



# THE OCCULT REVIEW

EDITED BY RALPH SHIRLEY

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INDIA: THACKER AND CO., BOMBAY AND CALCUTTA;  
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VOL. XL

AUGUST 1924

No. 2

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## NOTES OF THE MONTH

THE author of *The Eternal Masquerade* has not unnaturally been set down as a cynic and iconoclast, and the fact that he has, originally through some séances which he attended in America, become a convert to the truths of spiritualism, must inevitably make many of the readers of his previous works exclaim in astonishment, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

MR. DENNIS His writing hitherto has been destructive rather  
BRADLEY. than constructive, but throughout all there has run a note of challenge as of one who cared nothing for the world's opinions, and who was prepared to accept the truth wherever he found it. One senses a temperament that is as scornful of the hypocrisies, insincerities and shams of modern life as that of Carlyle himself (whom our author ridicules but in this respect unquestionably resembles), and a type of mentality that only literal facts impress. There is nothing of the dreamer or of the recluse in Mr. Bradley's temperament. In *The Eternal Masquerade* he tells us: "Only dull people enjoy seriousness. That is their limitation. They have not the capacity to enjoy life." And his poor opinion of the popular judgment is voiced in the phrase: "To be respected sends an icy shiver down the spine," while his contempt for the proprieties is voiced in the observation: "The ushering into the world of a



beautiful and innocent new life without the preliminary mumb-ling of a parish clerk is called a woman's shame."

In the prologue to the present work\* he prefaces his story by the remark that "The philosophy of the author is not that of a cloistered ascetic produced in the solitude of dreams. It is the philosophy of a prancing puppet immersed in the effervescent swirl of a fashionable metropolis before whose eyes there suddenly appeared an immense gulf, which involved a leap into the Unknown." One feels that in spite of his pleasure-loving temperament he can never have been in reality a materialist even when he had no actual faith in the other world. "Only in the spaciousness of thought," he tells us, "can the magnificence of reality exist. Materialism is death. All those things that are visible and we imagine to be actual are transient and perishable. All that is material in conception is stillborn and abortive. This frail but devastating materialism

"TOWARDS  
THE  
STARS." has threatened to ruin all our civilization." And again (and here we get the clue to the choice of his title for the present work): "The great scheme of the universe could never have continued on a

lie or an illusion. Look towards the stars and comprehend this planet's insignificance. If one can leap beyond the gravitations of this earth then one can fly to unknown spheres of thought. . . . Truth is the poignant weapon of the gods. It is the one clean pathway to knowledge and to the discovery of lasting beauty. It is the most devastating of virtues, for it tears from the face of mankind the hypocrisies of the ages. . . . This is a book of truth."

Mr. Bradley records in the second chapter of the present work what he describes as "the most staggering event of my life." In England, he had made the acquaintance of an American lawyer, a certain Joseph de Wyckoff, who was a Russian by birth and whom the author describes as "clever, critical and shrewd." Mr. Bradley was aware that Mr. de Wyckoff was interested in spiritualism, but the subject was one which he

"THE  
MOST  
STAGGERING  
EVENT OF  
MY LIFE." himself had never studied and in which in consequence he was only mildly interested in a sceptical way. The business which had taken him to America having been satisfactorily transacted, Mr. Bradley accepted an invitation from his friend to stay at his country residence, Arlena Towers, Ramsey, N.J., at a convenient distance from New York. The suggestion

\* *Towards the Stars.* By H. Dennis Bradley. London: T. Werner Laurie, Ltd. 7s. 6d. net.



that he should attend a séance at his house was made by his friend, and Mr. Bradley acquiesced, feeling that he might derive some amusement from the experience. De Wyckoff invited George Valiantine, a medium with whom he was acquainted and in whose powers he placed reliance, to stay the week-end at Arlena Towers. Valiantine came accordingly and Mr. Bradley gives his first impressions of the visitor. "I judged him," he says, "to be a very ordinary provincial American, simple and clean in person and mind. He is not able to express himself with any fluency, and is neither well educated nor well read. I detected in him no suspicion of the crafty silence, clever evasions, or misleading effusiveness that denote the charlatan and the crook."

At the ensuing séance there were only four people present, the host, his nephew Joseph Dasher, the medium, and Mr. Bradley. Our author observes: "America is now a prohibition country, but my host's cellar had gained my appreciation. That night, however, we were served only with ice-water. I was slightly annoyed, but I appreciate the forethought now, since no one can say that my imagination had been stimulated by alcohol." As a precaution de Wyckoff placed a luminous band round each wrist of the medium so that it was possible to discern any movements he might make in the darkened room. The sitters were placed about five feet from each other and in

the centre were deposited two trumpets "aluminium things with luminous ends." Then followed some ordinary conversation and after that the singing of songs. "We had all rotten voices," says Mr. Bradley, "and mine was the worst of the lot." Nothing happened for some time, and the author, as he expresses it, was "getting bored stiff." Finally they sang hymns, to Mr. Bradley's undisguised disgust. At length, however, "without warning or premonition, the phenomenal happened."

There was a sudden acute silence, and in a flash I sensed the presence of a fifth being in the room. The soft and gentle accents of a woman's

voice broke the stillness. I was called by name, and the  
 BROTHER voice, which sounded about three feet away on my right,  
 AND was full of emotion. I maintained my ordinary calm,  
 SISTER. critical, and observant self. I was not in the slightest  
 degree affected or disturbed. In an ordinary tone I  
 answered: "Yes." My Christian name was repeated twice and there  
 was an emotional break in the voice, as if the possessor of it were over-  
 joyed at being able to greet a friend after a long journey.

H.D.B.—Yes, I'm here. What do you want to say to me?

The Voice.—Oh, I love you! I love you!

The words were charged with electrifying beauty and great tenderness.



I have heard the same phrase spoken in ordinary life and declaimed by some of the world's greatest actresses, but never have I heard it expressed with more tender feeling.

My mind travelled back, searching the past to recall the memory of one who might have loved me. I could find no clue.

H.D.B.—Will you please tell me who you are—your name?

The Voice.—Annie.

Then I understood all. But with that scepticism which is natural when one gets in touch with the inexplicable, I asked for the full name.

The Voice.—I am Annie, your sister.

Then we talked, not in whispers, but in clear, audible tones, and the notes of our voices were pitched as if we might have been speaking on earth. And that which we said to each other were things of wondrous joy.

Every word was heard by the other three men in the room. None, I am sure, knew anything of my family affairs and *could* not know that I had a sister who had died ten years ago.

It appears that between Mr. Bradley and his sister, Annie, there had been a peculiar sympathy which he did not share with any other member of the family. She was a few years older than himself, well read, and possessed of an intellect which, he observes, "developed too quickly to be appreciated by fools." "Her voice on earth was soft and beautifully modulated, and her elocution in public was distinguished. In conversation she was a purist in the choice of words." "I have never met any woman who spoke in the same odd way. When she addressed me after ten years of silence, she said things in her own characteristic manner. Every syllable was perfectly enunciated, and every little peculiarity of intonation was reproduced. We talked for fifteen minutes, and about such subjects as only she and I could have known."

