves—a passionate longing for separate life, for sensation, for the consciousness of growth in his own self, will rush in upon him and sweep over the frail barriers which he has raised. And no such barriers as asceticism, as renunciation, nothing indeed which is negative, will stand for a single moment against this powerful tide of feeling. The only barrier is built up of new desires, purer, wider and nobler. . . . It is only on the last and topmost rung of the ladder, at the very entrance of the Divine or Mahâtmic life, that it is possible to hold fast to that which has neither substance nor existence, and thus leave the region of desire altogether.

A. A. WELLS.

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HE alone can be adopted into the Rank of the Gods who has acquir'd for his Soul Virtue and Truth, and for his spiritual Chariot, Purity. Such a Man being thereby become sound and whole, is restor'd to his primitive State, after he has recover'd himself by his Union with sound Reason, after he has discover'd the All-Divine Ornament of this Universe, and thus found out the Author and Creator of all things, as much as 'tis possible for Man to find Him. And being thus arriv'd after his Purification to that sublime Degree of Bliss, which the Beings whose Nature is incapable of descending to generation always enjoy, he unites himself by his Knowledge to this Whole, and raises himself up even to God Himself.—HIEROCLES ON THE GOLDEN VERSES OF PYTHAGORAS.

## POWER, KNOWLEDGE, AND LOVE.

*(Concluded from p. 232.)*

WE have now considered the three aspects of the great force as Power, Knowledge and Love. We have seen how the perfected Master of Wisdom holds all three united in the essence of his being. Power to mould the forces of nature on the various planes of existence, Knowledge that allows no error, no doubt in its certainty of truth, and Love which binds the whole in the one unifying principle that is at once the crown of his development and the life of his nature.

But if this is the goal of perfected humanity we must now consider these three in relation to the development of the individual. What are we to seek for; how are these three lines of activity to be utilized for the advance of the ego?

As we find men and women at the present stage we see certain definite pre-organized lines on which the individual works and which he can no more avoid than the body can avoid using its limbs for movement. We have seen that the commencement of human faculties may be found far back in pre-human development, but it is the potentiality rather than the actual development. Up to the conscious human stage it may be said that evolution is only concerned with the preparation of the fitting framework, in and through which the divine germ of individuality may manifest. Let us for instance take one of the common operations of the body, such a simple example as the action of raising a book from a table. It may seem a very simple act, requiring no complex knowledge of rules and methods, and yet the faculties that are made use of are the outcome of long series of gradual developments before the eye can measure the spatial relation between the book and the hand, and the hand in obedience to the prompting of the will can follow direction without mistake. Anyone who has watched the attempts of a young infant to seize the object that attracts it, must have noticed the aimlessness of its movements, for each human infant

has to pick up again and so to say run through the whole processes of evolution. To this extent then development proceeds through the conscious life of sense; the response to external stimuli is acquired, the nervous processes of the body stand complete, there is the sense of extension, the consciousness of relativity in space, the eye can measure and the hand can touch, the instrument is fitly formed to be the link between the evolving ego and the world of its experience. We have now to consider how this evolving ego in taking possession of its kingdom proceeds to grow and perfect itself on the three lines of development which we are considering. But first we must form some conception of what this growing, evolving ego is. We must not suppose that the ego as it puts itself forth at first into manifestation is conscious of its end and goal. The human babe that you see cooing and laughing on its mother's knee has the potential power that shall sway great nations with its command; it is the statesman, the warrior, the man of love that shall sacrifice himself for his race, the deep thinker that shall probe the hidden sources of knowledge. But what do you see of all this power in the little restless life that lies helpless and dependent on the mother's breast? Such is the baby-ego as it first enters the stream of experience. Like the human babe it is potential of all it will be in the future; like the human babe it has to grow from within outwards, and also to receive impressions from without inwards. It has to draw its experience through the sensuous faculties that have taken so many ages in their process of evolution; it has to take that experience and by it and from it acquire the increased power of again throwing itself outwards in manifestation. As is above so is below, and as is the lower so is the higher. The material faculties of the brain become strengthened as day by day the child uses them, and at the same time the use strikes the channel deeper, so that the new act has all the accumulated strength and power not only of the present act, but of every act in the past. This is what we mean by habit, and in the same manner the ego-life proceeds. The three ways of action as Power, Knowledge and Love are there before the ego; at first, like the child, it exercises mere random efforts, its movements in experience as it seeks to obtain for itself the satisfaction of sensation. The ego has not yet even learned the first preparation to lead it to the

unfoldment of its true stature ; it is in the infant stage, grasping at mere sense perception, it does not even know whither it is tending. But in the meantime in each life the faculties of the soul are somewhat strengthened through the exercise of those organs of perception which the æons of previous evolution had prepared for it. We cannot realize the duration of this unfoldment. The processes of evolution are slow, and the path seems to us weary in length of days and little progress.

Life after life passes before the mind is sufficiently open to reflect upon itself or its actions in any systematic way. In speaking here of the opening of the mind, it must be remembered that the real commencement of mind takes place at a very much earlier stage than that with which we are dealing, but during the long childhood of the ego it is engaged in merely taking note, so to say, of sensuous experience, and it is only after a long period that the ego awakes to the consciousness that this life of sensuous experience does not satisfy, that it is not the end of being, and that the nature of soul demands a something higher.

It is at this stage that the ego enters definitely on those three paths of which we are speaking. The personal ego, that instrument which shadows forth the condition of the real pilgrim, now begins to have an object in action beyond mere animal gratification. Power draws the man ; he would be foremost among men, or he feels the beauty and attraction of knowledge, or again love and affection bind him with their magic spells. The question now comes to be which of these three qualities or attributes of the ego shall precede the others ; is there one aspect more important than another, that is to say, one which will most help forward the development of the ego and so fulfil the purpose of his being ? With respect to the question of order it has been stated that in most lives we find the ego making tentative advances on the three lines, a little knowledge, a little power, a little love ; but knowledge and power are too often devoted to selfish purposes, power is exercised without the control of knowledge, knowledge is without power to carry out its behests, and the little love lacks both judgment and power to lift it from the region of emotionalism to the true sphere of love as unity. It would seem therefore that if there is to be any real progress for the ego that these three must combine to form one path for the soul.

But although it is one path yet each step on the path involves the three aspects, and it is from this point of view that we see the necessity of a certain order of precedence in the development of the qualities.

We have spoken of the order as Power, Knowledge and Love, but that is looking at the three in the reverse order to that of development. In considering the steps of the ego we should rather take the order as Love, Knowledge and Power, and the reason for this is evident. In the upward cycle of the ego after it has touched the outermost rim of material manifestation it has to return, so to say, upon itself, the outgoing tendency to differentiation has to give place to the indrawing principle that is the realization of unity. For this reason it is that the first step towards the path has to be the abnegation of the lower self as the preliminary requisite for further progress. Love is the divine characteristic of the Buddhas and Saviours of the race, but it has also to be the stepping-stone to enable the ego to withdraw from the path of differentiation and its expression in selfishness, to the path that leads to unity. Selfishness is the essential characteristic of all sin, and there can be no entrance on the path of spiritual progress unless there is some effort to overcome the line of separation that selfishness raises between man and his brother man. Anger and hatred spring from this curse, murder, lying and cruelty are its offspring.

If we examine some of the many religions of the world that at different times and in different places have been opened out as golden stairways for the soul, we shall see that all begin with the same teaching of love as the first necessity of the soul in the path of upward progress. Let us take that religion first the development of which has been last in order of time. Do we not find love as the first injunction of the teacher. "Love God with all thy heart and thy neighbour as thyself," which may be interpreted as love the ideal which you aspire to, the goal of good which is the horizon which limits your view; and love thy neighbour, those that tread the same path as thyself, love them as thyself, as the unity which is both them and thee.

If again we take an older religion, do we not find the same teaching although in a different form. "The heart of Law is Love," and the "Law of Love" must "reign King of all before the Kalpas

end." He who would rise on this path is taught to "have good will to all that lives, letting unkindness die." Such is the teaching of the Buddha. In other words again still further back in time, from the distant ages the echo of the same thought comes to us in other languages, for here instead of the direct injunction to love, the teacher impresses on the earnest student that "from death to death he goes who here below sees seeming difference," and again "he sees indeed who sees in all the living, lordly soul, he who thus beholds in every place, in every form the same one living life, doth no more wrongfulness unto himself." It is the same teaching although more fitted to those accustomed to think in the deeply philosophical fashion of those ancient days. The first duty of the student was to become convinced of the unity of all being, this is sometimes described also as learning the difference between the real and the unreal. The soul penetrated with love or aspiration towards unity becomes a fitting channel for the spiritual force given forth from the Logos, so to transmute and specialize it, that each soul in its turn becomes a fresh out-breathing without let or hindrance in selfishness or greed.

In the development of the human soul love or the unifying principle is thus the first step on the path, and so true is this that we have been told that in many lives otherwise wholly debased and evil the lowest aspect of this love, the little spark of unselfish devotion to wife or child, or maybe the kindly thought to some animal companion, will often prove the stepping-stone to spiritual progress. For this reason we see also that in all our dealings with others, in our endeavours to help them, it is necessary above all to try and stimulate the unfolding of the love principle. The lower and more undeveloped the ego the greater the need that its infant steps should be guided and directed along this path. This may be the reason why we find the later forms of religion putting this forward in what in many ways seems a repulsive and unphilosophical aspect. Hinduism in its purity, as we have seen, gave the true aspect of the love force as the unifying principle. In the modern Vaishnavism we find this principle degraded to its personal aspect in the same way that Christianity has forgotten how its founder impressed this unity upon his disciples, "I and my Father are one"; "Ye may be one with me even as I am one with the

Father." These religions now have to a great extent lost the higher aspect of love and have become stationed in the slavish or at the most in the filial stage. We see, therefore, love or the conception of unity as the necessary qualification that will lead the ego to the realization of its true nature as the one self. But love uncombined with knowledge and power is but the one side of the great triple force that the soul has to realize as its being. As man rises from the animal he has to live more and more for the other selves around him, but love must be balanced by reason, and reason must be fortified by power. Many errors in development have been made through the neglect, wilful or unconscious, of the co-ordinate unfoldment of the one force in its triple aspect. Schools of asceticism and magic have arisen in which men have sought to advance by indifference to pain and desire, or by strength of will, to the control of nature and its forces. The ego that seeks for power in this way without cultivating love must, if he continue on those lines, inevitably find his way barred by the black magician's fate, and after what periods we know not the road to union or love must again be sought. The individual who attempts to move in a direction that does not harmonize with the law of being, must inevitably be stopped sooner or later. Power will not lead to love nor knowledge, therefore it is necessary that love should precede in the order of development.

But love alone also makes many mistakes; self-sacrifice must have the true purpose and definite aim of fulfilling the law by bringing that which was discordant into harmony, that which was separated into unity. Therefore love must develop wisdom, knowledge, judgment; it is not enough for the man of love to give of his love, he must give wisely. Love without wisdom is like the random movement of the child, love needs training before the purpose of love can be accomplished.

Thus we find that the first infant struggling of the soul has to be guided by ethical rules, for all morality is merely the external framework for the ego to manifest its birthright of unity. But ethics need the support of metaphysics, the knowledge that can trace in all manifested existence the one Self, in its unfoldment as differentiated selves in time and space. Morality is the outward shell of love, but it has no life unless the living power animate it.

It is not enough to do no evil, the soul must feel no evil. Love, Knowledge and Power, ethics, metaphysics and physics—it is in this order that the Bhagavad Gîtâ gives us its divine teaching, but it is only so far as the three form one perfect whole that the path may be truly said to be gained. In every action, love must draw the soul towards harmony, but love must be combined with knowledge, not for selfish gratification, but in order that wisdom may direct love ; in order that the purpose of the Logos may be fulfilled, that each individual soul may itself become the conscious centre whence the out-going force may again stream forth in its triple aspect ; each by giving of himself will draw fresh stores of energy to spread and specialize in new waves of life for new creations.

Sat, Chit, Ânanda, are the terms of That which knows no appellation, and as Sat, Chit, Ânanda must the individualized consciousness rise in its development towards the realization of That which is the Self.

Sat the reality of being, which no words can describe, no thought can fathom, before whose mystery the highest intellect is nought, That which is not power but the holder of power, That which is not will but the holder of will, whose manifestation is the power of becoming, in which and by which infinity unrolls its possibilities of development. Each manifested atom has the potentiality of the whole, and it is the unfoldment of this potentiality which is the purpose of its manifestation. To fulfil this purpose, the soul as the Self in manifestation has to expand, and realize its power to be. To do this it has to pass through the experience of becoming ; each faculty must be developed, each attribute raised to its highest, till self-consciousness has realized its power to pass beyond the limitation of the lower spheres, till it can function without let or hindrance in the higher realms of being of which as yet we have but the barest glimpses. He who has realized the Self in power may rule worlds, he wields the forces of nature both within and without our chain, Fohat is his messenger and his will the cosmic law. Then Chit, the perfect wisdom, the culmination of all knowledge in which and through which the power of Sat is no longer an incomprehensible mystery. Chit is the realization of self, the true Vidyâ in which all cause and effect are one ; all error is eliminated, for truth holds its own compelling force, power is mani-

fest in law, but knowledge is the sanctifier that removes the karma of action. This is the Râjavidyâ, the royal knowledge that leads to Nirvâna. We are told in the sacred scripture that he who has realized this Self in knowledge escapes from all evil, and what is evil but imperfection, the lack of that which should be developed, and when limitation is removed through knowledge, the soul consciousness unfettered beholds the truth that Self is one.

Ânanda, bliss eternal, words fail to image forth what this may be, but let none think that the path of sacrifice or renunciation leads to a joyless existence, for Ânanda is the goal, and love the pathway, bliss that is the end of sacrifice, love that no human heart can know, for when the Self is known by the Self, all conflict is ended.

Step by step on the path, each life, each action, should bring the ego nearer the goal, but the perfect figure must be formed, each aspect of the triune symbol is incomplete without the others. Love must draw the soul to seek union with all other selves, knowledge shall take the illusions of the self and sweep them away from the pure light of truth, and love shall act with knowledge, and power shall crown the perfect work.

Sat, Chit, Ânanda, power, knowledge and love. One are they unmanifest, one must they become in the manifested individualized self-conscious soul.

FRANCESCA ARUNDALE.



NEVER do anything which thou dost not understand.

In no wise neglect the health of thy body; but give it drink and meat in due measure, and also the exercise of which it hath need.—THE GOLDEN VERSES OF PYTHAGORAS.

## AMONG THE GNOSTICS OF THE FIRST TWO CENTURIES.

### FOREWORD.

SURELY no period of the earth's known history can be of greater interest to the Western world than the first two centuries of our present era ; and yet how few have any competent knowledge of an epoch which is believed by the majority to mark the most stupendous event not only in the chronicles of the world, but in the history of the universe itself !

To understand this period and to comprehend the state of affairs among the adherents of the " new religion," it is necessary to have an intimate acquaintance with the innumerable schools and communities which sprang up in every direction in those early days, all marked by the common characteristic of a new religious effort, all of equal authority and yet of no authority, in those days of large freedom, when orthodoxy had not yet been born to dwarf the growth of mind and soul.

This general tendency and these efforts are by custom now classed under the general term " Gnostic," though the word originally had a far more restricted meaning, and probably only designated one school or one special tendency. The Gnostics are admitted to have been generally the most cultured and trained thinkers of earliest Christendom, but as with common consent the future ages of orthodoxy execrated them as Antichrist and banned them as arch-heretics and the progeny of Satan, it is difficult at first for the student to realize that these men were really as " orthodox " in their own times as those who in future years anathematized them, and this simply because there was then no acknowledged dogmatic standard by which to test them ; *that* was an after development. In these early years each man wrote or taught as seemed to him good,

in freedom, and with free permission to do so, owing to the absence of any commonly acknowledged authentic tradition.

It is therefore perhaps not surprising that the generality knows nothing of the Gnostics; such knowledge would open wide the door to doubt not only the authority of the Churches, but even the authority of the canon of the New Testament itself.