It is communications of this kind, as has been observed elsewhere, which bring conviction home to the mind of the person concerned, far more effectively than even the most stringent tests that can be devised by the scientific investigator. The conviction is a personal one, and may not influence the outside world, but after all each investigator demands primarily to know the truth for himself by direct personal evidence, and the most satisfactory proof for the individual is never the most convincing for the world at large. Throughout our talk," says Mr. Bradley, "the note of gladness was uppermost. The grateful gladness of eternity, the magnificent laughter of survival, the knowledge of the dawn of the inconceivable. Before she went, I asked her if she would come back and talk on the following night. She promised that she would.

THE  
MOST  
CONVINCING  
EVIDENCE  
FOR THE  
INDIVIDUAL.



We had just said good night to each other, and an audible kiss was heard as she went away." Of his own mental attitude at the time, he observes: "Doubt took flight when faced by an unchallengeable fact and the mind understood in a flash that what had hitherto appeared to be impossible was possible." Of his previous attitude he observes: "Living through the years of the most devastating and iniquitous war in the history of the world, and watching the effects of an equally devastating and revengeful peace, I saw no reason for man's eternal existence. Civilization had become a mockery, and humanity a misnomer. This was my mentality at Arlena Towers on that evening in June."

After this other spirits conversed with those present, the voices coming from various parts of the room, sometimes from close to the ceiling or from an extreme top corner of the room. "If one discussed the question on the basis of ventriloquism [says Mr. Bradley], one would be compelled to take Valiantine as the greatest mimic and the greatest audible actor that the world has seen, for there were that night six distinct types of voices each with dissimilar notes, cadences, and inflections. But this theory of ventriloquism is smashed by the fact that Valiantine spoke simultaneously with the spirit voices."

Records of séances with other mediums fill a large space in Mr. Bradley's book. Where it is a case of communications with those recently passed over, and they can offer by their ways, voice, manner, and recollections of personal incidents, conclusive proof of their identity, a feeling of certainty arises which is by no means the case when the communicator alleges, like Mrs. Travers Smith's control, Johannes, that he passed over to the other side some two thousand years ago, and gives particulars of his earthly career which there is no possible means of verifying. Here we seem to be very much in the same position as we are with

THE  
PROBLEM  
OF  
CONTROLS.

regard to Joan of Arc's "controls," St. Michael, St. Catherine, and St. Margaret. In such cases one is always inclined to suspect the assumption of a rôle or part. Johannes at least has not the boastful arrogance of some controls which to my mind at once puts them out of court. He answers questions courteously, perhaps almost too courteously at times, and has his own philosophy of life and theory of the universe for whatever that is worth. One is rather inclined to speculate what he has been about all these two thousand years roaming apparently in the confines of this very unimportant planet. One wonders why he has not got "forrarder"; for he has his own theory about



the progress of the soul of man, and is, in fact, a new brand of reincarnationist. Mr. Bradley puts the question to him: "Are any human beings reincarnated on earth, and if so, is there ever in a man's existence a moment when the possibility of his former reincarnations are brought to his mind consciously or subconsciously in a definite form?" "Surely," Johannes replies, "you know that you are not ever to come here again, and you were never here before, but your friends, those who are very dear to you, are old acquaintances and you cannot get away from them even in your further states. You have been in many places, some of them more interesting than the world you are in now, and you will pass on to many more. . . . You will pass on from here to a new star, one of the blue stars that are younger than the world you are in. . . . But back to the old earth you do not go again. You are there once and never more, but of course there is reincarnation in a sense. You might have to go back in a more material body if you were foolish enough."

This dance from planet to planet is surely an Eternal Masquerade with a vengeance. It is reasonable enough to suppose that we pass on from this earth in due course to better and higher planets, but on what grounds are we to base the assumption that we come to this particular planet once only and never again? At least it is hardly a plausible hypothesis and at the very best can scarcely be held to meet all cases.

A CHAOTIC  
THEORY  
OF REIN-  
CARNATION.

How about those who die as infants? What can they have been supposed to have gained by their sojourn on earth, unless it be just to be able to say that they have been there? If the earth life is of use at all it is of use as an experience and this experience is surely hardly to be gained in one incarnation, however long, much less in one that may perhaps only last a few days or weeks. And why again should Johannes say to Mr. Bradley: "Surely you know that you are never to come here again, and that you were never here before." Surely Mr. Bradley knows nothing of the kind, and Johannes, on his part, unquestionably ought to realize the fact. Surely evolution begins at the beginning, and we are what we have made ourselves in countless past lives, wherever these lives may have been spent. From the philosophical point of view there is as great an interest in a man's past as in his future. Johannes does not speak very clearly about the origin of the ego, and we are left in doubt as to whether he actually believes in evolution from the lowest to the highest. "When you are born," he says, "you are made of three parts, one is your body. This



is really only a cloak which is cast around you to protect the precious part of your personality. Then you have another covering for your spirit. This is what is called soul or mind."

Johannes apparently does not mean to suggest that when you are born you first come into existence, as this statement is contradictory to that made by him in the observations I have previously quoted. But he is not at all clear on the point, and what he says at one time can hardly be dovetailed with what he says at another. For on p. 284 he observes: "Can you imagine a tiny soul imbued with a small portion of life force? When you

INCON-  
SISTENT  
STATEMENTS  
OF  
JOHANNES.

come over here you have gone such a short distance that you are not much more than a tiny cell and your work is to expand yourself, to build up a spirit which will become more intuitive as you pass on." But previously he told Mr. Bradley: "You have been in many places, some of them more interesting than the world you are in now." What! as a tiny cell? Johannes, in short, writes as if he had not really any definite cosmic philosophy at all, and though he can talk ingeniously round the subject, he obviously has not thought matters out in any coherent manner.\* I must apologize if I seem to be picking to pieces the philosophy of so venerable an old gentleman, but I confess that his ideas seem to me hardly to bear critical investigation and analysis.

Apparently (according to Johannes) the period during which the soul continues wearing its covering after the body has been cast off, is a very long one. "Far longer," says Johannes, "than your earth life, and during that time you have many experiences in passing from one sphere to another, and from one plane to another." Finally comes the time when experience is sufficient, and the ego casts off its soul and enters into the spirit "which is mere intuition." "This," says Johannes, "is a rest and peace incomparable with anything you can imagine." If this is the scheme of things it is not quite clear where that doctrine of reincarnation comes in, the truth of which elsewhere Johannes seems to admit.

Then comes the problem of the body. The expressions used on this matter seem rather contradictory, but apparently Johannes is not willing to speak of "the covering of the soul" as a body at all. "After death," he tells us, "you pass to one of the lower spheres for a time, where you become accustomed to that new

\* For a curious sidelight on this tendency, see some observations of Mr. Ernest Hunt at the end of his article in the present number.



state in which you have no body. You do not need physical nourishment any more, but you do need shelter and care, and these are provided for you." This point seems to be made clearer

THE  
SPIRITUAL  
BODY. by other references, as Johannes speaks of the soul having its own form, and obviously if it has a form it must have a body, as without a body it would be formless, and Johannes specifically denies this. "You ask," he says, "about clothes and appearance. Some stupid people believe that the soul is a fluid, that it has no shape and streams about. That is absurd. Every soul has its own form. It has formed itself during the earth life, and it comes to us as it made itself." Here again one may query: Is it not a fact that the soul's form was made by it long before this present earth life, in countless previous existences? Then again as regards clothes: "We seem," says Johannes, "to each other to be men and women as you are, and as to our garments, we do wear garments which convey the same impression as yours. They are merely veils for the mental part, but you need not believe that when you pass on you live so differently as you expect. These garments are not made in the market as yours are, they really proceed largely from the idea of the individual."