That the believer has been kept in ignorance is not so surprising, but that the opponents of orthodox pretensions, the so-called rationalists and free-thinkers, have so neglected the subject is at first sight a somewhat startling phenomenon. We should, however, remember that the Gnostics were for the most part exceedingly interested in the mystic and spiritual side of religion, in considerations as to the nature of the soul and of the world, in the relationship of man to God, and in the final union of the individual with the All—the expansion of the finite consciousness into the infinite Wisdom. Such aspirations and such investigations raise a prejudice in the mind of the mere rationalist which obscures the importance of the Gnostics, and prevents such a mind perceiving that they are *the* most important factor in the whole investigation, not only in the consideration of the evolution of dogma, but also as settling some of the most obscure historical points.

The really unprejudiced investigator, however, has to steer a middle course between the Charybdis of mere iconoclasm and the Scylla of mere apology, both of which are founded on the most inexpugnable prejudice.

The study of the origins of Christianity in the past has been pre-eminently marked by these two extreme characteristics. Happily there have been exceptions to the rule, and the strides which biblical criticism has made in the last fifty years or so is entirely due to the development of this impartial tendency; and though the tendency is still in its infancy, it has already done great things, and to it we owe the most careful investigations into Gnosticism which have appeared during the last half century.

The study of Gnosticism, however, has so far been almost entirely confined to specialists, whose works cannot be understood of the people; the ordinary reader is deterred by the wealth of detail, by the difficulty of the technical terms, by the obscurity of theological phraseology, and by the feeling that he is expected to know

many things of which he has never even heard. It is, therefore, necessary that some short introduction to the subject should be written as simply as may be, in order that thinking men and women who have not enjoyed the advantages of a technical training in Church history and dogmatics, may understand the importance and absorbing interest of the subject.

This essay will accordingly deal with the matter only in a general way, and is not intended as a technical exposition ; it is, as it were, a "guide to the perplexed," yet not conceived on the plan, or carried out with the ability of a Maimonides, but rather the mere jotting down of a few notes and indications which may save the reader the years of labour the writer has spent in searching through many books.

#### LITERATURE.

First, then, as to books ; what are the best works on Gnosticism ? The best books without exception are by German scholars. Here, then, we are confronted with our first difficulty, for the general reader as a rule is a man of one language only. For the ordinary English reader, therefore, such works are closed books, and he must have recourse to translations, if such exist. Unfortunately only one of such works is procurable in English dress, and of that, so far only a single volume.

The best general review of Gnosticism by the light of the most recent researches, is to be found in Harnack's admirable History of Dogma, of which the first volume was translated in 1894.

For a more detailed account Smith and Wace's Dictionary of Christian Biography (1877-1887) is absolutely indispensable. The scheme of this useful work contains a general article, with lengthy articles on every Gnostic teacher, and shorter articles on a number of the technical terms of the Gnosis. Lipsius, Salmon and Hort are responsible for the work, and their names are a sufficient guarantee of thoroughness.

These two works are all that are necessary for a thorough preliminary grasp of the facts, and are the outcome of profound scholarship and admirable critical acumen. It is a pleasure to subscribe one's tribute of praise to such work, especially as the writer does not agree with the main point of view of these distinguished

scholars, who all finally, and in the nature of things in such a Dictionary, take up the "Catholic" position. It is true that that "Catholic" position in their hands is broad, but it is not broad enough for a student of really universal religion.

Of other English works we may mention King's *Gnostics and their Remains* (2nd ed., 1887), a work intended for the general reader. King strongly insists on a distinct Indian influence in Gnosticism, and deals with a number of interesting points; but his work lacks the thoroughness of the specialist. He is, however, far removed from orthodoxy, and has an exceeding great sympathy for the Gnostics. The weakest point of King's work is the side he has brought into chief prominence; the so-called "remains" of the Gnostics, amulets, talismans, etc., in which King as a numismatologist took especial interest, are stated by the best authorities to have had most probably no connection with the Gnostics, the old error of confusing the "Abraxas" gems with the "God" of the Basilidians being now exploded.

Mansel's posthumous work, *The Gnostic Heresies of the First and Second Centuries* (1875), is not only marred by much prejudice, but for the most part does entire injustice to the Gnostics by insisting on treating their leading ideas as a mere metaphysic to be judged by the standard of modern philosophical methods, the Dean having himself once held a chair of philosophy.

Norton, in his *Evidences of the Genuineness of the Gospels* (1847), devotes his second volume to the Gnostics, and the value of his work may be judged by the title.

Burton's *Inquiry into the Heresies of the Apostolic Age* (1829) might have been written by an early Church Father. The Bampton lecturer's effort and Norton's are now both out of date.

So much for works in English dealing directly with Gnosticism.

The student will find in Harnack elaborate and discriminating bibliographies after each chapter, in which all the best works are given, especially those of German scholars; in Smith and Wace's Dictionary, each article is also followed by an excellent bibliography. A general bibliography and full list of all the latest work done on the only direct documents of Gnosticism which we possess, will also be found in the Introduction to my translation of the Gnostic treatise *Pistis Sophia* (1896). The student will be surprised to see how

unfavourably the paucity of information in English compares with the mass of encyclopædic work in German, and how France even, in this department of Church history and theological research, runs England very close. But the consideration of these works does not fall into the plan of this short essay.

#### DOCUMENTS.

So much then for the literature of the subject ; we have now to consider briefly the indirect and direct documents of Gnosticism. By indirect documents, I mean the writings of those Church Fathers who wrote against the Gnostics. These indirect documents were practically the only sources of information until 1851. By direct documents, I mean the few Gnostic treatises which have reached our hands through the medium of Coptic translation.

Our indirect sources of information, therefore, come through the hands of the most violent opponents of the Gnosis ; and we have only to remember the intense bitterness of religious controversy at all times, and especially in the early centuries of the Church, to make us profoundly sceptical of the reliability of such sources of information. Moreover, the earlier and more contemporaneous, and therefore comparatively more reliable, sources are to be found in the writings of the Fathers of the Western Church, who were notoriously incapable of understanding the philosophical and mystical problems which agitated the Eastern communities. The Roman and occidental mind could never really grasp Greek and oriental thought, and the Western Fathers were always the main champions of orthodoxy.

We should further remember that we have practically no contemporary "refutation" of the first century or of the first three quarters of the second. The great "store-house of Gnosticism" is the Refutation of Irenæus, who wrote at Lyons in Gaul, far away from the real scene of action, in the last decade of the second century. All subsequent refutators base themselves on the treatise of Irenæus, and for the most part directly or indirectly simply copy the work of the Gallic bishop. If, then, Irenæus can be shown to be unreliable, the whole edifice of refutation crumbles with the giving way of its foundation. This important point will be considered later on.

Prior to Irenæus in the early part of the second century a certain Agrippa Castor, who lived in the reign of Hadrian about 135 A.D., is said by Eusebius to have been the first to write against heresies. His work is unfortunately lost.

Justin Martyr, the apologist, also composed a work against heresies; this *Syntagma* or *Compendium* is unfortunately lost. Judging from Justin's strange account of "Gospel history" in his extant works, and his evident ignorance of the four canonical Gospels, it is to be supposed that his work upon heresies threw too strong a light on early Church history to make its publicity desirable. This may also be the reason of the disappearance of the work of Agrippa Castor. Justin flourished about 140 A.D.

Clement of Alexandria, whose greatest literary activity was from about 190-203 A.D., lived in the greatest centre of Gnostic activity, and was personally acquainted with some of the great doctors of the Gnosis. His works are free from those accusations of immorality with which the general run of Church Fathers in after years loved to bespatter the character of the Gnostics of the first two centuries. All the critics are now agreed that these accusations were unfounded calumnies as far as the great schools and their teachers were concerned, seeing that the majority were rigid ascetics. But this point will come out more clearly later on.

Clement is supposed to have dealt with the higher problems of Gnosticism in his lost work, the *Outlines*, in which he endeavoured to construct a complete system of Christian teaching, the first three books of which bore a strong resemblance to the three stages of the Platonists: (i) Purification, (ii) Initiation, (iii) Direct Vision. This work is again unfortunately lost. It was the continuation of his famous *Miscellanies*, in which the Christian philosopher laboured to show that he was a true Gnostic himself. Contemporary with Clement, but out in the wilds of Lyons, was Irenæus.

Tertullian of Carthage (flour. 200-220 A.D.), whose intolerance, "fiery zeal," and foul-mouthed language are notorious, wrote against heresies, mostly copying Irenæus. For the Marcionites, however, he is an independent authority. Part of the treatise against heresies ascribed to Tertullian is written by some unknown refutator, and so we have a Pseudo-Tertullian to take into consideration.

Hippolytus, bishop of Portus at the mouth of the Tiber, was the

disciple of Irenæus. He wrote a *Compendium* against all heresies, which is lost; but a much larger work of the same Father was in 1842 discovered at Mount Athos. This purported to be a *Refutation of All Heresies*, and adds considerably to our information from indirect sources, for the work is not a mere copy of Irenæus, but adds a large mass of new matter, with occasional quotations from some Gnostic MSS. which had fallen into Hippolytus' hands. The composition of this work may be dated somewhere about 222 A.D.

About this time also (225-250) Origen, the great Alexandrian Father, wrote a refutation against a certain Celsus, who is supposed to have been the first opponent of Christianity among the philosophers, and who lived a hundred years before Origen's time. In this there are important passages referring to some of the Gnostics. If then, we include Origen's work against the *True Word of Celsus*, we have mentioned all the Fathers who are of any real value for the indirect sources of Gnosticism in the first two centuries.

Philaster, bishop of Brescia in Italy, Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, and Jerome, fall about the last quarter of the fourth century, and are therefore far too late for accuracy with regard to the things of the first two centuries. Philaster and Epiphanius, were not the former put out of court owing to his overweening credulity, and the latter for his great faculty of inventing scandals and all kinds of foulness, are of little use in any case, for when not employing their special talents they mostly copy either Irenæus or Hippolytus.

Eusebius is fifty years earlier, but there is little to be gleaned from him on the subject, and that little is entirely discounted by his unenviable reputation of being the most unscrupulous fabricator of "history" in that age of literary immorality.

Theodoret's *Compendium*, based on his predecessors and dating about the middle of the fifth century, is of course of no value for our period.

The study of these indirect documents has exercised the ingenuity of the critics and resulted in a marvellously successful feat of scholarship. Lipsius has demonstrated that Epiphanius, Philaster and the Pseudo-Tertullian all draw from a common source, which was the lost *Syntagma* or *Compendium* of Hippo-

lytus, consisting mainly of notes of the lectures of Irenæus. Thus reconstructing the lost document, he compares it with Irenæus, and infers for both a common authority, probably the lost Syntagma of Justin.

We thus see that our main source is Irenæus. The Refutation of Irenæus is the "store-house of Gnosticism"—according to the Fathers—for the first two centuries. Irenæus lived far away in the wilds of Gaul; is his evidence reliable? Setting aside the general presumption that no ecclesiastical writer at such a time could, in the nature of things, have been fair to the views of the heretics, which he perforce regarded as the direct product of the prince of all iniquity, we shall shortly see that fate has at length, and only in this very year, placed the final proof of this presumption in our hands. But meantime let us turn our attention to the direct sources of information.

We have now no less than three MSS. containing Coptic translations of original Greek Gnostic works.

(i.) The Askew Codex, vellum, British Museum, London; containing the Pistis Sophia treatise and extracts from the Books of the Saviour.

(ii.) The Bruce Codex, papyrus, Bodleian Library, Oxford; containing the two Books of Ieou, under the general title The Book of the Great Logos according to the Mystery, and a long Hymn to the Gnosis.

(iii.) The new Akhmîn Codex, papyrus, Egyptian Museum, Berlin; containing The Gospel of Mary (or Apocryphon of John), The Wisdom of Jesus Christ, and The Acts of Peter.

The Akhmîn Codex was only discovered this year. Until the present year also, neither of the other two important and interesting treatises had appeared in English dress; in fact prior to 1851, when the Askew Codex was translated into Latin, nothing of a practical nature was known of these works, and we have to reflect on the indifference which allowed these important documents to remain in the one case (Cod. Ask.) for eighty years without translation, and in the other (Cod. Bruc.) one hundred and twenty years! For further details and a bibliography of the subject, the reader may consult the Introduction to my translation of Pistis Sophia (1896), and Lipsius' article, "Pistis Sophia," in Smith and Wace's

Dictionary ; it is sufficient to add here that a French translation of Pistis Sophia appeared in 1895, and French and German translations of the Codex Brucianus in 1891 and 1892 respectively. It will thus be seen that the study of Gnosticism from direct sources is quite recent, and that all but the most recent research is out of date. This new view is all the more forced upon us by the latest discovery which in the Akhmîn MS. places in our hands the means of testing the accuracy of Irenæus, the sheet anchor of hæresiologists. The Gospel of Mary is one of the original sources which Irenæus used. We are now enabled to control the Church Father point by point, and find that he has so condensed and paraphrased his original that the consistent system of the school of Gnosticism which he is endeavouring to refute, appears as an incomprehensible jumble. The reader is referred to the last number of LUCIFER for further information, and the student will regret to learn that Dr. Schmidt, the eminent German Coptic scholar, can hold out no hopes of the publication of his text, translation and commentary at an earlier date than from one to two years.

This recent activity among specialists in Gnostic research at a time when a widespread interest in a revival of Theosophy has prepared the way for a reconsideration of Gnosticism from a totally different standpoint to that of mere criticism or refutation, is a curious coincidence.

From the above considerations it is evident that so far are the Gnostic heretics and their ideas from being buried in that oblivion which orthodoxy has so fervently desired and so busily striven to ensure, that now at the very end of the nineteenth century, at a time when biblical criticism is working with the reincarnated energy and spirit of a Marcion, these same universalizers of Christianity are coming once more to the front and occupying the attention of earnest students of religion.

#### SOURCES.

So far for our documents, and now for a brief consideration of the sources from which the Gnostics drew their inspiration ; in other words, let us cast a hasty glance round from Palestine as a centre, prior to the epoch which marks the beginnings of the Christian era.

As Harnack says (*op. cit.*, p. 243): "Long before the appearance of Christianity, combinations of religion had taken place in Syria and Palestine, especially in Samaria, in so far, on the one hand, as the Assyrian and Babylonian religious philosophy, together with its myths, as well as the Greek popular religion, with its manifold interpretations, had penetrated as far as the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, and been accepted even by the Jews; and, on the other hand, the Jewish Messianic idea had spread and called forth various movements."

All these tendencies have to be considered in treating the genesis of Gnosticism, but above all we should remember that back of all such efforts was the common wisdom-tradition enshrined in the innermost sanctuaries of the common mystery-cult of antiquity, which secretly held all together in a synthetic doctrine which only showed itself publicly, and even then only partially, in the great religious upheaval of the first centuries.

In considering the Semitic factor we should bear in mind that only a small portion of the Jews returned from captivity, the major part of the nation remained behind in the East, and of those who returned large numbers were scattered among the nations, and were in full contact with the modifying influence of Hellenic ideas. The Jews then, as now, were the great leaders of commerce, and the communities of the Diaspora were in constant communication, and thus the most potent means of disseminating news and ideas in the Græco-Roman world. But the religion of the educated Hebrews was after the return totally different to the crude Jehovistic cult of the Pentateuch. Such conceptions of deity were for the people alone; the Rabbins brought back with them a wealth of new ideas and an esoteric method which has come down to us in the Talmud and in the present recension of the Kabalah. The connection between the Jews of the second Temple and those of their nation who remained behind in Babylon and elsewhere, was close and uninterrupted, and the intimate connection between their religious ideas and the mystery-cultus of Chaldæa, Babylon, Persia, and then further east to India, is no longer a matter of question.

Mingling with this stream we can detect the ancient cosmological legends and mystery-system of Phœnicia, Syria, and the old Arab tradition, and the pre-historic cultus, of which some relics

still lingered in Asia Minor. Our mind can thus wander over the nations and back into time—how far, who can say? There be even some who speak of a connection with ancient China and the peoples and cults north of the great Snowy Range of which history so far knows nothing. In any case the vista opens up infinitely for the far-off birth of the Gnosis in this direction.

On the other hand we have ancient Egypt hoary in wisdom, and doubtlessly in former ages in close connection with the mother-stream—Egypt who still refuses to reveal her real secrets in spite of the busy searching of the keenest of intellect. It is curious how little we know of the theosophy of ancient Khem; the Hermetic treatises of the first centuries enshrine in Greek dress, and in Hellenized form, some of that wisdom, but they are as weak echoes of the mighty voices of her past glory, as is the modern Kabalah of the old Chaldæan wisdom.