One curious passage in the course of Johannes's description of the other life recalls quite startlingly a similar passage in *The Dreams of Orlow*, where the dreamer passes on to the astral plane and records the intensification of her sensations as compared with those she experienced in her normal waking life. The passages are so strikingly similar that they really deserve to be placed in juxtaposition. I have, however, quoted the one from *The Dreams of Orlow* before, and doubtless many of my readers will recall it. Had anyone present at this séance, I wonder, ever read the book in question?

Your senses, [says Johannes], after you pass over are intensified, and you must gently grow accustomed to your new state. Eyesight is more vivid . . . you see colours in a manner which is impossible on earth. . . . Hearing in the same way becomes intensified. You can hear the movement of your own sphere as it were and music becomes a new sensation. So many different tones are added. Even the sound of growth comes up towards you unconsciously perhaps, but if you listen you can hear it. Touch, too, is more delicate. Your finger tips are more serviceable to you in life than you have any idea of, but here your touch, which seems to you to be a mere physical attribute, is so delicate that it almost conveys mental ideas to you without the help of the actual mind. This intensification of the senses is your first impression, and it gives a sense of intoxicating delight after the first shock.



The idea here enunciated is certainly a very interesting one, and all the more so if we are justified in accepting the trance dreams of Orlow as corroborative evidence. It would be easy to criticize certain other of Johannes's views and opinions, notably the statement which he makes that suicide is worse

than murder. Surely this could hardly be argued in the case of someone struck down by an incurable illness. We consider we are justified in putting animals to death when their life has become a misery to them through old age or otherwise. Can we really argue that a man who shortens his life by a few months and thus saves his friends and relatives much needless suffering and anxiety is actually worse than a murderer? Surely it is impossible to take such a view seriously, however difficult it may be to justify suicide in the vast majority of cases.

I confess I regard with the most profound suspicion these professional "controls" whose business it appears to be to boss the show at every séance. How far are they necessary, I wonder? Mr. Bradley got in touch with his sister without the aid of any such intervention, merely through the presence of the medium. If such entities are required I prefer Mrs. Osborne Leonard's Feda, a trixy spirit who makes no pretence to philosophical acumen, and does not preach to us of the mysteries of the cosmos only to leave us in the end utterly unconvinced.

If, however, there is much to criticize in Johannes's observations, I certainly sympathize with him in the bewildering questions which were sometimes put to him to solve. Mr. Bradley received three of these from people whom he describes as "men of international reputation." One wanted to know "the point of interaction between the principles of unity and variation"; another "whether the universe was like a clock running down, which would eventually cease to go through the equipartition of energy"; and the third why the Tower of London which should be the place par excellence of historical ghosts, was, as a matter of fact, not haunted? If Johannes had exclaimed

SOME POSERS FOR JOHANNES. in ribald tones, "Now you flummux me!" or "Ask me another!" he would have certainly been well within his rights. Instead, he laboriously attempts to solve the insoluble, even going so far as to try and explain why the Tower of London is not haunted, whereas of course everyone knows perfectly well that it is one of the worst haunted spots in the Metropolis. Rather surprisingly Johannes pours the vials of his contempt upon the inquirer who



asks whether the universe is like a clock running down, observing that the question " indicates a very finite and limited intelligence," though why it should do so, seems rather difficult to discover. Surely the hypothesis is at least a tenable one. Johannes himself admits that the universe had a beginning, and if this is the case, it does not seem very absurd to assume that it must also have an end.

The main point to which Mr. Bradley draws attention with regard to these communications is that the answers to profound philosophical problems " came instantaneously, without a second's pause, and with easy fluency." Is it permissible to suggest that if Johannes had taken a little more time to consider his replies, his answers might have been rather more pertinent ?

One does not know quite how to place these entities with Greek, Latin, or Egyptian names that preside at séances. Annie, Mr. Bradley's sister, rings true. She gives evidence of her identity, and it is difficult to regard her as being anything but what she purports to be. So also in the case of Oscar Wilde. Though much ink has been spilt in this case for and against, the dispassionate critic cannot help feeling that he is the same individual who played such a dramatic part in earth life. His way of writing and speaking, his mental attitude, are the same, with only such difference as might be accounted for by his transference to another plane. I entirely agree with my correspondent in this issue, who draws attention to the fact that

CREATURES  
OF THE  
ASTRAL  
PLANE.

the Oscar Wilde of the "Ballad of Reading Gaol" was only a temporary and passing phase, and that he subsequently reverted to the old Oscar Wilde so familiar to the world. To suppose, therefore, that the passing mood resulting from his condemnation and incarceration was of a permanent character and continued after death, is to assume a spiritual conversion in his case which had no actual basis in fact. But with people like Johannes the matter is very different. We cannot, it seems to me, accept them at their face value, though Mr. Bradley appears to do so. He is, however, a recent experimenter in this direction, and may very possibly come to have second thoughts. I doubt if Mrs. Travers Smith herself accepts Johannes's story with any strong conviction.

What impresses one most about Mr. Bradley's book is its extraordinary candour. The author, in fact, is so outspoken in his opinions that he is bound to give offence in more quarters than one. Not that I suppose for a moment that this will trouble



him in the very least. Mr. Bradley was exceptionally fortunate in his first séance. He records others in the course of his narrative that were by no means equally successful, and one might well hazard the opinion that if one of these had been his first experience

of the kind it is quite probable it would have been his last. The way of the investigator of such phenomena is by no means always a smooth one, and, as Mr. Bradley well says, the number of really competent mediums now available in either hemisphere is extremely small, and, as we all know, even the best of them fail at times, owing to unfavourable conditions. Even Valiantine became suspect at one time by his patron, as it appears to me, without adequate justification. To expect a medium to be able to exercise his full psychic powers in the face of scepticism and open charges of fraud is surely the height of folly. Among the requisite qualifications of a medium cannot be included that of being thick skinned, but this fact does not seem to have permeated the brain of the sceptical investigator. Inhibition of power is the necessary consequence of an atmosphere of suspicion in the case of a susceptible and ultra-sensitive temperament. Is it not rather curious that anyone could suppose that it could possibly be otherwise?

I regret to have to record the passing away of Dr. Gustave Geley, the well-known psychic investigator, whose monumental work *From the Unconscious to the Conscious* I reviewed at length in my Notes of the Month a year or two ago. He was one of the victims of modern aviation, and met his death through the crashing of a Spad aeroplane on its journey from Warsaw to Paris. Dr. Geley had been, before the war, a medical practitioner at Annecy, and had long been interested

in psychological studies. During the war he came to Paris and there associated himself with the leaders of the psychic movement. His painstaking investigation of the phenomena connected with ectoplasm is well-known to all my readers. Besides the book alluded to above he was the author of *L'Etre Subconscient* and *L'Ectoplasme et la Clairvoyance*. Dr. Geley leaves a widow and two daughters, one of whom is the wife of Professor Leclainche, of the French Academy of Science. His invaluable aid and philosophical intellect will be greatly missed by the advance guard of psychical investigators, among whom he was one of the boldest, ablest, and most level-headed.