But just as India of to-day is subject to an Occidental power, and the younger and more active mind of the West is re-modelling the ancient lore of the East with methods of analytical exactitude; so in those centuries Egypt and Syria and the rest were in subjection to the Macedonian arms, and the young intellect of Greece was grappling with the ancient problems of philosophy and religion, which had occupied the Orient for untold ages.

For two or three centuries basing themselves on Aristotle alone the Greeks thought that they indeed “were the people”; the Greek arms had conquered the physical world, the Greek mind should conquer the world of ideas. But as they grew older and gained experience they discovered that Aristotle was no match for the Orient, and so they flew for refuge to Plato, Plato who, as every tradition asserted, gained his wisdom in Egypt; who based himself on Pythagoras, whom universal repute asserted to have learned his theosophy in Egypt and Persia and India; Pythagoras whose communities of ascetics joined themselves to the Orphic communities founded by Orpheus whose existence was lost in the night of legend, but who came from the East; who brought the mysteries to Greece and the cult of Iacchos, which tradition rightly or wrongly traced to India.

True it is that Pythagoras and Plato and the Gnostics have much in common, but when an Hippolytus says that the Gnostics

copied from Plato, he is blind to the real fact that both drew from a common source.

For this reason we find attempts by Jews to show that Plato plagiarized from Moses, and by Greeks to prove that the Moses of the Jewish Rabbins was dressed in Platonic ideas. Especially do we find the Jewish doctors of Alexandria philosophizing, this Hellenistic tendency culminating in Philo who flourished at the exact time ascribed to Jesus. Philo though familiar with every shade of Jewish belief, unfortunately gives us not a single word of information in his voluminous writings as to the genesis of the new religion. Philo is the great synthesizer of the Greek and Jewish Logos-ideas, and his works are an enormous storehouse of mystical and philosophical Judaism.

We must also remember that prior to the rise of Christianity there had been attempts at eclecticism and syncretism in matters religious, attempts at universalism and a synthetic theosophy; that the educated of all nations bordering on the east of the Mediterranean possessed a philosophy of religion, while the cult of the god or gods, as the case might be, was for the people and the preservation of old customs. This state of affairs was the outcome not only of the intellectual activity and scepticism of the age, but also the effect of the most ancient and sacred institution of antiquity—the Mysteries.

The great temples of antiquity were not only the centres of the popular religion, with its statues, sacrifices, ceremonies, shows, processions and feasts, but also enshrined a secret cultus with its ceremonies, symbols, methods of instruction and interpretation. In considering this most important, but owing to its secrecy most obscure, subject, three strata may be traced. The external layer of the Mysteries, of which alone some fragmentary traces are preserved, is supposed by the majority of writers to be the beginning, middle and end of the whole matter. The obscure hints as to these mystic dramas, symbols and ceremonies have been puzzled over with great industry by a number of scholars and searchers after curious things, but no one has so far thrown any clear light on the subject. To this degree or series of degrees, many were admitted after due trial and purification; we read of as many as 100,000 "initiates" being gathered together.

The second layer was far more important, the number of its "adepts" far more restricted, and the preliminary trials and training far more rigid. In this series of degrees, the mysteries of the invisible world were more clearly revealed; and instruction was given as to cosmogony, psychology, post-mortem existence, the facts of reincarnation, the mystical rebirth or resurrection, and the path of salvation and freedom from "genesis," the dominion of the sensible universe.

But within this and back of all was the heart of the Mysteries, the innermost school of wisdom, dealing with the ultimate facts of man and the universe, whose degrees are the natural stages of spiritual growth, and whose teachers are those whose feet tread the path of perfection.

Undoubtedly the outer degrees of the Mysteries, in various nations at various epochs, together with the popular cult, became corrupted and often sank to depths of sorcery and excesses of every kind; but then only the shell and appearance of the Mysteries remained, and the real spirit fled from the temple, there being no longer a "righteous man" in the "city."

But all the above subjects are so vast and far reaching, dealing with such a wide stretch of history and involving an enquiry into such a heterogeneous mass of cults and so profound an analysis of human nature, that a writer with even a superficial knowledge of them loses all hope of giving the faintest idea of the real state of things religious, prior to the rise of the present era and during the early centuries of Christendom, in so condensed a form as the narrow limits of this essay demand.

We should, however, remember that by this time the older mystery-systems had for the most part been replaced in the Græco-Roman world by the Mithras-cult. The Eleusinian centre still remained, but even at Eleusis, prior to its destruction by the adherents of the new religion in the last decade of the fourth century, the Eumolpid hierophant was replaced by a priest of Mithras.

The worship of the spiritual Sun, or Mithras-cult, is said to have been "the principal antagonist of the truth during the first four centuries of our period." It spread everywhere, East and West, and was practically universal. Justin, Tertullian and Origen regarded Mithraicism as a demoniacal plagiarism of Christianity by anticipation. The subject is of immense interest and should be studied closely by those interested in the origins of the new religion.

In Egypt also the ancient cult had been almost supplanted by Serapis-worship, exactly the same transmutation being traceable as in the Mithras-cult. The Serapis-worship was introduced into Alexandria at the end of the fourth century B.C. by the Lagides, and soon became the most popular external religion, while it enshrined all the ancient tradition in its inner rites. The state of affairs in Alexandria in about 130 A.D. from an outside point of view, which took into consideration only the general populace, may be seen from a letter of the Emperor Hadrian to his brother-in-law. The imperial "sophist," as Julian calls him, who held no creed but contemplated all, wrote as follows :

"The Egypt which you so praised at home, my dearest Servian, I have learned to be thoroughly false, fickle, and swayed by every breath of rumour. Those who worship Serapis are Christians; and those who call themselves bishops of Christ are vowed to Serapis. There is there no ruler of the Jewish synagogue, no Samaritan, no priest of the Christians, who is not an astrologer, a diviner, and a charlatan. The very patriarch, when he comes to Egypt, is compelled by some to adore Serapis; by others, Christ."

In the early days when orthodoxy had not yet been invented, names and literalism and "history" were not of such importance as they subsequently assumed, but this will be even more apparent as we proceed.

G. R. S. MEAD.

*(To be continued.)*



THOU shalt likewise know that men draw upon themselves their own misfortunes voluntarily, and of their own free choice.—  
THE GOLDEN VERSES OF PYTHAGORAS.

## INVISIBLE HELPERS.

*(Continued from p. 241.)*

HELP, then, may be given by several of the many classes of inhabitants of the astral plane. It may come from Devas, from nature-spirits, or from those whom we call dead, as well as from those who function consciously upon the astral plane during life—chiefly the Adepts and their pupils. But if we examine the matter a little more closely we shall see that though all the classes mentioned may, and sometimes do, take a part in this work, yet their shares in it are so unequal that it is practically almost entirely left to one class.

The very fact that so much of this work of helping has to be done either upon or from the astral plane goes far in itself towards explaining this. To anyone who has even a faint idea of what the powers at the command of an Adept really are, it will be at once obvious that for him to work upon the astral plane would be a far greater waste of energy than for our leading physicians or scientists to spend their time in breaking stones upon the road. The work of the Adept lies in higher regions—chiefly upon the arûpa levels of the devachanic plane, where he may direct his energies to the influencing of the true individuality of man, and not the mere personality which is all that can be reached in the astral or physical worlds. The strength which he puts forth in that more exalted realm produces results greater, more far-reaching and more lasting than any which can be attained by the expenditure of even ten times the force down here; and the work up there is such as he alone can fully accomplish, while that in lower places may be at any rate to some extent achieved by those whose feet are yet upon the earlier steps of the great stairway which will one day lead them to the position where he stands.

The same remarks apply also in the case of the Devas. Be-

longing as they do to a higher kingdom of nature than ours, their work seems for the most part entirely unconnected with humanity; and even those of their orders—and there are some such—which do sometimes respond to our higher yearnings or appeals, do so on the devachanic plane rather than on the physical or astral, and more frequently in the periods between our incarnations than during our earthly lives. It may be remembered that, in the course of the investigations recently undertaken into the various sub-planes of Devachan, a Deva was found in one case teaching the most wonderful celestial music to a chorister, and in another, one of a different class was giving instruction and guidance to an astronomer who was seeking to comprehend the form and structure of the universe.

These two were but examples of many instances in which the great Deva kingdom was found to be helping onward the evolution and responding to the higher aspirations of man after death; and there are methods by which, even during earth-life, these great ones may be approached, and an infinity of knowledge acquired from them, though even then such intercourse is gained rather by rising to their plane than by invoking them to descend to ours. In the ordinary events of our physical life the Deva very rarely interferes—indeed, he is so fully occupied with the far grander work of his own plane that he is probably scarcely conscious of this; and though it may occasionally happen that he becomes aware of some human sorrow or difficulty which excites his pity and moves him to endeavour to help in some way, his wider vision undoubtedly recognizes that at the present stage of evolution such interpositions would in the vast majority of cases be productive of infinitely more harm than good.

There was indubitably a period in the past—in the infancy of the human race—when it was much more largely assisted from outside than is at present the case. At the time when all its Buddhas and Manus, and even its more ordinary leaders and teachers, were drawn either from the ranks of the Deva evolution or from the perfected humanity of a more advanced planet, any such assistance as we are considering in this article must also have been given by these exalted beings. But as man progresses he becomes himself qualified to act as a helper, first on the physical plane and then on higher levels; and we have now reached a stage at which humanity

ought to be able to provide, and to some slight extent does provide, invisible helpers for itself, thus setting free for still more useful and elevated work those beings who are capable of it.

It becomes obvious then that such assistance as that to which we are here referring may most fitly be given by men and women at a particular stage of their evolution; not by the Adepts, since they are capable of doing far grander and more widely useful work, and not by the ordinary person of no special spiritual development, for he would be unable to be of any use. Just as these considerations would lead us to expect, we find that this work of helping on the astral and lower devachanic planes is chiefly in the hands of the pupils of the Masters—men who, though yet far from the attainment of adeptship, have evolved themselves to the extent of being able to function consciously upon the planes in question. Some of these have taken the further step of completing the links between the physical consciousness and that of the higher levels, and they have the undoubted advantage of recollecting in waking life what they have done and what they have learnt in those other worlds; but there are many others who, though as yet unable to carry their consciousness through unbroken, are nevertheless by no means wasting the hours when they think they are asleep, but spending them in noble and unselfish labour for their fellow-men.

What this labour is we will proceed to consider, but before we enter upon that part of the subject we will first refer to an objection which is very frequently brought forward with regard to such work, and will also dispose of the comparatively rare cases in which the agents are either nature-spirits or men who have cast off the physical body.

People whose grasp of Theosophical ideas is as yet imperfect are often in doubt as to whether it is allowable for them to try to help some one whom they find in sorrow or difficulty, lest they should interfere with his karma. "The man is in his present position," they say in effect, "because he has deserved it; he is now working out the perfectly natural result of some evil which he has committed in the past; what right have I to interfere with the working of the great cosmic law by trying to ameliorate his condition, either on the astral plane or the physical?"

Now the good people who make such suggestions are really,

however unconsciously to themselves, exhibiting the most colossal conceit, for their position implies two astounding assumptions; first, that they know exactly what another man's karma has been, and how long it has decreed that his sufferings shall last; and secondly, that they—the insects of a day—could absolutely override the cosmic law and prevent the working-out of karma by any action of theirs. We may be well assured that the great karmic deities are perfectly well able to manage their business without our assistance, and we need have no fear that any steps we may take can by any possibility cause them the slightest difficulty or uneasiness. If a man's karma is such that he cannot be helped, then all our well-meant efforts in that direction will fail, though we shall nevertheless have gained good karma for ourselves by making them. What the man's karma has been is no business of ours; our duty is to give help to the utmost of our power, and our right is only to the act; the result is in other and higher hands. How can we tell how a man's account stands? For all we know he may just have exhausted his evil karma, and be at this moment at the very point where a helping hand is needed to give relief and raise him out of his trouble or depression; why should not we have the pleasure and privilege of doing that good deed as well as another? If we *can* help him, then it was his karma that he should be helped; but we can never know unless we try. In any case the law of karma will take care of itself, and we need not trouble ourselves about it.

The cases in which assistance is given to mankind by nature-spirits are few. The majority of such creatures shun the haunts of man, and retire before him, disliking his emanations and the perpetual bustle and unrest which he creates all around him. Also, except some of their higher orders, they are generally inconsequent and thoughtless—more like happy children at play under exceedingly favourable physical conditions than like grave and responsible entities. Still it sometimes happens that one of them will become attached to a human being, and do him many a good turn; but at the present stage of its evolution this department of nature cannot be relied upon for anything like steady co-operation in the work of invisible helpers.

Again, help is sometimes given by those recently departed—

those who are still lingering on the astral plane, and still in close touch with earthly affairs, as (probably) in the above-mentioned case of the mother who saved her children from falling down a well. But it will readily be seen that the amount of such help available must naturally be exceedingly limited. The more unselfish and helpful a person is, the less likely is he to be found after death lingering in full consciousness on the lower levels of Kâmaloka, from which the earth is most readily accessible. In any case unless he were an exceptionally bad man his stay within the realm whence alone any interference would be possible would be comparatively short; and although from Devachan he may still shed benign influence upon those whom he has loved on earth, it will not be of a nature to bring about any such results as those which we have been considering.

Again, many of the departed who wish to help those whom they left behind, find themselves quite unable to influence them in any way, since to work from one plane upon an entity on another requires either very great sensitiveness on the part of that entity, or a certain amount of knowledge and skill on the part of the operator. Therefore, although cases of apparitions shortly after death are by no means uncommon, it is rare to find one in which the departed person has really done anything useful, or succeeded in impressing what he wished upon the friend or relation whom he visited. So that but little help is usually given by the dead—indeed, as will presently be explained, it is far more common for them to be themselves in need of assistance than to be able to accord it to others.

At present, therefore, the main bulk of the work which has to be done along these lines falls to the share of those living persons who are able to function consciously on the astral plane. It is difficult, for those who are accustomed only to our ordinary and somewhat materialistic lines of thought, to believe and to realize fully a condition of perfect consciousness apart from the physical body. Every Christian, at any rate, is bound by the very foundations of his creed to believe that he possesses a soul; but if you suggest to him the possibility that that soul may be a sufficiently real thing to become visible under certain conditions apart from the body, or after its death, the chances are ten to one that he will scornfully tell you that he does not believe in ghosts, and that such an idea is

nothing but an anachronistic survival of an exploded mediæval superstition.

If, therefore, we are at all to comprehend the work of the band of invisible helpers, and perchance ourselves to learn to assist in it, we must shake ourselves free from the trammels of contemporary thought on these subjects, and endeavour to grasp the great truth (now a demonstrated fact to many among us) that the physical body is in simple truth nothing but a vehicle or vesture of the real man, and that while it is put off permanently at death, it is also put off temporarily every night when we go to sleep—the process of falling asleep consisting indeed in this very action—the real man in his astral vehicle slipping out of the physical body.

Again I repeat, this is no mere hypothesis or ingenious supposition. There are many among us who are able to perform (and *do* perform every day of their lives) this elementary act of magic in full consciousness—who pass from one plane to the other at will; and if that is clearly realized, it will become apparent how grotesquely absurd to them must appear the ordinary unreasoning assertion that such a thing is utterly impossible. It is like telling a man that it is impossible for him to fall asleep, and that if he thinks he has ever done so he is under a hallucination.

Now the man who has not yet developed the link between the astral and physical consciousness is unable to leave his denser body at will, or to recollect most of what happens to him while away from it; but the fact nevertheless remains that he leaves it every time he sleeps, and may be seen by any trained clairvoyant either hovering over it or wandering about at a greater or less distance from it, as the case may be. The entirely undeveloped person floats shapeless and inchoate above his physical body, scarcely less asleep than it is, and he cannot be drawn away from it without causing serious discomfort which would in fact awaken it. As the man evolves, however, his astral body grows more definite and more conscious, and so becomes a fitter vehicle for him; in the case of the majority of intelligent and cultured people the degree of consciousness is already very considerable, and a spiritually developed man is as fully himself in that vehicle as in this denser body.

But though he may be fully conscious on the astral plane during sleep, and able to move about on it freely if he wishes to do

so, it does not yet follow that he is ready to join the band of helpers. Most people at this stage are so wrapped up in their own train of thought—usually a continuation of some line taken up in waking hours—that they are like a man in a brown study, so much absorbed as to be practically entirely heedless of all that is going on around them. And in many ways it is well that this is so, for there is much upon the astral plane which might be unnerving and terrifying to one who had not the courage born of full knowledge as to the real nature of all that he would see.

Sometimes a man gradually rouses himself out of this condition—wakes up to the world around him, as it were; but more often he remains in that state until some one who is already active takes him in hand and wakens him. This is, however, not a responsibility to be lightly undertaken, for while it is comparatively easy thus to wake a man up on the astral plane, it is practically impossible, except by a most undesirable exercise of mesmeric influence, to put him to sleep again. So that before a member of the band of workers will thus awaken a dreamer, he must fully satisfy himself that the man's disposition is such that he will make a good use of the additional powers that will thus be put into his hands, and also that his knowledge and his courage are sufficient to make it reasonably certain that no harm will come to him as a result of the action.

Such awakening so performed will put a man in a position to join if he will the band of those who help mankind. But it must be clearly understood that this does not necessarily or even usually bring with it the power of remembering in the waking consciousness anything which has been done. That capacity has to be attained by the man for himself, and in most cases it does not come for years afterwards—perhaps not even in the same life. But happily this lack of memory in the body in no way impedes the work out of the body; so that, except for the satisfaction to a man of knowing during his waking hours upon what work he has been engaged during his sleep, it is not a matter of importance. What really matters is that the work should be done—not that we should remember who did it.

Varied as is this work on the astral plane, it is all directed to one great end—the furtherance, in however humble a degree, of the processes of evolution. Occasionally it is connected with the deve-

lopment of the lower kingdoms, which it is possible slightly to accelerate under certain conditions. A duty towards these lower kingdoms, elemental as well as animal and vegetable, is distinctly recognized by our Adept leaders, since it is in some cases only through connection with or use by man that their progress takes place.

But naturally by far the largest and most important part of the work is connected with humanity in some way or other. The services rendered are of many and various kinds, but chiefly concerned with man's spiritual development, such physical interventions as were recounted in the earlier part of this article being exceedingly rare. They do however occasionally take place, and though it is my wish to emphasize rather the possibility of extending mental and moral help to our fellow-men it will perhaps be well to give one or two instances in which friends personally known to me have rendered physical assistance to those in sore need of it, in order that it may be seen how these examples from the experience of the helpers gear in with the stories of those who have received supernormal aid—such stories, I mean, as those which are to be found in the literature of so-called “supernatural occurrences.”

In the course of the recent rebellion in Matabeleland one of our members was sent upon an errand of mercy which may serve as an illustration of the way in which help upon this lower plane has occasionally been given. It seems that one night a certain farmer and his family in that country was sleeping tranquilly in fancied security, quite unaware that only a few miles away relentless hordes of savage foes were lying in ambush maturing fiendish plots of midnight murder and rapine. Our member's business was in some way or other to arouse the sleeping family to a sense of the terrible danger which so unexpectedly menaced them, and she found this by no means an easy matter. An attempt to impress the idea of imminent peril upon the brain of the farmer failed utterly, and as the urgency of the case seemed to demand strong measures, our friend decided to materialize herself sufficiently to shake the housewife by the shoulder and adjure her to get up and look about her. The moment she saw that she had been successful in attracting attention she vanished, and the farmer's wife has never from that day to this been able to find out *which* of

her neighbours it was who roused her so opportunely, and thus saved the lives of the entire family, who but for this mysterious intervention would undoubtedly have been massacred in their beds half an hour later; nor can she even now understand how this friend in need contrived to make her way in when all the windows and doors were found so securely barred.

Being thus abruptly awakened, the housewife was half inclined to consider the warning as a mere dream; however, she arose and looked round just to see that all was right, and fortunate it was that she did so, for though she found nothing amiss indoors she had no sooner thrown open a shutter than she saw the sky red with a distant conflagration. She at once roused her husband and the rest of her family, and owing to this timely notice they were able to escape to a place of concealment near at hand just before the arrival of the horde of savages, who destroyed the house and ravaged the fields indeed, but were disappointed of the human prey which they had expected. The feelings of the rescuer may be imagined when she read in the newspaper some time afterwards an account of the providential deliverance of this family.

Another instance of intervention on the physical plane which occurred a few months ago makes a very beautiful little story, though this time only one life was saved. It needs however a few words of preliminary explanation. Among our band of helpers here in Europe are two who were brothers long ago in ancient Egypt, and are still warmly attached to one another. In this present incarnation there is a wide difference in age between them, one being advanced in middle life while the other is as yet a mere child in the physical body, though an ego of considerable advancement and great promise. Naturally it falls to the lot of the elder to train and guide the younger in the occult work to which they are so heartily devoted, and as both are fully conscious and active on the astral plane they spend most of the time during which their grosser bodies are asleep in labouring together under the direction of their common Master, and giving to both living and dead such help as is within their power.

I will quote the story of the particular incident which I wish to relate from a letter written by the elder of the two helpers immediately after its occurrence, as the description there given is more

vivid and picturesque than any account in the third person could possibly be.

“We were going about quite other business, when Cyril suddenly cried ‘What’s that?’ for we heard a terrible scream of pain or fright. In a moment we were on the spot, and found that a boy of about eleven or twelve had fallen over a cliff on to some rocks below, and was very badly hurt. He had broken a leg and an arm, poor fellow, but what was still worse was a dreadful cut in the thigh, from which blood was pouring in a torrent. Cyril cried, ‘Let us help him quick, or he’ll die!’

“In emergencies of this kind one has to think quickly. There were clearly two things to be done; that bleeding must be stopped, and physical help must be procured. I was obliged to materialize either Cyril or myself, for we wanted physical hands at once to tie a bandage, and besides it seemed better that the poor boy should *see* some one standing by him in his trouble. I felt that while undoubtedly he would be more at home with Cyril than with me, I should probably be more readily able to procure help than Cyril would, so the division of labour was obvious. The plan worked capitally. I materialized Cyril instantly (he does not know yet how to do it for himself), and told him to take the boy’s neckerchief and tie it round the thigh, and twist a stick through it. ‘Won’t it hurt him terribly?’ said Cyril; but he *did* it, and the blood stopped flowing. The injured boy seemed half unconscious, and could scarcely speak, but he looked up at the shining little form bending so anxiously over him, and asked ‘Be you an angel, master?’ Cyril smiled so prettily, and replied, ‘No, I’m only a boy, but I’ve come to help you’; and then I left him to comfort the sufferer while I rushed off for the boy’s mother, who lived about a mile away.

“The trouble I had to force into that woman’s head the conviction that something was wrong, and that she must go and see about it, you would never believe; but at last she threw down the pan she was cleaning, and said aloud, ‘Well, I don’t know what’s come over me, but I must go and find the boy.’ When she once started I was able to guide her without much difficulty, though all the time I was holding Cyril together by will-power, lest the poor child’s angel should suddenly vanish from before his eyes. You see when you materialize a form you are changing matter from its natural

state into another—opposing the cosmic will, as it were; and if you take your mind off it for one half-second back it flies into its original condition like a flash of lightning. So I could not give more than half my attention to that woman, but still I got her along somehow, and as soon as she came round the corner of the cliff I let Cyril disappear; but she had seen him, and now that village has one of the best-attested stories of angelic intervention on record!

“The accident happened in the early morning, and the same evening I looked in (astrally) upon the family to see how matters were going on. The poor boy’s leg and arm had been set, and the great cut bandaged, and he lay in bed looking very pale and weak, but evidently going to recover in time. The mother had a couple of neighbours in, and was telling them the story; and a curious tale it sounded to one who knew the real facts. She explained, in very many words, how she couldn’t tell what it was, but something came over her all in a minute like, making her feel something had happened to the boy, and she *must* go out and see after him; how at first she thought it was nonsense, and tried to throw off the feeling ‘but it warn’t no use—she just had to go.’ She told how she didn’t know what made her go round by that cliff more than any other way, but it just happened so, and as she turned round the corner there she saw him lying propped up against a rock, and kneeling beside him was the ‘beautifullest child ever she saw, dressed all in white and shining, with rosy cheeks and lovely brown eyes;’ and how he smiled at her ‘so heavenly like,’ and then all in a moment he was not there, and at first she was so startled she didn’t know what to think; and then all at once she felt what it was, and fell on her knees and thanked God for sending one of his angels to help her poor boy.

“Then she told how when she lifted him to carry him home she wanted to take off the handkerchief that was cutting into his poor leg so, but he would not let her, because he said the angel had tied it and said he was not to touch it; and how when she told the doctor this afterwards he explained to her that if she *had* unfastened it the boy would certainly have died.

“Then she repeated the boy’s part of the tale—how the moment after he fell this lovely little angel came to him (he knew it

was an angel because he knew there had been nobody in sight for half a mile round when he was at the top of the cliff just before—only he could not understand why it hadn't any wings, and why it said it was only a boy)—how it lifted him against the rock and tied up his leg, and then began to talk to him and tell him he need not be frightened, because somebody was gone to fetch mother, and she would be there directly; how it kissed him and tried to make him comfortable, and how its soft, warm, little hand held his all the time, while it told him strange, beautiful stories which he could not clearly remember, but he knew they were very good, because he had almost forgotten he was hurt until he saw mother coming; and how then it assured him he would soon be well again, and smiled and squeezed his hand, and then somehow it was gone.

“Since then there has been quite a religious revival in that village; their minister has told them that so signal an interposition of divine providence must have been meant as a sign to them, to rebuke scoffers and to prove the truth of holy scripture and of the Christian religion—and nobody seems to see the colossal conceit involved in such an astonishing proposition. But the effect on the boy has been undoubtedly good, morally as well as physically; by all accounts he was a careless enough young scamp before, but now he feels ‘his angel’ may be near him at any time, and he will never do or say anything rough or coarse or angry, lest it should see or hear. The one great desire of his life is that some day he may see it again; and he knows that when he dies its lovely face will be the first to greet him on the other side.”

A beautiful and pathetic little story, truly; and one which helps us, more than many a learned disquisition would, to realize how help from the astral plane may sometimes be given. The moral drawn from the occurrence by the village and its minister is perhaps somewhat of a *non sequitur*; yet the testimony to the existence of at least something beyond this material plane must surely do the people more good than harm, and after all the mother's conclusion from what she saw was a perfectly correct one, though more accurate knowledge would probably have led her to express it a little differently.

An interesting fact afterwards discovered by the investigations of the writer of the letter throws some light upon the reason why

the help was rendered by these particular agents and no other. It was found that the two boys had met before and that some thousands of years ago the one who fell from the cliff had been the slave of the other, and had once saved his young master's life at the risk of his own, and had been liberated in consequence; and now, long afterwards, the master not only repays the debt in kind, but also gives his former slave a high ideal and an inducement to morality of life which will probably change the whole course of his future evolution. So true is it that no good deed ever goes unrewarded by karma, however tardy it may seem in its action—that

Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;  
 Though with patience stands He waiting, with exactness grinds He all.

C. W. LEADBEATER.

(*To be concluded.*)

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## THE SÂÑKHYA PHILOSOPHY.

(*Continued from page 154.*)

IN the preceding paper we studied in outline the twenty-five tattvas, or factors into which the Sâñkhya analyzes the entire universe, subjective and objective. We saw how, from the standpoint of this system, the "soul" or Puruṣha is absolutely individual, standing alone and unique in its nature, a pure witness or spectator, neither acting nor suffering, simply knowing, over against Prakṛiti and its products, in which however the nearness of Puruṣha, or as it is sometimes put, the radiation of its light, calls forth a seeming but illusory subjectivity—the complex series of what we call "states of consciousness," such as pain and pleasure, knowledge and ignorance, love and hate, joy and sorrow, the feeling of "I am," and the illusion of being the doer, enjoyer, sufferer of actions and their fruits. We saw how from Prakṛiti, root-substance, proceeds first, mahat or buddhi, the organ of discriminative knowledge, the determiner and decider; how from mahat proceeds ahankâra, the creator of the illusion "I am the actor, enjoyer," etc.; and from ahankâra the dual series of the five tanmâtras and their products, the gross elements on the one hand, as also manas, the recipient

and analyzer of the impressions from these which are received through the five organs of sense, and also the impeller to the activities of the five organs of action.

There now remains for us to consider one more fundamental thought of the Sâṅkhya to which allusion was made at the close of the previous article. This is really a further elaboration of the conception of Prakṛiti, though it is so fundamental, so characteristic of our system, so interwoven with every part and detail of its working out, that it seemed better to reserve this conception for separate consideration. According to the Sâṅkhya, although Prakṛiti is the root-substance, is the *ultimate* source and origin of all activity, all production, all change, the material cause of all that is—the Puruṣha alone excepted—yet Prakṛiti is not itself really *simple*, though repeatedly asserted to be *one*. On the contrary, Prakṛiti consists of, is constituted by, *three* factors or constituents, called *guṇas*, and named respectively *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. No possible translation can convey the real significance of these words, and the best thing for a student to do is to take the Sanskrit terms as they stand and to build up in his own mind their meaning and connotation from what follows. Let us take them in order :

1. *Sattva* : The characteristic effects or manifestations of *sattva* in the world of objects (in the ordinary sense) are luminosity and lightness, while in what we should call the subjective world, but which the Sâṅkhya calls the subtler world of the finer products of Prakṛiti, they are virtue, self-control, mental calm, benevolence, friendliness, purity, content, pleasure, happiness, the perfect activity of the sense organs and the *manas*, and the attainment of supernatural powers. *Sattva* is therefore said to predominate over the other two *guṇas* in the world of the Gods.

2. *Rajas* : Those of *rajas* are motion and force in the world of objects ; while in the subtler inner world they show themselves as every description of pain and suffering, trouble, anxiety, care, annoyance, discontent, dependence, jealousy, envy, instability, disturbance, passion, desire, love and hate, malice, love of strife and fault-finding, lack of balance and calm, wildness and unfriendliness of demeanour, but also ambition, effort and activity. Thus *rajas* is said to predominate in the world of men.

3. *Tamas* : In the world of objects, *tamas* exhibits itself in

weight, heaviness, rigidity and darkness; in the inner nature of man as depression, fear, alarm, despair, want of sympathy, indecision, lack of perception, ignorance, drunkenness, madness, disgust, laziness, carelessness, unconsciousness, sleep and fainting, as hard-heartedness, shamelessness, lustfulness, impurity and evil in general. Tamas thus predominates over sattva and rajas in the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms.

These three guṇas then are the constituents of Prakṛiti and they are all three "universally extended." In other words there is no single point in all infinity where at least a *minimum* of each of these three is not present; they are, as we have seen, widely different from each other in nature and functions and yet the three together are *one*, are Prakṛiti, just as three distinct rivers form after their junction a single stream. But, strictly speaking, the three guṇas in their union are only called Prakṛiti when they are in equilibrium with each other. For any disturbance of that equilibrium brings about manifestation, and all manifestation is comprised under one or other of the productions which proceed from Prakṛiti; while so long as none of the three preponderates in any way over the others, and each remains in the most absolute equilibrium with, and indeed quite unrelated to, each of the others, so long is Prakṛiti or the root-substance a subtle indistinguishable mass wherein all the powers and properties, which make their appearance in the unfolded or manifested universe, repose in germinal inactivity.

And it should also be noted that neither sattva nor tamas can spontaneously or self-moved enter into activity; it is only rajas, the action, motive guṇa, which can set them in motion and so lead to the unfoldment of the peculiar properties of each.

Now these three guṇas are regarded by the Sāṅkhya as being ceaselessly in struggle and conflict with one another—except during the periods of non-manifestation when they repose in their perfect equilibrium as Prakṛiti, the root-substance. Each is constantly striving, during manifestation, to assert itself, to come to the front, to predominate and display its own special nature. To quote the statement as found in the texts, the guṇas "serve for manifestation, activity and restraint: they mutually subdue and support each

other, produce each other, consort together and take each other's condition."\*

To the modern western mind this conception of all nature as constituted by the interaction of three factors, these three *guṇas*, will naturally appear strange and altogether imaginary. Even put forward as an hypothesis it would seem, especially to the scientist, so far-fetched and in the air, that nothing but the strictest and most rigid demonstrative proof would reconcile him to even entertaining it for a moment. And yet, in some way or other, it must accord with certain very fundamental facts in nature, in the human mind at any rate, for not only has it obtained unquestioned acceptance for many many centuries from the successive generations of Hindu thinkers—men, keen, acute, questioning, and logical more perhaps than any other of earth's peoples—but this acceptance has so long been an unchallenged reality in all minds, that not even in the very oldest texts of the Sâñkhya that have reached us, do we find a single word of reasoning or proof on the subject. The question is not even raised either by the Sâñkhyan writers themselves or by any of the many other schools with whom they were so long engaged in the most acute and incessant controversy. Nay more, the doctrine itself, the teaching that all nature consists of these three factors, the *guṇas*, has been accepted and adopted into every one of the various schools, and throughout the whole of the epic and post-epic literature of India.