## THE INFLUENCE OF TOHUNGAISM ON THE MAORIS

By HORACE LEAF

THE belief that certain individuals have a kind of supernatural quality appears to be as old as the human race ; even people who boast of their "rationalism" are subject to it, for they often speak in terms of adoration of those whom they regard as their masters in thought. Among religious people the belief is unusually strong, and they will often positively aver that some saintly person to whom they attach great importance is divinely inspired owing, apparently, to their belief that he possesses some special qualification denied to ordinary men and women. With the great founders of religious systems the possession of this peculiar psychic or spiritual virtue is regarded as having been particularly powerful. I once was informed by a staunch Mohammedan that Mohammed was not as other men, otherwise Allah could not have communicated directly with him. So difficult is it to overcome the idea of the existence of this remarkable quality that I discovered during a long and interesting conversation with a highly educated Singhalese of Colombo, a "modernist" in Buddhism, that he held a similar idea in regard to Gautama Siddartha.

Many Christians undoubtedly believe likewise about some of the principal characters of their faith, especially the Roman Catholics in regard to the Virgin Mary. If we knew the histories of defunct religions we should no doubt find that the same point of view was maintained by them, and so on into the "dim and distant past"; an opinion well supported by a study of the religious beliefs of modern primitive races, who are regarded as exhibiting stages of culture through which civilized peoples have passed in their upward trend. I could not help noticing this when studying the Maoris who, notwithstanding the influence of the white man and of Christianity among them, still remember with religious fervour the great rangatiras and tohungas whose powerful "mana" made their tribes great; and who, by their ability to intercede with the atua, or gods, on behalf of the people, brought them health and prosperity. Maori



rangatiras, or chieftains, were usually also tohungas, or priests, and from them has been derived the name of their religion—Tohungaism. Essentially Spiritualistic in nature, Tohungaism not only made psychic phenomena common knowledge among the Maoris, but also included a good deal of belief in magic, black and white. From the popular Western point of view it therefore contained all the elements of evil. It is interesting to know what effect it had upon the people who so rigorously embraced it.

The Maoris are a rapidly declining race who, in common with other primitive people, have carefully cultivated the habit of hiding many of their most precious religious beliefs from the white man, while pretending to embrace those acceptable to the much admired stranger. It is unfortunate for the comparative religionist that they began to do this almost as soon as the pakeha, or white man, arrived among them, especially as those who undertook the arduous task of opening up new colonies were hardly of the order to merit imitation in matters of philosophical and religious ideas. It would have been much better if their appeal to the natives had been restricted to their economic and industrial superiority; but these merely became part of a foundation on which more drastic changes were to take place, not because the white man was mentally superior to the savage, for in this case the savage was in some respects superior to the white man. It is well known that in the schools and universities of New Zealand the coloured scholar can more than hold his own in open competition with white ones, a fact which I have noticed the New Zealanders mention with pride.

This opinion has not been formed hastily, but is based on long experience and observation. The testimony in favour of it, made to me in 1922 by a New Zealand educational authority, is little more than an echo of what was said by Christian missionaries nearly a century ago, and missionaries seldom overpraise the mentality of the heathen. They have, nevertheless, always felt obliged to speak favourably of the high intelligence and general good manners of the Maoris. At an early date the Maori boys in missionary schools were educated up to the matriculation standard of the New Zealand University, and were particularly quick at mental arithmetic, "coming out with the answer almost before the interrogator himself knows what it is." Mental arithmetic is regarded as an excellent test of the intelligence of children. Maori scholars, because of their greater sensitiveness, are more readily affected by the disposition of the teacher, more easily



won by kindness and patience, and less amenable to coercion than are white children. The matron of a large institute for girls declared: "The Maoris give less trouble than the English; I would fifty times rather have them to teach and manage. They are more refined than the English of the same class, who are often low and coarse in their thoughts and ways."

A natural refinement characterizes the whole race, as I have myself noticed, and its influence has not been without beneficial effect on the settlers, especially in the early days, when some, alas, were sent straight from English prisons to this land of promise. Needless to say, they were often guilty of breaches of tact and good faith and feeling towards the natives. The contrast in the conduct of the pakehas and the natives gave rise to the saying: "The English are savage gentlemen, and the Maoris are gentlemanly savages!" There were, of course, good Englishmen as well as bad ones. The Maoris were quick to discern this and polite in acknowledging it. When a set of worthless fellows arrived at a township, the Maoris, realizing the difficult position in which it placed the old settlers whom they had grown to respect, helped them out by asserting that the newcomers were evidently members of another tribe!

The noble qualities of the Maoris long ago won for them the appellation, "the boldest and most intelligent race of savages the world has ever seen." It is necessary to keep this in mind when studying their religious beliefs, as the tendency of people who have never been among primitive races is to regard them as naturally inferior to the civilized, and, in consequence, whenever they differ from the white man necessarily in error. The notion springs from a natural conceit and is based upon the assumption that the white races know everything that has yet been discovered, and that the progress of civilization has always been accompanied by gain and never by loss. The truth is that civilization has resulted more in a remarkable mastery of matter than of pure ideas and spiritual knowledge, and in the process of attaining scientific efficiency a good deal that was of psychical significance has been lost. It is precisely in this department that we may expect to find primitive races superior to ourselves; and we may expect them to lose their knowledge as they adopt civilized ways and consequently weaken in the sense of importance they originally attached to spiritual things. Now that Psychic Science has grown so strong we shall doubtless approach the study of primitive religious beliefs in a more sympathetic and appreciative spirit, although we shall need to hurry if we



are to save the best of the native religious ideas of the Maoris, owing to the rapid decrease of the race and the effect of the impact of civilized ideas. The change of beliefs consequent on this is not altogether good, and has weakened the moral sense of the people by causing them to lose faith in certain native religious practices. This is particularly true in regard to the remarkable beliefs in tapu and mana, at one time the two main mystical pillars supporting their primitive culture ; and now that these have been largely overthrown, nothing effective has been found to fill their places. The loss of tapu has not been accompanied with a loss of belief in its power, and, as a result, the renunciation of so essential a spiritual energy has degraded the Maoris in their own estimation, and is eating like a subtle poison into their minds, weakening their self-confidence and killing them by sheer suggestion. The same may be said of the mysterious power known as mana, a strange psychic force linking the possessor up with the spirit-world, giving him magical power and social and religious standing on earth.

The bad effect that the loss of primitive beliefs and practices had upon the Maoris was soon apparent, and after a few years produced a much inferior race. J. H. Kerry-Nicholls, the famous explorer who penetrated the forbidden King Country of the North Island, in 1882, noticed these signs of degeneration even then. He found among the Maoris some of the finest specimens of mankind, but they were nearly all of the older school. The change of religious beliefs, accompanied by an inevitable change of life, had brought about a considerable alteration for the worse among the rising population ; and, although during his journey he had met and conversed with many tattooed warriors, all embracing Tohungaism, it was clear to him that this splendid type of savage would become a matter of the past as a change of ideas took place. " It is," he says, " a notable fact that many of the old chiefs and elders of the tribes, with their well-defined tattooed features, and splendid physique, have the stamp of the ' noble savage ' in all his manliness depicted in every line of their body, while many of them preserve that calm, dignified air characteristic of primitive races in all parts of the world." This must be attributed in large part to the influence of Tohungaism upon them, for the old Maori was exceedingly religious. It is notable that degeneration set in as soon as they began to lose grip of their Tohungaistic practices. Christianity has never been able entirely to destroy this belief, but has resulted in a curious mixture in which the most vigorous part of the old



faith flourishes in a new garb and under a new name, while some of the more powerful magical practices still secretly hold sway. The term magical is used here only in deference to the customary phraseology of the orthodox comparative religionist, who is often lamentably ignorant of the reality of psychic phenomena. Magic among the Maoris corresponds indeed to supernormal manifestations among psychical researchers and spiritualists, for the Maoris are well acquainted with most branches of psychic science.