To such an extent is this the case that neither from the old books, nor from the living paṇḍits have I been able to discover any clue to the line of demonstration followed. And yet that so wide and startling a theory must in its time have been most thoroughly and exhaustively threshed out, and only obtained acceptance because its actual correspondence with some reality in nature or man enabled it to survive as the "best-fitted," is obvious to anyone who has even a slight acquaintance with the thoroughness and minuteness, the traces of which are everywhere apparent in the accepted doctrines of logic and philosophy, which have won for themselves an accepted place in the philosophical thought of India.

It must therefore be left to the future—perhaps to the

\* *Sâñkhya Kârikâ*, Aph. 12.

researches of some trained student of occultism—to rediscover the lines upon which this doctrine of the *guṇas* was originally established to the satisfaction of such penetrating minds. For the moment, all that I can even attempt is to suggest a line of thought which may at least make this conception seem less strange and wild to western minds, and show that, even from our modern standpoint, some basis for it may be found in our actual concrete experience. This line of thought has been suggested by the fact that the three *guṇas* are correlated by all the Sāṅkhya authorities with pleasure, pain and indifference. These words have not infrequently been used by English translators to render the Sanskrit terms: *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*; and this has been done on the strength of the explanations given by the old commentators as to the meaning and significance of these terms, as well as under the guidance of the sense currently attached to them at the present day. Taking therefore these ideas—pleasure, pain and indifference—as being correctly correlated with the three *guṇas* respectively, the following line of thought not unnaturally suggests itself; though I am bound to add that it seems to me very far from satisfactory, and leaves my own mind in a state of restless enquiry on the subject. On modern hedonistic lines we might reason thus; though I again repeat that I do not believe that these ancient thinkers followed that line.

Taken in relation to our human consciousness, the most important characteristic of the objects around us is whether they give rise to pain or pleasure when we come into contact with them, or leave us indifferent in that respect. From the purely human point of view these questions are the ones of supremest, nay even of the only practical importance. And then, when once we have begun to classify all objects in nature into one or other of the three classes, painful, pleasurable, indifferent, the step does not seem a long or unnatural one to assume that these properties in objects are the result of the varying admixture and proportion in them of three actual substances or factors, possessing these properties. Once such a theory has been adopted, the rest follows from the logic of observation; while association of ideas and experiences would naturally bring together other properties of objects and of human organisms and associate them with these fundamental factors which build up our own bodies and all around us. After all, though more

logically consistent and thoroughly worked out in its philosophical aspects, the theory of the three guṇas is not so very fundamentally different from that of the four "elements" of earth, air, water and fire, which for so many centuries reigned supreme and unchallenged in the minds of all the learned men of Europe.

At any rate I am unable to suggest any other line of thought along which this theory may have been arrived at ; unless indeed I resort to an appeal to spiritual clairvoyance and assume that the founder of the Sâṅkhya system based his teachings upon actual knowledge and experience of super-physical nature. But even then the difficulty arises that so far as I know no modern student of occultism among ourselves, has, so far, been able to perceive and recognize the three guṇas as actual basic substances in nature, with the exception perhaps of Jacob Böhme, whose "three qualities of nature," sweetness, bitterness and astringency, are wonderfully like, even in minute details of their working out, the three guṇas we are considering here.

Be that, however, as it may, the fact remains that this conception of the guṇas is fundamental to the Sâṅkhyan system, that it passed thence into the other schools, and now colours and forms part of the whole system of Indian thought as found in all the literature later than the Upaniṣhads.

The origin of colour is also referred to the guṇas, if not in the actual Sâṅkhya texts themselves, yet by weighty commentators, and as it may assist the reader in building up in his mind the idea of the guṇas, I will quote a passage from Nīlakantha's Commentary on the Mahābhārata, XII., line 10,058, which indicates pretty clearly how this idea has worked out : "When tamas predominates, sattva is small and rajas holds the middle, the colour black results ; if the proportions of sattva and rajas are reversed, the colour grey ; when rajas predominates, sattva is a minimum and tamas holds the middle, then the colour blue appears ; if the proportions of sattva and tamas are reversed, the colour red ; when sattva predominates rajas is small and tamas holds the middle, the colour yellow is the result ; if the proportions of rajas and tamas are reversed, we get white."

Having examined the guṇas separately, let us now consider them in union. As already stated, during pralaya, or the periods when the universe having been re-absorbed is unmanifested, the

guṇas exist in perfect equilibrium, indistinguishably merged into the one root-condition of all matter—Prakṛiti. But even in this condition it must not be imagined that they are completely at rest, for that would be contrary to their very essential nature which is ceaseless change and motion. But the activity of each guṇa is, at such times, confined to itself alone and does not affect the other two. Thus to quote the Sâṅkhya-tattva-kaumudî (Kârikâ 16), it is said: "During pralaya, sattva, rajas and tamas only undergo change within themselves; for the guṇas, whose very nature is change, remain not even an instant without undergoing alteration. Therefore, when the world is in the condition of dissolution, the sattva unfolds itself only in the form of sattva, the rajas in the form of rajas, and the tamas in that of tamas." And it must be noted that this isolated motion of each guṇa within itself is something quite different from, and independent of, that motion which communicates itself to the root-substance as a whole (Prakṛiti) at the beginning of a new world period.

This original impulse, which ends the pralaya and brings about the dawn of a new period of universal manifestation, is termed "kshobha," a word which conveys the sense of "thrill," "vibration," "shock," and its primary effect is to cause the three guṇas to interact with each other, instead of each continuing its ceaseless eternal motion within its own substance and nature. Nowhere in the philosophical Sâṅkhya texts is any definite or consistent explanation of the whence or how of this kshobha or primary impulse to be found; but in the Purâṇas, as also in the Yoga school of Patanjali, it is ascribed to the "Will of the Lord," or as we should express it in Theosophical phrase, it is the outcome of the primary act of self-sacrifice, or self-limitation, by which the Logos calls the universe into manifestation.

As the topic of pralaya, or the period of universal dissolution and re-absorption, has come in our way, a word may as well be added here as to the condition during that state of things of those Puruṣhas or souls who have *not* obtained liberation during the previous period of manifestation. According to the Sâṅkhya, such Puruṣhas are as free from suffering as those who have attained liberation, because the internal organs pertaining to each, along with the subtle body, which are the material substrata of every

feeling, no longer exist as such. But these inner organs and subtle bodies have, in spite of that, not perished utterly, but have only returned to the condition of root-substance and continue to exist "in a subtle condition." The same thing is true also as to their most fateful attributes, their moral characteristics, tendencies and past karma, resulting from the unworked out thoughts, words and deeds in the previous world-period. And lastly, their ignorance or non-discrimination persists also through the pralaya as a tendency (*vâsanâ*), *i.e.*, their inability to distinguish truly between what is Puruṣha and what Prakṛiti. For these two attributes of the soul—its karma and this non-discrimination of self and not-self—exist, according to the Sâñkhya, as a beginningless continuity which remains uninterrupted even by the universal dissolutions, and is terminable only through the arising in the individual of the True Discriminative Knowledge.

In the following article of this series we shall proceed to trace the sequence in which the manifestation of the twenty-five tattvas or principles of the Sâñkhya takes place; and we shall then be able to fill in many of the details which will render more intelligible a good deal which had to be left obscure in the skeleton outline of these conceptions which was given in the previous article. I propose to select for this purpose rather such details as will be of common interest, or useful as illustrating general characteristics of Hindu thinking, than those of more directly and immediately philosophic significance, except where such philosophical questions cannot be left aside without seriously distorting or mutilating the presentment of the system as a whole.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

(*To be continued.*)

#### ERRATUM.

Page 153, line 9 from bottom; for "material substates," read "material substrata."

## THE UNKNOWN PHILOSOPHER.

### INTRODUCTION.

FEW periods of modern history have been stamped with such extremes in philosophical ideas as the century in which lived and worked Louis Claude Saint-Martin, "Le Philosophe Inconnu" of the eighteenth century.

It is sometimes thought that this period was essentially materialistic, but students of Mysticism and Theosophy will find that even in this seemingly, for them, dead century, there was a strong and clear pulse of occult thought and mystic teaching. There were mystics and occultists, who throughout the darkest hours kept unshaken their knowledge of the unseen life.

In order to understand the life and work of our unknown philosopher, we must also glance briefly at the conditions which surrounded him. Indeed few epochs have been marked with such eventful changes as the years in which Saint-Martin studied the unseen life, and yet we see the picture of a tender-hearted man looking quietly on as the sorrowful drama of the French Revolution unfolded itself before his eyes. We see a man who is spoken of as pure-hearted, scrupulously just in his judgment, with qualities of kindness and affection which endeared him to his many friends, watching the death carts rolling heavily through the streets of Paris, and yet in his writings we find but few words of regret for the sorrows and trials of the passing days. On the contrary, we gaze into a mind which is looking for a purified France, a philosopher who recognizes that the conditions of the time are but the results of the causes which had gone before.

Let us now look further into the past, to the teacher of our philosopher, the master who moulded and guided his first studies in the "occult world." In Martinez Pasquales we find one of those strange characters who from time to time appear on the pages of history; a man of undoubted power, who influenced many men and

many minds at this period. Martinez Pasquales forms one of the links in that unbroken chain of mystic teaching which stretches far back into the night of time. He was one of those who had the power of communicating with beings on other planes; thus keeping the fact before men's eyes that the physical life is not the only plane of action, or the ordinary senses the only means of perception.

But in order to simplify our task, it will be necessary to treat the subjects under the following heads :

1. The period 1754 to 1802.
2. Martinez Pasquales, the teacher and founder of the Rite of Elected Cohens, or Priests, the Order of Martinists.
3. Louis Claude Saint-Martin, the disciple, the Unknown Philosopher.
4. The doctrines of Saint-Martin and his teacher, and a comparison of these with the Theosophy of the present day.

#### THE PERIOD 1754—1802.

Seldom have been seen such extremes of opinion as we find generally in the eighteenth century, and particularly in unhappy Paris, the centre at which all the opposing forces met. On one side we have the Encyclopædists and the Materialists, a brilliant phalanx, numbering Voltaire, Diderot, D'Alembert, Rousseau, Buffon, Condorcet, and many others in its ranks—leaders of a mental revolution. On the other we have Saint-Germain the mysterious; Cagliostro, at one time called "divine" and afterwards dubbed "charlatan"; then the still more unknown Lascaris, the teacher of Cagliostro, who figures so dramatically in the novels of Dumas as Althotas; next Anton Mesmer with his wonderful magnetic experiments, the talk of Paris; then Martinez Pasquales with his disciples, and many other mystic and occult students.

Not only is France affected by the forces at work, but the whole of Europe is a seething sea of mental unrest. Swedenborg is also strongly influencing the thought of the day.

Amongst the well-known names of those who were more or less definitely involved in the mysticism of the eighteenth century we find the following renowned personages: Frederick the Great of Prussia; Catherine of Russia; the Emperor Joseph II. of Austria; Gustavus III. of Sweden; the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel; the Duke of

Württemberg; the Princess of Anhalt; the Margrave of Baireuth; and many other names, some of them renowned in the world of letters.

Another interesting and somewhat curious fact; in no other century in modern history do we find so many secret societies. Every leading mystic thinker appears to have had a separate centre or school of his own; sometimes they appear almost at variance with each other, while at no time are they wholly in sympathy. Indeed, nearly the whole of Europe appears honey-combed with secret organizations of various kinds. In France the conditions were ripe for both secret societies and rebellion. The Court was corrupt, the Church was corrupt, the nobles corrupt, and the people tired and disgusted with those who ruled over them. The Court amused itself by talking the language of the "markets," and the Regent of France set the example of vicious living.

Unrest and the spirit of revolt spread even amongst the Masons and Illuminists. In 1785 there appear to have been three leading secret associations, united under a veil of Freemasonry, but in reality, each having a different aim of its own, occult or political (*L'Illuminisme en France*, Papus, p. 139). These were:

1. The Grand Orient of France, founded in 1772, by the amalgamation of several Masonic bodies. This was a democratic society, and it aimed at a representative legislation in its Lodges; it was not avowedly anti-clerical, since it numbered certain of the clergy in its body.

2. The Grand Chapter General of France, formed by the amalgamation of two other Societies: (a) Conseil des Empereurs d'Orient et d'Occident; (b) Les Chevaliers d'Orient.

3. The Martinist Lodges, created by Martinez Pasquales, of which the centre was at Lyons. The spirit and tone of this Lodge was entirely aristocratic, and the researches of the Lodge were confined to mystic philosophy and the occult sciences.

The Martinists were very particular and exclusive in the choice of their members; they did not trouble themselves about politics, but they had a strong influence on the intellectual development of Masonry.

Unfortunately for the Martinists they were being continually identified with the second society above mentioned, which was the true revolutionary party, and about which a few words must be said before we go any further.

This Society was, according to some writers (*Histoire de la Magie*, Éliphas Lévi, p. 44; *L'Illuminisme en France*, Papus, p. 140; *Royal Mas. Enc.*, Mackenzie, art. "Templarism"), descended from, or amalgamated with, the order of Knights Templar, founded in 1118, by Hugh de Payens, whose Grand Master, Jacques de Molai, was treacherously invited to Paris by Philippe le Bel, King of France, at the instigation of Clement VI. Charges were made against the order, and finally after being subjected to much indignity and hardship Jacques de Molai was burned in front of Nôtre Dame de Paris in 1314.

The members of his order vowed vengeance against the Church and king, and the feeling of implacable hatred was handed on from generation to generation, until the period arrived when the conditions of corruption made vengeance easy, and the kindly but weak Louis XVI. had to suffer for the wrong-doings of his ancestors.

We find that the Regent, the able but licentious Duc d'Orléans, was one of the Grand Masters of this order; he was succeeded by the Duc du Maine and others of the same rank. It is said also that Cagliostro was the agent of the Templars (Lévi, *op. cit.*, pp. 427, 442), and that all the events of the Revolution were directed by this body, unseen, unknown, but all powerful, with one aim, the total destruction of a corrupt Church and a corrupt State (Papus, *op. cit.*, p. 144). Their origin and descent were to a certain extent shielded by the new amalgamations which had been formed, and there seem to have been secret factions within the Masonic bodies of the period.

The Abbé Barruel, in his *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du Jacobinism*, asserts that the whole of the bloodshed and the Reign of Terror was due to the secret societies, or the Jacobins, as he calls them, looking on them all as one large revolutionary society, and unfairly dragging the peaceful Martinists into the same category. His indictment is unjust and vindictive, but we get a good picture of the period from his writings, and we understand to some extent how widespread was the scope and work of these secret societies. Unfortunately he uses the terms Theosophist and Theosophy, Adept and Initiate, quite indiscriminately for many unworthy people in his discourses.

Among the well-known names of the period, there are a few of whom mention should be briefly made, as they are of deep interest

to students of our present day, such as Saint-Germain, Cagliostro, Mesmer and Swedenborg, as well as Saint-Martin, with whom we are chiefly concerned.

It is interesting and somewhat remarkable to notice that in no case do we find them working together—remarkable, since if they were all aiders of the same great mystic impulse, we should expect to find some common action between men of such powers as they undoubtedly had.

Saint-Germain, of whom so much is said and so little known, is called by Ragon one of the three celebrated chiefs of modern Illuminists (*Maçonnerie Orthodoxe*, p. 256).

Lévi tells us that when all these anarchical doctrines and ideas began to spread, he separated from the society which he had founded; he was opposed by his members and accused of betraying them (*op. cit.*, p. 420). The society he founded was that of Saint Jakin, or Saint Joachim, tracing its origin from the Templars and Rosicrucians. The tenets were gnostic; they were Theosophists who studied and practised theurgy. Abbé Barruel makes a furious attack on Saint-Germain as having instigated much of the bloodshed in the Revolution; this does not seem to coincide with the fact that he left the society he had formed when he found the members were adopting anarchical views. This Society disappeared during the Revolution, being most probably amalgamated with others of the same tendency.