The arrival of the sceptical white man in New Zealand is thought by the Maoris to have had a curious effect on the native plants and animals, as well as on human beings. Pehi, a great Maori chief, declared to Nicholls that before the colonists came the Maoris were a strong and healthy people. When the pakeha arrived everything began to die away. "Formerly, when we went into a forest and stood under a tree, we could not hear ourselves speak for the noise of the birds; every tree was full of them. Then we had pigeons and everything in plenty; now many of the birds have died out. A few years ago there was a big green parrot in these forests; now it is gone, and lots of other things have gradually faded away. In those times the fields were well tilled, and there was always plenty of provisions, and we wore few clothes, only our own mats of feathers. Then the missionaries came and took our children from the fields, and taught them to sing hymns; they changed their minds, and the fields were untilled. The children came home and quoted the gospel on empty stomachs."

The significance of all this lies deep. The Maori would attribute the disappearance of these natural objects to the baneful psychic influence of the white man, whose uncongenial presence would offend the mauri-ora, or sacred life principle, of the animals and flowers, and so endanger their welfare. Mauri-ora is a protective power or quality, but if defiled in any way its protective potency would cease until restored by means of ceremonial placation of the god or gods in whose particular care the object is, and without which it cannot live in this world. In the case of man this ceremonial act could be performed by a qualified tohunga, but plants and animals cannot appeal to external agents, and so are dependent upon the kind of person or influences which may reside in their environment.

It seems that so long as Maoris were the only humans who dwelt among them they were perfectly safe, for the Maoris understood and were acceptable to the atua and presiding spirits



whose task it was to watch over the welfare of these lower forms of life. Not so the unbelieving, materialistic white man, who has always been considered by the Tohungaists as outside the pale. There were, therefore, only two things that could be done. The objects affected had either to go elsewhere or die out. The idea is similar to that often related of nature spirits who, finding it impossible to dwell in the presence of unsympathetic human beings, are said to seek new abodes. The inevitable consequence of hara—that is, the disregard of some law of tapu—is the withdrawal of the influence of the protecting genius, and consequent loss of virtue of that person's or thing's mauri-ora, for the gods are its strength and mainstay. So effective is this that even mankind cannot escape it, and Maoris believe this to be the cause of the gradual dying out of their people.

Their chief act of hara was the embracing of Christianity, a most appalling infringement of tapu, for it implied the denial of their atua and the seeking of other protective powers. Here the force of suggestion comes in, for while the Maori renounced his old protective influences in whom he had the greatest confidence, he endeavoured to embrace another about which he knew little and believed less. It is perhaps impossible for us to realize the enormous influence these beliefs have upon the sensitive Maori even to this day. It is this that some authorities regard as being the primary cause of the dying out of these fine people. The sense of loss of spiritual grace and virtue has undermined and weakened their national power of resistance. Referring to this, Elsdon Best says: "The knowledge that their mauri-ora is defiled has had a serious effect on the Maori's outlook on life, and also on his general welfare. He feels that he has lost caste, and that he has become a common, graceless being, like unto the slaves of old, and that he will never regain his old-time physical, intellectual, and spiritual vigour. This conviction and his racial fatalism are responsible for the dejected attitude of the Maori to-day."

It is not difficult therefore to realize why the old Maori chief-tain attributed the disappearance of birds and other things to the presence of the white man, for everything is conceived of as having mauri-ora—the sky, sun, moon, stars, seasons, wind, rain, mist, winter, summer, day, night, trees, stones, animals, humans and all other things.

There can be no serious doubt that the unadulterated native religious beliefs had a much better effect on the Maoris than the confused mixture of Tohungaism and Christianity that they



now hold, for I have seen sufficient to know that they are, on the whole, only nominally Christian. The rules governing tapu were often very inconvenient and carried beyond what reason would seem to dictate, but a careful study reveals it to have been a wonderful inspiration to such conduct as the tribal life required for its healthy continuance. So long as tapu ruled there was no need for a police force. It was sufficient to enable the chiefs and tohungas to maintain that control over the members of the community that is always necessary where a large number of people are bound together in a common cause. It gave prestige to the leaders, and made their word more powerful than any written law could have done among a savage people. It made men strong in spirit and gave them such courage as is still the wonder of those who know what a Maori man, woman, or child would have unhesitatingly faced in the interests of his clan, because behind tapu he felt the spirits of his departed ancestors working, and the greater spirits in whose hands was the destiny of every human being.

The Maori War proved the heathen to be a noble, courageous, clever foe, able to hold his own against the pakeha who was much better armed than he. It is one of the finest testimonies to the innate nobility of the Anglo-Saxon race that they are ready to admit the worthiness of a brave enemy and to live with him on terms of sincere friendship when peace has been established. During my sojourn in New Zealand I came across numerous proofs of the readiness with which the New Zealander acknowledged the fine spirit and great fairness that characterized the Maori during that protracted war. The celebrated battle of Gate Pa in which five hundred natives, armed only with the rifle and tomahawk, out-manceuvred and defeated two English regiments of infantry and a body of marines numbering four thousand men all told, is a striking example of Maori courage and prowess; while the shattered remains of their various strongholds, scattered over the country, still call forth expressions of admiration at the skilfulness with which they were devised. The Maori is equally keen in his admiration for his pakeha friends, although he had reason to question the justice of the methods he adopted during the strife.

The old Tohungaist was undoubtedly a more energetic person than his modern half-Christianized descendant, who inclines to indolence in a degree that must be much to his disadvantage. This also speaks well for the Tohungaist's faith in the tribal and family spirits whom he ventured to consult when in need of



special advice, and in whom he felt his own best interests and that of his tribes to rest. The old Maori was a forceful man, full of the joy of living and so optimistic as to count no task too hard or unimportant that he felt was necessary and agreeable to the atua. That he flourished on it is shown by the testimonies that have been given about him from the earliest association of Europeans with his race. Captain Cook was much struck with their fine appearance and wonderful healthiness, and if they were too much given to warlike deeds, we must remember that in warfare the European has for centuries been able to kill in a single day more than these savages with their primitive weapons could kill in a lifetime. In the old days white people when travelling with Maoris commented upon their tirelessness and good spirits. So good natured were they that nothing seemed to disconcert them. When impediments to travel presented themselves, the bigger the difficulties to overcome, the more ardent were they to surmount them. When crossing swollen rivers, if one got a bigger ducking than the rest, they would laugh and joke at the ill-luck of their comrade, while he in his turn would enjoy the amusement as much as anybody. On one occasion, when Nicholls was travelling with a party of Maoris, the saddle-girth of one of the horses broke, and the saddle slipped aside, causing the rider to fall heavily and roll down a muddy bank. This brought roars of laughter from his companions, who told him not to mind himself, but that it was a pity to spoil a good horse by letting it know how easy it was to cause a man to fall off its back. So attracted was Nicholls by what he saw of these primitive people during his daring penetration of their country that he concluded they were unsurpassed for high spirits and geniality. He "always found the natives to be expert and fearless horsemen, and I believe that a cavalry regiment of well-trained and well-mounted Maoris, for both courage and endurance, and *élan*, would form one of the finest bodies of troops ever marshalled on a parade-ground or a battle-field."