Passing on to Alexander, Count Cagliostro, we find that he adopted the Rite of Egyptian Masonry, which was essentially Eastern in its tenets; the Count was said to have held meetings in the Loge des Amis Réunis with Mesmer; we also find him attending a meeting of the Philaletheans on Feb. 15th, 1785, at which Mesmer was also present, but there is no trace of any work being done by these two well-known men in conjunction.

Frederick Anton Mesmer again was a member of the *Fratres Lucis*, and founded the Order of Universal Harmony, with the idea of propagating the doctrines of animal magnetism. The *Fratres Lucis* were a mystic order. Among the members of this order were Pasquales, Cagliostro, Swedenborg, Saint-Martin, and subsequently Éliphas Lévi, and other mystics. This body had been much persecuted by the Inquisition in earlier years.

We also find Swedenborg founding his own society and strongly influencing the later development of Saint-Martin.

These are the best-known names of the period, and the names of the societies to which they belonged, excepting the school founded by Martinez Pasquales, with which we must deal more in detail as it leads directly to our main subject.

The remarkable point to be noticed is that no distinct link is to be found between these mystics, and no common work; on the other hand there is a tradition that Saint-Germain, Mesmer, and Cagliostro were all more or less connected with the "Great Brotherhood" which guides the affairs of men; but they did not seem to recognize each other's work, nor to be much in sympathy.

Speaking of Mesmer, the biographer of Saint-Martin says: "Mon. de St. Martin avait de la personne de Mesmer une opinion peu favorable; c'était à ses yeux 'un matérialiste, mais qui disposait d'une grande puissance'" (*Saint-Martin, Le Philosophe Inconnu*, par Matter, p. 62). In the same author we find a plain hint that the "forms and ceremonies" affected and adopted by Cagliostro, which had also formed part of the early studies of Saint-Martin in the school of Pasquales, were later on entirely put aside by him; on this point Matter (*ibid.* p. 94) says: "Saint-Martin remarqua avec peine que la plupart des Adeptes de Versailles n'avaient été initiés que par les formes, c'est-à-dire par les cérémonies extérieures. . . . Il y ajoute d'ailleurs un mot de plus, pour marquer la distance qui les sépare de lui: '*Mes intelligences étaient loin d'eux.*'"

It is a remarkable fact that no trace can, so far, be found of any reference made by Saint-Martin to Saint-Germain, who had been certainly the most mysterious and striking personage of the period; and only indirectly, as we shall see, to Cagliostro.

There may, perhaps, have been some *bonâ fide* reason why all these well known men—pursuing to some extent the same researches and having, without doubt, a knowledge of occult forces—did not come into public contact with each other, but the fact remains that there is very little evidence to show that there was even a semblance of friendliness between them.

One other change must be briefly noticed; from 1786 the Martinists allied themselves with the Illuminists of Baron Hundt, while the Grand Orient and the Rite Templar formed into one

body. Thus in 1789 we find two large secret societies in France, practically in opposition; on one side the latter with their aims purely revolutionary, on the other the former keeping to their philosophical and occult studies, of these the Martinists suffering most during the Reign of Terror.

Let us now trace what is told of Martinez Pasquales and the school wherein Saint-Martin first studied the occult life.

ISABEL COOPER-OAKLEY.

(To be continued.)



## CHRISTIANITY ACCORDING TO TOLSTOY.\*

THE translation of a letter addressed by Count Tolstoy to the Dutch recruit, Herr van der Weer, who lately refused to serve his term in the army, as required by the laws of his country, has within the last few weeks appeared in the public prints. In this letter the Count congratulates Herr van der Weer on the attitude he has assumed, and states that "the spirit of Christianity is the main-spring of your action."

These words serve to call attention once more to the views Count Tolstoy has previously expressed as to the spirit of the Christian revelation, the meaning of its ethical precepts and their bearing on life and conduct in his well-known book, *The Kingdom of God is within You*. At the present moment, therefore, it may not be amiss to consider his interpretations and position generally as therein set forth.

There is so much that is attractive in the personality of Count Tolstoy, so much in the entire sincerity of his character that commands our respect, so much that is noble in the manner in which he endeavours, so far as in him lies, to conform his own life to the ideals which he inculcates, so much in the self-denying and self-sacrificing enthusiasm with which he endeavours to better the physical conditions and the environment of the oppressed and needy of his fellow-countrymen, that it is with a feeling of sadness that one closes these

\* *The Kingdom of God is within You: Christianity not as a Mystic Religion, but as a New Theory of Life*. Translated from the Russian of Count Leo Tolstoy by Constance Garnett. 2 vols. (W. Heineman. London, 1894.)

volumes, in which Count Tolstoy expounds at length his view of the meaning and purpose of Christianity.

The title strikes the keynote of all religion, and in the hands of such an accomplished and thoughtful writer one expects to find this great truth handled with much depth of insight and much careful and logical argument based thereon; but alas! in these volumes there is nothing of the kind, and the principal impression left on the mind of the reader is one of amazement at the narrowness of view and the apparent want of any real knowledge of the other religions to which allusion is made, and at the amount of dogmatic assertion contained between the covers. This is sad, for one cannot help realizing what splendid work might be done by a writer of such ability, with such hold on the public attention, were his insight a little deeper, his outlook a little wider, his views less crude and material. For even despite these defects, it cannot be doubted that in the state of transition through which Christian thought at the present day is passing, Tolstoy has played a considerable part in directing the forces at work for good, for by his writings many, perhaps for the first time, have had their eyes opened to realities and have been made to consider whether what they have hitherto professed to believe is a true, living thing, or merely a shell; and for this work great credit is due to him.

What then are these ideas which, according to Count Tolstoy, are peculiar to Christianity, differentiating it from all other, and as he terms them, "pagan" religions, and which, in his eyes contain the essence of Christian teaching? They are summed up in the injunction not to resist evil by force, and in the statement that "the Kingdom of Heaven is within you."

With regard to the latter, it is unnecessary to waste words or pile up quotations from the Scriptures of other and far older faiths, to prove what cannot but be abundantly evident to anyone who has made even the most superficial study of the religions of the East, that it is precisely this same conception of the Kingdom of God being within the individual which forms the basic idea of all their spiritual teachings, although in many of these other systems the same conception is much more elaborately displayed than is the case in the Christian Scriptures; it cannot, therefore, be claimed that promulgation of this truth is peculiar to Christ's teaching.

The exposition, however, of this teaching, which serves for the title of the book, occupies comparatively small space and is but slightly treated of; it is on the former injunction as to non-resistance to evil that in reality the "New Theory of Life," according to Count Tolstoy, depends, and it is to the various aspects of this theory and its reaction on the individual and social life that he principally devotes himself.

Before considering the conclusions drawn from this injunction, let us briefly consider the text itself, as found in *Matthew* v., 39, where it forms part of what is known as the "Sermon on the Mount."

The words in the old version of the English translation run as follows: "But I say unto you, resist not evil"; in the new version, however, it stands thus: "But I say unto you resist not *him* that is evil." In the discourse which occurs in *Luke* vi., and which is usually considered to embody the same address, though the two sermons differ very widely and materially in many respects, we find no mention made of this special ordinance; in the other Gospels we find no such address. But in no case do we find the words occurring precisely as quoted by Count Tolstoy, namely, "resist not evil *by force*." It might be held that the addition of these two words "by force" is of itself unimportant; but when we find that the whole of his "New Theory of Life" entirely depends on these added words, it may fairly, I think, be demanded that before we can be asked to accept Tolstoy's interpretation of the text as being correct, that we should be given some clue as to where it is to be found as quoted by him.

It is hard to enter into that peculiarly narrow and material view, by which Count Tolstoy has seemingly convinced himself and would fain convince others, that the prohibition as to the resistance of evil solely refers to physical force being employed for that purpose; and it is hard to understand on what grounds, if the literal interpretation of the text is correct, Count Tolstoy can justify resistance of evil by the more potent mental and intellectual methods. But that he does think such resistance not only justifiable but obligatory is most conclusively proved by this very book we are now considering, devoted as it is to the combating of what appears to him as evil, with all the energy and determination of which he has command.

The manifest absurdity of carrying this narrow interpretation of "resist not evil" to such a length has been realized, and it is for this reason that Count Tolstoy would still further limit its application, and by introducing the words "by force" seek to make it apply simply and solely to the active employment of physical force.

Having, however, satisfied himself that this is what the text means, he is prepared to carry its application to life to the most extreme limit, and to exemplify this I cannot do better than quote the following from vol. i. p. 50. :

"I see that a man I know to be a ruffian is pursuing a young girl; I have a gun in my hand, I kill the ruffian and save the girl. But the death or wounding of the ruffian has positively taken place, while what would have happened if this had not been I cannot know."

Thus the inference we are left to draw is that because we have not absolute knowledge of the ultimate result of any action and, seeing that we are by no means under any circumstances to use force in the resistance of evil, that the proper attitude for a Christian is to stand quietly by and see an outrage which he has power to prevent perpetrated before his eyes. Can we be surprised or feel regret that such a creed has failed to make any very great impression on the minds of the more thoughtful of the Christian community—indeed it is somewhat surprising that anyone with any moral sense can be disposed to accept this teaching, especially when the ultimate conclusions to which it leads are thus stated with what we might call brutal frankness. For however much we may disagree with Count Tolstoy's views, we must admit that he never shirks the results to which his teaching lends itself.

That Tolstoy does not consider passive resistance as being resistance the whole of the book goes to prove, much of it being taken up with the proper conduct of the Christian with regard to his compliance with the law of the land, and throughout the burthen of Tolstoy's advice is "resistance to the uttermost." Take for example the following from vol. i. p. 31 :

"People will ask, perhaps, how ought a subject to behave who believes that war is inconsistent with his religion, while the Government demands from him that he should enter the military service? . . .

“This is the gist of Dymond’s answer—‘His duty is humbly but steadfastly to refuse to serve.’

“Therefore we consider it the duty of every man who thinks war inconsistent with Christianity meekly but firmly to refuse to serve in the army. . . . By a steadfast refusal to make use of force, you call down on yourselves the blessing promised to those who ‘hear these sayings and do them.’”

Again in vol. ii. p. 70, speaking of “true” Christians he says:

“Thus they refuse the voluntary payment of taxes, because taxes are spent on deeds of violence,” which savours more of a method by which the Christian may “save his own soul,” rather than as an effective method of bringing influence to bear on public opinion in the direction of remedying the evils which he considers to exist; for it seems fairly probable that such defiance of law would tend to prejudice most sensible persons against the individual who resorted to such methods, and raise an opposition in public opinion to the very reforms which he is in sympathy with.

It must always be remembered that Count Tolstoy is nothing if not literal in his interpretations of the Gospel. It was therefore with some curiosity I read on to see how the reply of Jesus in *Luke* xx. 21-26 to the question, “Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar or not?” was made to square with the above teaching in the matter of taxes. But not once is this incident referred to in any way.

Another assumption is made by Count Tolstoy without a word of explanation or one atom of proof being brought forward in support of it—an assumption for which we have the right to demand the clearest proof, seeing that it states as a fact that which is contrary to all experience and observation, not only of mankind but of any realm of nature. This assumption is that Christianity teaches not only brotherhood but “equality,” as for example in vol. ii. p. 22, where, speaking of the views of non-religionists as opposed to his own, he says, they hold “that the salvation of mankind will be brought about by slow and gradual progress, through which the pagan principles of our existence will be replaced by the principles of liberty, equality, fraternity—*that is, by Christian principles.*” And it is this assumption of equality which gives rise to such views as the following from vol. ii. p. 41:

“The Christian is independent of every human authority by the fact that he regards the divine law of love, implanted in the soul of every man . . . as the sole guide of his life and other men’s also. . . . Therefore the Christian who is subject only to the inner divine law, not only cannot carry out the enactments of the external law, when they are not in agreement with the divine law of love which he acknowledges, he *cannot even recognize the duty of obedience to anyone or anything whatever*, he cannot recognize the duty of what is called allegiance.”

Here we have in a few words a statement of the social aspect of Christianity as interpreted by Count Tolstoy, and we see that it strikes at the root of *all* government whatsoever. Again on p. 43: “The Christian is independent of human authority.”

We have seen that the Christian may not be ruled; it therefore follows that he cannot rule, and the following is the definition of ruling we find on p. 86:

“Ruling means using force, and using force means doing, to him to whom the force is used, what he does not like and what he who uses the force would certainly not like done to himself. Consequently ruling means doing to others we would not that they should do unto us—that is doing wrong.”

This definition is a very fair sample of the crudeness which is one of the most striking features of the book. Let us examine it for a moment. The whole argument turns on the statement that we should not like being restrained from any course of action, however evil or disastrous in its consequences that action might be, and therefore we have no right to restrain others. But is this a real statement of the sentiment of mankind? Possibly it may be if we take the least developed and most degraded, but surely it does not express the sentiment of even the moderately thoughtful! Surely any ordinary individual would only be too grateful to know that someone would intervene to prevent, even by force if necessary, the commission by him in a moment of passion, or when blinded by his lower nature, of some crime or act which in his saner moments he would regard with horror; if this is so, is then society to be organized on the basis of the least intelligent? As it seems to me, it is absolutely untrue to say mankind does not like to be ruled, nor does the fact of being ruled imply any degradation, unless we

are to assume ourselves to be possessed of all knowledge and infinite capacity. Nature itself teaches us this very fact above all others, that it is a realm of law and government.

To enforce his point as to the iniquity of ruling we find the following (vol. iv. p. 86):

“To submit, means to prefer suffering to using force, and to prefer suffering to using force means to be good, or at least less wicked than those who do unto others what they would not like themselves. And therefore in all probability not the better, but the worse, have always ruled and are ruling now. There may be bad men among those who are ruled, but it cannot be that those who are better have generally ruled those who are worse.”

The question now arises, even if we are satisfied that this doctrine of non-resistance is untrue as an interpretation of Christ's teaching, can we consider it even a humane doctrine? Take the case of a man about to murder another—true, we do not know the absolute good, but we are most of us pretty well agreed that it is evil for a man to commit a murder; so it would seem that even at the risk of exerting force to prevent the act being carried into execution, we should be doing in reality a kinder act to the would-be murderer by preventing the murder, than by allowing him to act unhindered, taking into account the kindness to the individual who would have been killed. Take again the case of cruelty to children—but it is no use multiplying examples, the answer to the question is so self-evident that one can only feel amazed that there should be reasonable people found to advocate such methods as those of Tolstoy's Christianity.

That Tolstoy does not admit there can be any other sincere interpretations of the command not to resist evil than that which he himself offers, is apparent from the beginning to the end of his book, and he roundly accuses of insincerity all who may differ from him. Nevertheless, it may be that there are sincere persons who believe that by these words the Great Teacher of Christianity did not mean quite what Tolstoy thinks he did, but that what he meant his teaching to convey was the same great truth found in other religions also, that hatred only ceases by love; that the mainspring of the Christian's life should ever be the helping of his brother, never the seeking for personal advantage, much less revenge,

careful for all that subserves his neighbour's welfare, careless as to his own ; that he should be long-suffering and requite good for evil ; and that if this rule of life is true for the individual, it follows that it must be true for the national life also. The individual and the nation will both make mistakes ; this is in the nature of things ; but if the motive is always good, progress would be made by failure and the ideal ever become more realized.

Looked at from this point of view, the command to "resist not evil" can be interpreted without outraging all common-sense, which I take it was no more the object of the Christian teacher than it was the method of any of the truly great initiated teachers of spiritual and occult truth. No teaching deserves the name of great which ignores practical conditions, such as they exist, and lays down identical rules of conduct for all men, no matter where they may stand in the whole sweep of evolution ; on the contrary, the truly great teaching is one which sees deeply into the conditions of things, and which adapts itself to all men's understanding ; which, while guiding all men towards the highest ideal, yet recognizes their limitations ; which, while endeavouring to raise humanity upward, never seeks to overthrow the very foundations on which they stand ; and therefore it is that I venture to differ from Count Tolstoy in his interpretation of the teaching of Jesus.

OTWAY CUFFE.

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## CORRESPONDENCE.

### "ANIMAL REINCARNATION."

I HAVE with considerable interest and I hope with some degree of profit read the article under this heading contributed by Mr. Bertram Keightley to the July issue of LUCIFER, in reply to the views set forth by myself in the May issue of the same magazine.

I note therefore, that Mr. Keightley's reply is not given "on the merits" of either position, nor on the question of the most probable philosophical aspect, but evidently from information which enables him to dispense with the idea of a theoretical probability, and to assert that the explanation given by him is *fact*. Now I do not in any sense find

fault with this view, indeed I think it is the best way of stating it, and that which I would myself adopt in similar circumstances. Before, however, one has this actual knowledge, one can only theorize and propound that theory which seems most appropriate, and to cover most of the facts of each individual case.

That part of Mr. Keightley's article which seems to me least satisfactory, is the karma question, when applied to animal suffering (see p. 425). He there says: "The gradual unfoldment of the animal essence . . . is greatly hastened and intensified by suffering," that is by the suffering of each separate animal soul! This means that the separate animal soul whilst in physical life may have had to pass through a period of torture which is to inure not to the benefit of its separate soul which underwent the torture, but to the benefit of the block of animal soul essence of which the suffering animal may have formed, say, a fifty millionth part. Thus the individual animal may have had *all* the torture, but when it returns to the "block," it gains only, say, a fifty millionth part of the benefit. This seems rather severe karma on the particular animal *Sic vos non vobis, fertis aratra boves.*

Mr. Keightley, like most writers on animal evolution from a Theosophical standpoint, seeks to establish a very marked difference between intelligence in the *feræ naturæ* and in the domesticated animals; now in connection with this question I have lately been reading *Animal Intelligence*, by Romanes, and that work confirms me in the opinion that the highest types of animals are by no means confined to the domesticated. I will not take up your space by citing instances from that work but will simply refer your readers thereto.

If the highest types of animals mean simply those animals most endowed with intelligence, then I think in that class will be found many a one which has no claim to be termed a "domesticated animal." I have read of instances of wild animals showing more than mere brain intelligence, in fact a truly moral sense; one I remember well, though not the authority—it was that of a starving tigress which carried a kid it had killed to its hungry cubs, resisting the cravings of its own kâmic desires. I can hardly place such an act below that of the domesticated animal, which is generally more selfish. Many instances will be found in Romanes' book of wild animals showing highly developed powers of mind, and even reasoning faculties of no mean order, so that I do not yet see why the domesticated animal alone should develop an individual soul! Would not the animal if left alone by man evolve in time into reincarnating individuals?

Is not the position of the Mânasaputra with regard to ordinary

humanity in the third and fourth races, analogous to that of present humanity with regard to animals and animal development generally?

The quickening influence of the Mānasaputra was simply a powerful accelerating force, but not a necessary ingredient in the evolution scheme, viz., evolution might and would have gone on, but much more slowly. This I gather from Mrs. Besant's teachings as pointed out in my article in LUCIFER, of May last. I therefore thought the same position applicable to animal development, and that human influence was only an accelerating force in assisting its progress, but that even without domestication the animals would in time reincarnate as individuals. I now gather from Mr. Keightley's reply that this is not so.

It seems to me that Mr. Keightley's explanation is open to this criticism, that it would make all animals coming from the same block of essence almost identical in soul qualities, particularly if subject to the same environment or conditions of life; it would hardly account for those differences in character which are often so observable, say, in two dogs belonging to the same family and brought up by the same master; you will often find one of such exhibit noble, generous, kind and affectionate traits of character, while the other (its own brother say), may be greedy, selfish and snarling. It seems to me difficult to account for this difference unless there be something equivalent to a continuing individuality in each. Why should the same block of animal essence, the same heredity and same environment, produce such different characters?

The karma of previous incarnations is given as the main reason for diversity of character in humanity, but apparently (so far as I can at present see), no adequate reason is given for that diversity in the lower animals, though they exhibit that quality in a marked degree—see Romanes.

I will only trespass further on your space to remark that I cannot agree with Mr. Keightley, where, on p. 425, he says: "To me it seems that all the passages he [Mr. Knox] cites from *The Secret Doctrine* or H. P. B.'s other writings . . . will be found to receive a harmonious, coherent and consistent interpretation in the light of the general views and facts which I have tried to make intelligible in the preceding pages." It seems to me that when H. P. B. wrote, "animals again are almost immediately reincarnated in higher animal organisms, suffering moreover is the cause of knowledge, so that the reincarnating entity gains experience, although the organism is tortured to death," she was under the impression that a system of reincarnation, analogous to that of humanity, obtained amongst the lower animals, or to put it in other

words, that, say, when the tiger had in that form gained all the experience that was required, its animal soul would return to physical life as a dog, a horse or other more advanced animal, until in another manvantara it was sufficiently evolved to occupy the human form.

I cannot help doubting if H. P. B. was aware of the later teaching as to animal soul essence, it seems to me not consistent with her utterances as quoted by me. I conclude by again thanking Mr. Keightley for the reply he has given to my remarks, and which reply is I suppose correct, though to me it is open still to the objection that it does not appear to cover all the facts, and is to me still a theory or hypothesis, more or less satisfactory.

N. A. KNOX.

There are two or three points with regard to the subject dealt with in the above letter which it will be advisable for students to bear carefully in mind. The remark that the unfoldment of the animal essence is hastened by suffering needs considerable qualification if we are to avoid the wildest misconceptions; for if it were true as it stands, the slaughterman, the sportsman and the vivisector would be benefactors in disguise instead of being curses to the humanity which they disgrace.

The thing is not a matter of revelation, but of investigation and plain common-sense. What is required to raise the animal essence to the point at which it is capable of individualization is perfectly clear. Intelligence has to be developed up to a certain level, and in the course of such development other qualities will undoubtedly be built in also. Now intelligence comes to the animal essence through experience, and the only question is what kind of experience will best produce the desired result.

At the present stage of evolution actual individualization is arrived at only through contact with man, the stimulus of association with and devotion to the higher intellect being necessary for the development of the lower. Since this unfolding of the intellect elevates the creature in the scale of being, it no doubt involves a capacity for greater suffering as well as for greater enjoyment, because both are now raised to some extent on to the mental plane. Yet it is neither the pain nor the pleasure which forwards the development of the essence, but the quality and amount of intelligence produced by the experience.

Now it is true that a certain kind of quickness of intelligence may be acquired through the ever-present anxiety to avoid or escape from suffering; but such intelligence will be always of the lowest type, and

always accompanied by the development of the eminently undesirable qualities of fear, hatred, selfishness and cruelty. On the other hand when unfoldment takes place, as nature means it to do, through the earnest upward striving to comprehend more fully and to serve more faithfully the master and friend to whom the animal is devoted, not only is the intelligence so developed of the highest type, but it is accompanied by the qualities of affection, gentleness and unselfishness. This latter therefore is true evolution, while such partial development of intelligence as may come through suffering can hardly claim that title, since it includes so much that will have to be got rid of later at the cost of great trouble and pain.

Mr. Knox speaks of the "individual animal" as having all the suffering, and gaining only a small fraction of the benefit; he hardly appears to realize that if the spirit of the animal *can* return to the block of essence at its death it has certainly not yet been individualized, and therefore cannot gain any benefit apart from that acquired by the block of which it is a part.

Very probably the position of man with regard to animal evolution *is*, as Mr. Knox suggests, analogous to that of the Mânasaputra with regard to human evolution. Quite possibly human influence may be only an accelerating force, and the animals might in the progress of countless æons have attained individuality without it. But it would certainly have been entirely impossible for any of them to reach that level at the present time without its help, just as but for the action of the Mânasaputra we should probably have taken a whole round longer to attain even our present not very advanced position in evolution.

The reason for diversity of character in animals is precisely the same as the reason for similar diversity in humanity. It is the karma lying behind—not indeed the ego of the animal, since by the hypothesis it is not yet individualized, but—the block of essence of which its spirit forms a part. Animals coming from the same block *are* almost identical in soul qualities, as Mr. Knox very correctly surmises; the mistake he makes is in assuming that two puppies born in one litter necessarily belong to the same block of essence. As a matter of fact that seems never to be the case, so far as has yet been observed, and it is quite possible that some law of nature may militate against such an arrangement; but we are not in a position to dogmatize on these points until we gain fuller knowledge.

Whether Madame Blavatsky was or was not fully aware of the facts as regards the development of animal essence seems somewhat beside the question; it may well be that she had never turned her

attention specially to the subject, and therefore was not in a position to pronounce upon it. But nothing obviously inconsistent with what has been recently observed is to be found in her writings, so far as I am aware. It is at any rate certain that a tiger has not at the present stage of evolution an individual soul, and that the essence which ensouls it will not reappear on earth as either a dog or a horse, these animals being on quite different lines of evolution.

C. W. L.

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## THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITIES.

### THE INDIAN SECTION.

The Convention of the Indian Section was held at Benares on October 19th and 20th, the meetings being in every way a success. The report of the General Secretary of the Section is one of the most satisfactory that has appeared, showing a marked increase in activity throughout the Section. The arrangements of the central office, under the direction of Babu Upendra Nath Basu, have become much more complete and business-like, greatly increasing the facilities for controlling the work of the Section. Four new Branches have been chartered, and a dormant one has been revived since the previous report, and the number of new members considerably exceeds that of the previous year.

A number of prominent members visited various Branches during the year, several tours of inspection having been undertaken, and Mrs. Besant on her visits also lectured at many of the Branches. The individual Branch reports likewise furnish cause for satisfaction, and the financial statement shows a great improvement on the previous year in the matter of payment of dues. The generosity of one or two Indian members is most gratifying, one having invested £2,000, the interest of which is devoted to various sections of Theosophical work in India.

The chair at the Convention was taken by Babu Purnendu Nath, Colonel Olcott not having arrived in India in time to be present at the proceedings. Mrs. Besant read the letter of greeting from the European Section, and then spoke on the general work of the Society in various parts of the world. Action was taken with respect to the impending famine, and a committee was formed to superintend arrangements for relieving people in the famine-stricken districts through the Branches of the Society. The very respectable sum of 2,267 rupees was subscribed at the Convention meeting as the beginning of the relief work.

Mrs. Besant gave, besides a number of informal conversations, three lectures during the Convention meetings, on "Karma-Mârga," "Gnyâna-Mârga," and "Bhakti-Mârga."

#### AUSTRALIAN SECTION.

There is not much of importance to report from this Section, except that more interest seems to be taken by the general public in the meetings of the various Branches, and the membership in the Society slowly but steadily increases.

Most of the Branches now hold public meetings on every Sunday evening. In Brisbane these are becoming very popular with the general public, and although this Branch has just moved to large premises, it almost seems as if they will soon have to take a still larger room. In Sydney also the accommodation is sometimes severely strained.

The demand for literature is increasing, and altogether the prospects for Theosophy look very hopeful.

H. A. W.

#### NEW ZEALAND SECTION.

The General Secretary is now busy lecturing in the south. At Wellington and Christchurch the lectures have been successful, more especially in Christchurch, the audiences there numbering about two hundred. In the latter city the lectures dealt with Psychism and Spiritualism, as there is a great tendency in that direction there. Miss Edger has been asked to address the members of "Our Father's Church" in Christchurch. At the time of writing this she is lecturing almost every night, in various towns in the neighbourhood of Christchurch, and between there and Dunedin, Kaiapoi, Rangiora, Ashburton, Timaru, and Oamaru. New members are being added to the Society from time to time as the various cities are visited.

Branch activities go on as usual, the various meetings and classes are held regularly, and are fairly well attended. In the larger centres much active work goes on, and as a rule the lectures command a fair amount of public attention.

#### EUROPEAN SECTION.

Drawing-room meetings are now in full force, attracting many people who would otherwise not be likely to come into contact with Theosophy. Those now engaged in conducting the meetings are Mr. Mead, Mr. Leadbeater, the Hon. Otway Cuffe, Mrs. Hooper, Miss Ward, and Miss Pope.

Mr. Mead's lectures at the Pioneer Club on the Gnostic Schools of Christianity have attracted most attentive audiences.

Mr. Leadbeater made an extensive tour in the north of England, from Nov. 20th to Dec. 5th, visiting Harrogate, Middlesbrough, Bradford, Leeds and Manchester. At Harrogate a public lecture was given on Sunday, Nov. 22nd, to a large audience, the subject being Spiritualism. It is interesting to note that a vote of thanks was proposed and seconded by Spiritualists. At Middlesbrough, Harrogate and Sheffield a lecture was delivered to the Branches and to invited visitors, on "Invisible Helpers," excellent attendances being secured. At Bradford the subject chosen was, "Our Relation to Children," which also formed the matter for a public meeting at Harrogate, on Sunday, Nov. 29th. The public meetings at Leeds and Manchester were both crowded, and the lectures were listened to most attentively. The tour was in every respect a most successful one, the intervals between the lectures being well occupied by private meetings and numerous interviews.

## REVIEWS.

## THE ASCENT OF MAN.

By Professor H. Drummond. [London: Hodder and Stoughton.]

It is impossible, in the short compass of a review notice, to undertake anything of the nature of a discussion of this very important work. Whoever wishes to see how far science has, by this time, moved from the vulgar and coarse materialism which was the first and most prominent result of the early presentation of the doctrine of evolution—the materialism which our own H. P. B. combated with so much vigorous argument and still more vigorous language—and how closely its views have come to approximate to those taught us by our own authorities, need only study its most interesting pages. There is still, of course, much hasty generalization; many things guessed at, and not all correctly, where our teachers give us the actual facts as they occurred. In one place our author allows himself to speak of the evolution of man as happening by “a conspiracy of circumstances,” and to say that “it was one *chance* in a million that the multitude of co-operating conditions which pushed man onward were fulfilled.” But to a writer who can sum up the matter as Professor Drummond does, we can forgive much. “Evolution,” he says, “is not progress in matter. Matter cannot progress. It is a progress in spirit, in that which is limitless, in that which is at once most human, most rational, and most divine.” And in another place we have this statement of the last word of science, “If anything is to be implied it is not that the spiritual energies are physical, but that the physical energies are spiritual. The roots of a tree may rise from what we call a physical world; the leaves may be bathed by physical atoms; even the energy of the tree may be solar energy, but the tree is *itself*. The tree is a Thought, a unity, a rational purposeful whole; the ‘matter’ is but the medium of their expression. Call it all—matter, energy, tree—a physical production, and have we yet touched its ultimate reality? Are we even quite sure that what we call a physical world is, after all, a physical world? The preponderating view of science at present is that it is not. The very term ‘material world,’ we are told, is a misnomer; that the world is a spiritual world, merely employing ‘matter’ for its manifestations.”

Indeed, the chief object of the book is the explaining, from the scientific point of view, of what is growing so well known to us as the Law of Sacrifice; and this side of the question is well worth the attention of every Theosophical student. It is hardly fair to the author to

give a brick as a specimen of his house, but we must try thus to make the general idea understood.

“That the Struggle for Life has been a prominent factor in the drama (he says) is certain. But that it is the sole, or even the main agent in the process of evolution must be denied. . . . There is in point of fact a *second* factor which one might venture to call the *Struggle for the life of Others*, which plays an equally prominent part. Even in the early stages of development, its contribution is as real, while in the world’s later progress—under the name of Altruism—it assumes a sovereignty before which the earlier struggle sinks into insignificance. . . . . The functions discharged by all living beings, plant and animal, are two in number. The first is Nutrition, the second is Reproduction. The first is the basis of the Struggle for Life; the second, of the Struggle for the Life of Others. These two functions run their parallel course—or spiral course, for they continuously intertwine, from the very dawn of life; in a sense they *are* life.” In the working out of this view there comes to light many points on which we and the author differ. “Great Homer sometimes nods” and we must be allowed a gentle smile when our author lays down that the struggle for life is already growing less intense, and that it will be practically ended when the chemists have perfected their method of “causing of these stones to be made bread.” But all criticism is disarmed by his candid confession at the close. “It is not said that the view here given of the process of evolution has been the actual process. The illustrations have been developed rather to clear up difficulties than to state a theory. The time is not ripe for daring to present to our imaginations even a partial view of what that transcendent process may have been. At present we can only take our ideas of growth from the growing things around us, and in this analogy we have taken no account of the most essential fact—the *seed*.”

It may perhaps be useful to note, for the benefit of those who happen to begin the book by the last chapter (as many do) that the Christianity of which he there speaks is more a habit of speech than anything likely to be seriously “offensive to (non) pious ears” A Christianity which “is as old as Nature, and did not begin at the Christian era,” and which permits its followers to hold that “the idea of an *immanent* God, which is the God of evolution, is infinitely grander than the occasional wonder-worker, who is the God of an old theology,” has not much in common with the ordinary sectarianism of ordinary Christians. There are not many of us who, if Christianity be thus interpreted, would much object to call ourselves Christians, for

there is much force in the contention that Christ has been too long the Buddha of the Western world to be displaced without doing more harm than good.