Their power of endurance was much greater in Nicholls' time than in ours, when, owing to their weakened resistance, disease makes easy inroads among them, and consumption claims a vast number of victims. Nicholls comments on the fact that in his time they were able to stand remarkable variations of temperature without experiencing discomfort. One night they would be sleeping in a wharepuni, or sleeping-house, with the thermometer at over 100 degrees, and the next night they would not hesitate to lie down on the damp ground with only a blanket



over them, and the thermometer at several degrees below freezing-point, and they seemed to enjoy it. Pakehas soon learnt to appreciate Maori stoicism and realized that to win their respect they must not lose their temper, as to do so simply resulted in the Maori saying contemptuously, "He is only a child; he is angry." This stoicism might easily be mistaken for insolence, but underlying it is often a keen sense of humour. On one occasion some natives went to a missionary in Waikato and said solemnly: "We want four horses from you because of the four bad pakehas [literally, strangers, but usually signifying white men] whom you have introduced here."

"What pakehas do you mean?"

"The acacia, the sorrel, the sweetbriar, and the dock."

"Well," replied the missionary slyly, "I will give you four horses for the four bad pakehas, if you will give me a horse for each of the good pakehas—oats, potato, corn, etc."

"Oh, it's no good talking to *him*," said the natives; and I have no doubt that they walked away with a merry twinkle in their eyes and a keen appreciation of the humour and shrewdness of the godly man, although the incident has found its way into a missionary book as an example of "unblushing insolence."

The Maoris are a strictly honest race, excepting when perverted by European influence. The missionaries and early settlers were impressed with this trait from the first. It is seldom one reads of cases of thieving in the early records of these people, excluding the curious practice of "stripping," which was an honoured custom and universally in operation among them. The person to be thus "robbed" of all his possessions was actually informed of the day and hour on which this curious act would be carried out, and would prepare a feast for the marauders, whom he welcomed as friends doing under the circumstances what he would have done, and what he doubtless hoped he might soon be able to do to another unfortunate. This custom has often been spoken of as "stealing," especially by the white settlers who suffered from it without at first understanding that it was a native custom. It is well that the pakeha succeeded in resisting and finally destroying the practice, although the motives of the natives were quite good. I can only remember having read of one detailed case of actual thieving by a Maori, and that was so amusing that I venture to recount it here.

Mrs. Williams, the wife of Archdeacon Williams, a famous missionary, was sitting quietly in her house one day, when she was astonished at seeing a blanket slowly departing from off the



bed and disappear through the window. Looking for the cause of this mysterious happening, she discovered a piece of string attached to the end of the blanket. She did not at the moment let the thief know that he had been seen ; but her husband had no difficulty in getting the article returned the next day. As this incident occurred in Wellington at a time when Europeans greatly outnumbered the natives, it is safe to attribute it to the evil influence of the white man !

A system of religious belief that can give rise to and nurture characteristics such as the old Tohungaists were noted for cannot have been altogether bad, especially if, in addition, it sustained its devotees in misfortune and consoled them in death. That Tohungaism did this cannot be doubted, for Maoris treated death with contempt and often unhesitatingly sought it for simple and sentimental reasons. They never felt the death of their relatives and friends with anything like the keenness that the Christian does, probably because they never believed in hell. When the missionaries got among them and disseminated this unpleasant notion the Maoris began to view the departure of their loved ones in a somewhat different light ; but even in this matter their natural common sense and excellent belief in divine justice appears to have more than held its own among those who embraced the new faith. Their fearlessness in the face of death was largely due to their conviction that it merely meant the separation of the atua, or spirit, from the physical body, a phenomenon which they believed might even occur in a temporary way during the life of a person. Nor did death mean that the departed would be permanently cut off from earth and their earthly friends. The atua could, they believed, revisit his old haunts, and mingle with his earthly friends if he so desired.

One needs to be clear upon this point of mourning the dead as the Maoris have a practice known as tangi which appears to belie what I have said. Primitive customs are curious things, and to a casual observer may be very misleading. Tangi, or lamenting the dead, is still universally practised among the Maoris and shows little or no sign of diminishing when they are in their native villages. It is merely a conventional way of expressing respect for the dead and sympathy for the relations, and it is more for the latter purpose than for the former. I witnessed one of these weird performances at the great Hui held at Tuahiwi, in the South Island, in 1922, on the day that Ratana, the wonderful Maori healer, arrived to take part in the proceedings of this intertribal convention. The tangi was executed in memory of a



Maori Member of Parliament who had died eight months before, and a luckless individual who had taken his life about four weeks previously. The preparation for the event was very deliberate and well staged. The women selected for the task were South Islanders, who loosened their long black hair, letting it fall in waves over their shoulders and down their backs. Some squatted in true Maori fashion cross-legged on the ground, others stood up, the remainder of the company not actually employed in the act of mourning retiring a short distance off, and standing in respectful silence. Then suddenly a most heartrending and unearthly wail rent the air, prolonged and dismal, rising and falling, and capable of being heard a great distance off, where it must have sounded like the sighing of the wind in a storm. The women rocked themselves to and fro, tore their hair, beat their breasts, and gradually worked themselves up into a great frenzy, tears pouring down their cheeks. Then all would cease for a moment while a Maori woman of the North Island, standing some distance away, made reply, mournfully recounting the virtues of the dead men ; whereupon the tangi would be renewed with all the previous vigour. The entire period occupied by this extraordinary rite was about fifteen minutes.

A tangi naturally produces a peculiar psychological effect and inclines to arouse powerful emotions in the most phlegmatic mind, while the sentimental soul is deeply stirred. This makes tangi very deceiving, especially when the copious flow of tears it produces from those actually participating in it is seen, but the nature of the Maori not understood. One of the strange features about these people is their capacity to cause tears to flow to order. They are, however, little more than "crocodile" tears. This will be better realized when it is remembered that those who take part in the practice may never have seen or known the deceased person, yet they will weep and wail with all the ardour of the nearest relatives. They will repeat a tangi for the same person with great frequency, and on each occasion with an equal demonstration of sorrow. This often becomes a considerable source of annoyance to white people who are often tangi-ed over. When Mrs. Basil Taylor lost her husband, who was much esteemed by the natives, every time she went out of doors a group of Maoris would lay hold of her and tangi for half an hour or more. Even at home she could not escape this token of respect for her departed spouse, as every morning some of the natives would come to the house and wail over her, no matter how busy she might be. She was obliged to tolerate



this infliction and hindrance, as to have done otherwise would have offended the tender-minded, well-meaning Maoris, who thought that their expressions of respect were acceptable by her and the atua of her husband. She was really fortunate in having escaped with only a few months of this unintentional torture, for it is still customary to keep it up for about twelve months. In the case of chieftains and priests it may be prolonged for four years ; and on the last occasion the tears and cries may be even more conspicuous than on the first. Under these circumstances it is clear that the practice of tangi is more a sign of respect for the friends of the dead than of sorrow for the departed.