One word for ourselves. We Theosophists know better than to attribute the spread of such ideas in the learned world to any mere "conspiracy of circumstances"; we know what "Invisible Helpers" have caused the change in men's hearts. Shall we not, in presence of these great changes, in which we, our Society, its writers and teachers have had practically no share, abate somewhat of our self-importance? The Masters do not need *our* help; do our best, we are yet amongst the lowest and poorest of the tools whereby They fashion the world as They see needful for its future growth—least of all are we a chosen people "to whom Their manifestations must be limited." A. A. W.

#### HINDU CASTES AND SECTS.

- By J. N. Bhattacharya. [Calcutta: Thacker, Spink and Co., 1896.]

#### LES CASTES DANS L'INDE.

By Émile Senart, Membre de l'Institut. [Paris: Ernest Leroux, éditeur, 1896.]

THESE two books are the latest of the many that have been written on the subject of the Hindu Caste system—a subject concerning the vast complexity of which few of us, perhaps, have more than the very vaguest notion. Indeed, so split up, so exclusive, and so full of complications and incoherencies is caste in its present-day aspect, that an attempt to generalize with regard to it, or to give anything like a real picture of it in a few words, would inevitably mean failure.

"L'Inde toute entière," writes M. Senart, "nous apparaît non pas comme une simple collection d'individus, mais comme une agglomération d'unités corporatives. Le nombre, le nom, les caractères, la fonction en varient à l'infini; partout elles forment le cadre invariable et, semble-t-il, nécessaire de la population. . . . Pour la théorie il n'y a que quatre castes, varnas: les Brâhmanes, prêtres et savans; les Kshatriyas, guerriers et nobles; les Vaiçyas, agriculteurs et marchands; les Çûdras, classe servile, vouée à tous les bas offices," whereas, "si un fait saute aux yeux dans la vie réelle de l'Inde, c'est le nombre énorme des castes," etc.

Some idea of this "enormous number" may be gained from the census returns of 1881, although the question has arisen as to how far these figures fall short of the truth. These returns "ne consignent pas moins de 855 castes différentes comptant au moins mille membres ou réparties dans plus d'une province ou d'un État natif. En ajoutant celles qui sont moins nombreuses ou qui n'existent que dans une seule province ou un seul État, on arrive au chiffre de 1929."

Turning for information upon this point to J. N. Bhattacharya's book, which treats of the different castes in detail, it is well if our courage to pursue the subject further desert us not altogether. The formidable list of names that confront us on every other page or so of the first half of this somewhat ponderous volume, might fairly afford excuse for such desertion. The index of this book alone is an education on the subject of caste. Note, for instance, the many divisions and subdivisions headed "Brahman" as set forth therein, and compare this indication of the actual state of things with the idea, shared by most of us, that the Brâhman caste is one throughout India. "As a matter of fact," writes Mr. Bhattacharya when this matter comes under discussion, "the divisions among the Brahmans are so numerous that it is exceedingly difficult, if not actually impossible, to frame an exhaustive and accurate list thereof."

The tendency to caste distinctions seems to have become ingrained in the Hindu people—"il n'y a pas pour l'individu isolé de vie possible." Even outcasts form castes among themselves, and these "malgré tout le dédain des brâhmanes ne se font pas faute d'avoir leurs prétentions: elles trouvent des voisines à dédaigner."

One conclusion must any way, I venture to think, be drawn from a perusal of the books under discussion, *viz.*, that there is nothing in common between the unique social phenomenon presented us by Hindu civilization to-day and the ancient fourfold division of caste according to soul development and as the logical outcome of reincarnation—"the four great natural divisions alike all over the world," to borrow from Mrs. Besant's *Eastern Castes and Western Classes*, a pamphlet that might be read with much profit in this connection.

Of course both M. Senart and Mr. Bhattacharya put forward theories with regard to the origin of caste, the multiplication of castes, etc. But the interest of their books for the Theosophical student lies rather, it seems to me, in the presentment given of the caste system as it now exists—"diconcertante et insaisissable" as the nature of that system may be. Some knowledge of the facts may help us to understand the difficulties of our fellow-workers in India who have been born and bred under conditions so markedly different from our own, and to realize that if the false notion of caste is ever to give place to the real, the process bringing about the change cannot, in the very nature of the case, be other than an extremely gradual one.

E. G.

[Owing to lack of space a number of reviews are held over for our next issue.—ED.]

## THEOSOPHICAL AND MYSTIC PUBLICATIONS.

*The Theosophist* for November gives us quite an entertaining chapter of "Old Diary Leaves," which is now dealing with some of the most interesting years of the Society's early history. The year 1883 was one of exceptional work, no less than forty-three new Branches being formed. The arrangements for purchasing the Adyar headquarters were also made during this year. An interesting and rather amusing story is told of Damodar and his swimming lessons, showing how a little banter can stimulate the courage to overcome customary timidity. The account also contains a record of more mesmeric cures, the treatment of blindness being especially of interest. This issue of *The Theosophist* is somewhat above the average, a report of an excellent lecture on "Theism and Pantheism" following "Old Diary Leaves." Mr. Fullerton writes on "The Consolations of Theosophy," and Dr. A. A. Wells contributes a short but interesting biographical sketch of Arsenius, "A Saint of the Egyptian Desert." The article on the relation of the sexes is fortunately concluded. Written evidently with the best of motives, it is one utterly unsuitable for any magazine not specially devoted to such subjects.

The most useful article in the number of *The Thinker* now before us is a long paper on "Prâna, its Origin and Nature." It is based on most copious quotations from the Upaniṣhads and other Sanskrit works, and such a collection of quotations will be of permanent value for any future

study of the subject, should it ever be possible to discover the real basis of the ideas. We may consider the statements as to Prâna and the "vital airs," and so on from several standpoints; first, the ordinary Western one which regards them as the result of mal-observation of ordinary facts; second, that from which they are taken as referring to psychic conditions, forming a more or less scientific exposition of forces at present hidden from most; or third, the point of view of the writer of the article, that they deal with the same things as does modern science, and that they are corroborated by later researches. Which of the two former standpoints may be the true one we may not know, but there is little encouragement in the paper before us to hold to the third, and it is clear that if there was a science in the old Sanskrit writings it had very little connection with our modern physics, and it serves little to attempt to apply the old ideas to distinctly modern problems.

In *The Journal of the Mahâ-Bodhi Society* for November there is a great improvement shown in the quality of the matter, longer articles appearing in place of the numerous scraps of all kinds. The paper on "Nirvâṇa" is of distinct interest; the positive aspect is the view adopted, Nirvâṇa being regarded as a continued and supremely conscious life. The stages leading to it according to Buddhist teaching are described. In *The Buddhist* some historical information is given in an article on "The Ruined

Cities of Ceylon," many ancient relics being described; the translations of some of the Buddhist scriptures form a useful work. *The Prabuddha Bhāvata* contains as usual a number of articles of moderate interest, and written in a very creditable manner. An account of "Nanda, the Pariah Saint," contains a translation of a poem with a most original refrain which we must presume to be a mantram. It consists of the word "Natarāja," repeated no less than thirteen times in four lines. *The Theosophic Gleaner*, and *The Ārya Bāla Bodhini* both contain some well chosen reprints and short articles and notes.

*The Journal of the Buddhist Text Society* (Calcutta) is by no means light reading, but is a good specimen of the useful work of translation that is being done on ordinary Orientalist lines. The first contribution is an article by Prof. S. C. Vidyābhushan, entitled "A Brief Survey of the Doctrines of Salvation," in which he considers the ideas of the various Hindu schools and concludes with the Buddhist doctrine, disfigured by the usual error that Nirvāṇa is pure annihilation. The appendices are perhaps of the greatest value, containing, amongst other things, a number of Kāchāri folk-tales, which form an interesting record. From Ceylon we have received the little journal *Rays of Light*, containing a number of brief notes and articles, Theosophical and otherwise.

*The Vāhan* for December begins with an appeal on behalf of the Indian famine. The "Enquirer" is on somewhat more general lines than it has been lately, the questions dealt with being the strengthening of a weak will, vegetarianism, and the influence of the Greek Mysteries on the early Church. The first question receives a most admirable answer from A. A. W., who shows that he clearly understands the reality of the condition spoken of in the question and the difficulties that lie in the way of those engaged in the great fight between the man and the body he has made for himself. Vegetarians and non-vegetarians will

probably be influenced little in their respective opinions by the answers to that question, but the matter is put in a very common-sense form by G. R. S. M. in an answer which should meet with the approval of both sides.

*Le Lotus Bleu* is issuing its translation of *The Secret Doctrine* at a satisfactory pace, the last section of the sixteen pages reaching the commentary on the third stanza of the Book of Dzayan. The opening article is on "The Law of Sacrifice and the Mysteries of Creation," by Marius Decresne, M. Guymiot also contributing an article on an alleged, and, we cannot help thinking, somewhat fanciful, danger to the West—its invasion and conquest by the races of the extreme East, especially the Chinese. The remainder of this issue consists mainly of well-chosen translations. *L'Isis Moderne* continues the original papers of M. Jules Bois on "Naundorff, the Father of Neo-Spiritualism," and Mr. MacGregor Mathers on "The Kabalah," and also the translations. The very mystical "Réponse du Naturaliste au Mythologue," is by no means a healthy example of mysticism, the sexual element being unpleasantly prominent. The first part of the article had already been published in "The Reveries of a Pagan Mystic," and judging from the selection before us, the "reveries" had better have remained in obscurity. Dr. Baraduc contributes a short but interesting illustrated article on the aura.

We have also received from France a copy of a curious journal devoted to Alchemy and entitled *L'Hyperchimie*, begun a few months ago. Its alchemy is, however, of modern form, and the first paper reveals an ingenious idea connected with the attempted formation of gold from baser substances. Compounds, such as ammoniacal ferric sulphate, having the same molecular weight as gold, are taken as the basis, and are chemically ill-used in various manners, with the alleged result of a gold precipitate—which is interesting, if not probable. The old alchemists were certainly inno-

cent as regards information about molecular and atomic weights, but the conditions of the "science" were probably much the same then as now.

*Sophia* announces the immediate publication of a Spanish translation of Mrs. Besant's two articles on "Occult Chemistry" and "Thought Forms," in the form of a pamphlet, the illustrations being reproduced in their original colours. The new translations in the November number are: *Devachan*, "How a Chelá met his Guru," and a fragment from *The Perfect Way*. Señor José Plana writes on "The Past," dealing with Karma and the attitude of men towards it. There are moments of true consciousness, he writes, in which the man realizes the whole of his past life and thought, touching briefly the condition of his Higher Ego.

We are in receipt from Austria of the *Wiener Rundschau*, a new Viennese magazine. Judging from the first number, it is of a somewhat *fin de siècle* type. Translations form a large portion of the contents, a drama of Maeterlinck, a story from the Russian of Anton Tschechow and a poem by Paul Verlaine being given. The chief original articles are on decadent literature and woman in the paintings of Giorgione. *The Metaphysische Rundschau* opens with the second part of an article on psychism, dealing with the power of thought. This is followed by a "legend" of a mystical character, entitled "Abbadona," some translations from the English and an account or story of a psychic experience. *Die Uebersinnliche Welt*, the organ of the Sphinx Society of Berlin, is a magazine devoted mainly to spiritualistic matters, and in the issue before us contains a translation from the French on the value of *séances*, dealing especially with Eusapia Paladino, a reprint of an article by Dr. Carl du Prel on odic force, and a description of a haunted house in Vienna. *The Lotus Blüten* contains an account of various fakirs and others who have brought themselves into prominence by tested performances of abnormal sleep-

ing powers, some extracts showing the existence of similar phenomena in Western lands in olden times are of some interest. The translation of the *Tao-Teh-King* and the somewhat artificial allegorizing of Christian legends are both continued.

From Holland we are in receipt of *Theosophia*, for November, containing translations of *The Key to Theosophy*, *Karma*, and other literature, an article on the sacred word Aum, and an opening paper based on a short article in *The Prabuddha Bhārata*. The Swedish *Teosofisk Tidskrift* for October, contains the conclusion of "Thoughts on Theosophy and Culture," by Dr. Sven Nilsson, with a number of translations from the English, including part of Mr. Sinnett's *Growth of the Soul*. The November issue, besides continuing the translations, has some short papers and a poem by Mr. Ljungström, "Youth and Age." We have just received copies of a new Swedish journal, *Theosophia*, started in the interests of the seceding members, the first number being filled with translations of biographical sketches of the late Mr. Judge.

In *Mercury* for October Mr. Bertram Keightley contributes some excellent "Notes on the Study of Hindu Philosophy," in which he points out the difference of standpoint of the Eastern and Western philosophical methods. In the Eastern systems, the student is required as a preliminary to have developed certain high mental and moral qualities which in fact form the stages of what is now generally called in Theosophical literature "the probationary path." This, the writer points out, distinguishes the Eastern systems from the purely intellectual consideration characteristic of the Western. The November issue contains contributions from Mr. Fullerton, "Joining the Theosophical Society," Miss Walsh "Lights and Shadows of Theosophy," and other writers.

The Open Court Publishing Company has recently issued a short popular exposition of Buddhism, by Dr. Paul Carus, entitled *The Dharma, or the Religion of*

*Enlightenment.* The pamphlet is admirably suited for general readers, being concise and written in a most agreeable manner. The section on reincarnation is the least satisfactory, though orthodox enough, but it is difficult with such ideas to trace the real continuity of consciousness which is required to explain the statements in Buddhist books as to the recollection of past births.

From the same publishing firm has been sent the second edition of Dr. Paul Carus' Buddhistic story *Karma*. Since its appearance in *The Open Court* it has been translated into Russian by Count Tolstoi, who expresses a most favourable opinion of the story. The tale itself is simple in the extreme and is oriental in form, being designed, as its title indicates, to illustrate the doctrine of Karma. It deals with the adventures and misfortunes of a merchant, his slave and a farmer, with a Buddhist priest as the oracle who explains and manages things in general. The illustrations form by no means the least attractive feature. The book is printed in Japan and the illustrations are by a Japanese artist. The printing and colouring are charming, and equal to any colour printing that has been done in England and even in France. How the colours are blended and shaded must be a mystery to the ordinary person. The drawing also is quite up to the highest level reached by our illustrationists, though of course in a quite different style.

We have also to acknowledge the receipt from America of *The Metaphysical Magazine*—not quite so interesting as usual, but with a good article by Charles Johnston on "Karma and Salvation by Work," *The Literary Digest*, *Theosophy*, *The Theosophical News*, *The Lamp*, and *The Theosophical Forum*.

Our little Australian sectional magazine, *Theosophy in Australia*, publishes a short but useful paper on "How to Improve Character," and deals in its "Questions

and Answers" with cremation, hypnotism and drunkenness, and clairvoyance, the answers being generally well thought out.

There are now two astrological magazines in England, a new one having recently been sent us, called *Herschell's Coming Events*, which has at least one good feature—a reprint of a translation of Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos*, of interest as a record of early thought, whatever may be its value in other directions. The predictions are somewhat more definite than is usual, but we observe no very striking corroborations. *Modern Astrology* has partly adopted a suggestion made some time ago in these pages, that the predictions in one month should be critically examined in the following issue and compared with the events. The heading "Predictions Fulfilled" sufficiently indicates the line taken up. Both "predictions" and fulfilment are too vague, however, to base any judgment upon. The other articles are of the usual description.

We have been asked to notice a new catalogue issued by Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co., of new and second-hand books on Oriental religions, including a section of Theosophical literature, in which, curiously enough, Professor Max Müller is grouped with the names so familiar to the readers of LUCIFER. We are glad to notice so excellent a catalogue, but are at a loss to understand why the 1s. Theosophical Manuals are marked at 1s. 6d., and some other works also at a higher figure than supplied by the Theosophical Publishing Society.

We have also to acknowledge the receipt of *Book-Notes*, *The Agnostic Journal*, *Light*—with an account of an extraordinary (if true) spiritualistic phenomenon, in which the legs of the medium were completely dematerialized—*The Review of Reviews*, *The Sannârâga Bodhini*, *The Irish Theosophist* and *Ourselves*.

A. M. G.