A few brief remarks may be made here about the mysterious power known as mana, a special kind of virtue or psychic force that is still believed by the Maoris to have been the prerogative of chieftains, priests, and high priests of Tohungaism. To possess it was to be a holy man, superior to ordinary mortals, and near in spiritual condition to the atua, or gods, of the higher order. When Tawhiao was elected supreme monarch over the King Country by the agreement of the chiefs of several tribes, he was regarded as having a particularly strong mana, and consequently able to do no wrong ; and although he was a very intelligent, capable and well-meaning man, he appears to have thought this fiction justified. The attitude of his followers towards him was analogous to that of the Roman Catholics towards the Pope, and for much the same reason. His followers believed that at the back of all his decisions and actions were the atua of the tribes, spirits who were exerting all their power to see that the race was preserved and that justice should be done them by the white invader. So strong was this notion that it resulted in hindering the union of the two races for several years. The Maoris believed that his mana was so powerful that he could make no mistake, being under the direct inspiration of the tribal gods, whose mouthpiece they regarded him as being. Tawhiao and his guiding spirits appear to have warranted the respect they received, for troublesome as were the king's decisions to the British Government, they were of great benefit to the Maoris, whose interests were thoroughly well looked after, and to-day they are still reaping the results of his activities.

The whole of the Maori chiefs who elected Tawhiao to his exalted position were typical of those who were supposed to have good mana. They showed unremitting confidence in the existence of the power in their deportment and general manner. It is said to have ennobled their bodies, beautified their counten-



ances, and modified their speech to that remarkable degree of impressiveness that so often compelled the white men who had occasion to negotiate with them on matters of political and commercial importance to admit that they were in touch with a superior kind of people. The Maoris called forth the sincere admiration and deep respect of Her Majesty's representatives, who usually did all they could to see that the natives had fair treatment. Whether we attribute these things to spiritual or natural causes, there is no reason to doubt that they worked for the general good of the race in whom they were found, and justify the conclusion that Tohungaism, with all its psychic, magical, and spiritual practices, was beneficial to the people who understood and accepted it so sincerely.



## THE WISDOM OF THE SERPENT

By J. D. LECKIE

FROM all times the serpent has been looked upon as the emblem of cunning. Serpent worship was also one of the most ancient and wide-spread forms of primitive religion, and still finds a place among the rituals of some savage races, as the negroes of the West Coast of Africa, and until recently (if not still to-day) among the Red Indians of North America. It may be noted that among some of the Indian tribes, as the Dakotase Shawnees and Sacs, the word for spirit and snake are similar. The Voodoo of the Haytian blacks is simply a form of serpent worship, though in its extreme forms it is said to include human sacrifice—still occasionally and clandestinely performed in the remoter districts, on the authority of Sir Spenser St. John, former British Consul in Hayti.

The wisdom of the serpent is proverbial in Scripture history. It is the first animal specifically mentioned in the Bible. "Now, the serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made" (Genesis iii. 1). The word subtile is of course used here in the sense of cunning, and this attribute is bestowed more unequivocally in such passages as "Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves" (Matthew x. 16). In other passages, the serpent is referred to as the emblem of the devil. It was the rôle of the evil one which it played in the Garden of Eden, where it was invested with more than human knowledge, while similar references are made in Revelation xii. 9: "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world."

The Ophites of the early Christian Church (so called from the Greek *ophis*, a serpent) were a class of Gnostics who, while they shared the general belief in dualism, the conflict of matter and spirit, the emanations, and the Demiurgos, were distinguished by giving a prominent place in their systems to the serpent. We owe our knowledge of them mainly to Irenæus, Clement, Origen and Hippolytus; while Theodoret mentions serpent worship as still existing in the fifth century. The Ophites were antipathetic to the Jews, and called themselves



Gnostics, claiming that they alone understood the deep things of religion.

It is not the object of this article to enter into a discussion regarding the symbolism of the serpent in religious life; the above remarks, however, demonstrate that serpent worship in one form or another has been general in all periods of history and among nearly all peoples, even the most enlightened. As there is no smoke without fire, so it may be held that these so-called superstitions rest on a substratum of truth. If serpent-worship was not general among the Ancient Britons, it is perhaps owing to the fact that snakes are not numerous in England, and such as exist are not of a very deadly nature, while in Ireland they are said to be totally absent.

The fact is, human nature is always drawn towards the mysterious, and there is much that is mysterious surrounding the serpent and its life. To come to concrete facts: The case was recently reported in the Australian papers of a boy who seemed to be specially victimized by snakes under rather mysterious circumstances. There is a superstition among the Australian blacks (who are generally accurate observers of Nature) that any person bitten by a snake is subject to further attacks, although not necessarily from the same reptile. Australian bushmen will also inform you that one snake bite is often followed by another from a different snake, possibly from the mate of the first offender.

But with regard to the case of the boy above mentioned. This youth was the subject of repeated attacks by different snakes at his father's farm near Albury. For the fifth time within a few weeks the nerve-wracked boy was admitted to hospital suffering from the attacks of snake bite. Snake bites are not so numerous in Australia—besides, it is a notable fact that no other person on the farm was bitten except the boy himself. The boy was well aware of the tendency of snakes to attack a person who had already been bitten, and had taken special precautions to prevent their approach; nevertheless, the attacks continued in the most inexplicable manner. He was always accompanied by some one with a stick, in the daytime he wore leggings, which he only removed when he got into bed. Every hole, crack and cranny in the house which could allow the passage of a snake was blocked up, and as a further precaution a light was kept burning all night in his room.

The matter caused much local comment, and attracted so much attention that the boy was offered an engagement with a



Sydney theatrical firm, which he declined. What is the mysterious influence which impels snakes to persecute persons who have already been bitten? Stranger still is the fact that they know that a certain person has been bitten and can communicate the information to one another, while at the same time they baffle in the most incomprehensible manner all attempts made to evade them.

Many animals possess equally mysterious powers. The blood-sucking vampire of South America (a kind of bat) only attacks persons while they are asleep. The writer, who has lived many years in that part of the world, has been assured that attempts have repeatedly been made to attract the vampire by feigning sleep, but such ruses have never succeeded in deceiving the bat; it will only attack persons actually asleep, not merely feigning sleep. By what strange power does the bat discriminate between the actual sleeper and the person who merely makes a pretence? This is a digression, but bats, like snakes, are possessed of mysterious powers which have always caused them to be looked upon with awe by the ignorant and superstitious.

Do snakes possess the power of fascination? This question has often been discussed, and the writer believes it has never been answered in the negative by those who have thoroughly and impartially investigated the matter. Those who deny the facts are generally those who have never taken the trouble to investigate. Cases of fascination by snakes have been so frequently reported on the highest authority, that it is impossible to dismiss them lightly.

Some have attributed this fascination to fear on the part of the victim. There is no doubt that fear can, and often does, play an important part in the process; but on the other hand there are many well-authenticated cases in which fear could have played no part whatever. The writer has been informed by those who have witnessed cases of actual fascination, that the bird or small animal, in some cases at least, not only refuses to fly away, but actually creeps closer to the snake, though moaning or crying piteously the while, as though unable to control its movements. This suggests something of a hypnotic action, and this hypothesis is amply borne out by other facts. There seems, however, to be more than one form of fascination, just as there is more than one form of hypnotism. Once the snake's eye is fastened on its victim, it is apparently able to control his movements; but if a person passes between the snake



and the victim, so as to obscure the vision, even for a moment, the spell is broken and the bird (or other animal) escapes. We know that a person may become hypnotized by gazing at a small bright object. May not the eye of the serpent possess a similar power, the action being intensified by fear on the part of the victim? The coiling of the serpent appears to increase its magnetic force, for it generally coils itself up when fascinating small animals.

It has been objected by those who deny the fascinating power of the ophides, that serpents have never been known to exercise this power in captivity. Not infrequently, attempts have been made to put it to the test by offering mice, birds, or other small animals, to imprisoned serpents and watching their movements, without any positive result. It must be remembered, however, that in captivity the conditions are artificial and not to be compared to those which exist in the natural state. The confined snake is aware that some person is watching it, and under these conditions it seems unable to exercise that intense power of concentration which is necessary for fascination. In those cases where fascination has been observed in the wild state, the observer has happened to come on the snake while it was in the act of casting the magic spell. Its attention is then so absorbed that it will allow an intruder to approach quite near before it is aware of his presence. It certainly would never attempt to commence operations while aware that the intruder was observing it.

But there is another and more important distinction. There seems good reason to believe that an animal cannot be fascinated unless it is taken unawares. If forewarned, it is forearmed. This explains the habit of the snake in lying motionless and half concealed, generally close to some forest path, along which its prey is apt to pass. A snake so concealed can scarcely be distinguished from a fallen branch and will even allow itself to be trampled upon rather than get out of the way, for its instinct is to lie motionless and so take its prey unawares. It knows instinctively that all animals avoid it, hence its sense of security.

As already stated, fascination is a form of hypnotism. A person cannot be hypnotized if he is forewarned (and therefore prepared), and struggles against it. But he can be hypnotized against his will if taken unawares. Persons can be hypnotized at a distance at a time when they are unaware of the influence that is being exerted on them, and are consequently unpre-



pared to resist it. For such an operation exceptionally favourable conditions are necessary, but such cases have occurred. Again, the process of fascination may be compared to the act of blushing, to which it bears certain points of psychic resemblance. A person only blushes when he hears or sees something which causes a sudden and unexpected revulsion of feeling, such as shame. But if he is forewarned, and knows exactly what is going to happen, as a rule he does not blush—for under such circumstances he can control the muscles which produce blushing. This will serve to illustrate by analogy one of the processes of fascination.

An unexpected encounter with a snake does not generally occur in captivity; at least the element of inexpectancy does not seem to have been applied in such experiments as have been reported, but the main drawback of these experiments lies in the fact that the snake's power of concentration seems to be destroyed by captivity, owing to causes which can readily be understood. The senses of serpents are unusually keen, and they are probably aware of being watched even when the observer imagines himself effectually concealed. At the same time, his victims are nearly always forewarned against impending danger and therefore forearmed.

In the work *Problems of the Borderland*, by Mr. J. Herbert Slater, published by Messrs. William Rider & Son, Ltd.,\* the following account is given of a boa constrictor with powers which can only be described as hypnotic. Mr. Lange, during his wanderings in the region of the Upper Amazon, was told of enormous reptiles possessing a strange power of attraction which brought their victims within their toils. He placed no faith in these stories, till the case of Jose Pereira, a rubber worker, came under his notice. This he investigated, and found the facts to be as follows: Pereira was paddling in his canoe down a stream, when he heard a noise, made apparently by some animal. He ran his canoe to the shore and held his rifle in readiness. Seeing nothing, he continued his way down the stream. Several times he heard the noise, but saw nothing. Feeling very uneasy and uncomfortable, he paddled away, but returned to sit down upon the root of a tree, from which he soon found himself quite unable to move. Just then, three workers from headquarters happened to pass by, and hearing a sound as of some one in distress, they called out and finally landed. They found Pereira in a state of collapse, and under

\* London: 8 Paternoster Row. 3s. 6d. net.



the root upon which he was sitting saw the head of a monstrous boa constrictor, its eyes fastened on its prey. They fired at it and the spell was broken. Such is the story vouched for by Mr. Lange. The snake was said to be 52 feet 8 inches long and 28 inches thick.

In this case, it may be noted, not only was the man Pereira taken unawares, but he was even unconscious of the presence of the serpent. Had he been forewarned, he could probably have successfully resisted the influence. Although boa constrictors are not uncommon in South America, it is the only case of which the writer has heard in which they fascinated a human being; this is perhaps owing to the fact that they look on a man as a new and unfamiliar animal. A serpent does not seem capable of fascinating more than one animal at a time, which accounts for the immunity enjoyed by Pereira's companions who arrived in time to effect his rescue.

## AT DINARD

By MEREDITH STARR

I PASS with blank, unseeing eyes  
Through the shifting shadow-show  
Where the phantoms come and go  
In their surface-paradise,—  
Shadow-shapes that rise and pass  
Like the mist upon a glass,  
Like the creatures of a dream;  
They are not, but only seem.

Ah, the life of form and name  
Is a feebly flickering flame  
To the beacon burning bright  
Of the formless Infinite!  
Name and form are but a dream;  
They are not, but only seem.



## THE SUBCONSCIOUS AND PUBLIC SPEAKING

By H. ERNEST HUNT

HAVING been called upon during the past few years to do a considerable amount of public speaking, and having realized to what an unsuspected extent the natural powers of the subconscious may be utilized in this work, it may be a matter of some interest if I endeavour to give some brief outline of the results of my experience.

Hypnotism is a study of the greatest value in introducing us to the workings of our own subconscious minds, and it was in Dr. Milne Bramwell's valuable work on that subject that I first came upon the idea that the subconscious could be definitely used in the preparation of lecture material. Dr. Bramwell adopted the plan of getting in his material and of allowing it to be matured, and to a certain extent arranged, by the subconscious mind without any effort on his part. As he puts it himself: "Since I left college I had done no literary work of any kind until I began to write on hypnotism, and my early efforts were difficult and painful. In every instance I began by collecting an overabundant supply of information, and then had difficulty both in grouping and expressing it. I frequently spent hours in painful thought, with no more apparent result than the writing of a few lines; and even these often failed to satisfy me. Gradually, however, I came to rely more and more on the secondary self. When I encountered a difficulty, I recalled as clearly as I could the facts I wished to express, then put the matter on one side. A day or two later, I often was able to dictate to my secretary for hours at a stretch. Not only so, but the work was characterized by marked absence of effort, and accompanied by a distinct feeling of detachment, and even of surprise."

In this process of sorting out, classifying, and assimilating, it would appear that we are utilizing a natural function of the subconscious, as witness the way in which it works overnight and reduces our mountains of trouble to molehill dimensions by the morning. My personal experience certainly goes to corroborate that of Dr. Bramwell, and I habitually use this method.



Material may thus lie latent for weeks on end without any conscious consideration, and then when pen is put to paper the scheme comes out clear and logical in an orderly and fluent manner.

This matter is then set out in fair detail under clear and coherent note-headings ; then an abstract is made of this, again under the same headings. But it is most important that this abstract should be made without reference to the first copy, for the material must be reconstructed from the mind. This is a crucial point in mind training ; and if it be insisted upon, the subconscious yields readily to discipline. From this abstract again a further abridgement is made on a post card, which is the final résumé of the lecture. But as the material is by now firmly established in the mind, these final notes are not used except for the purpose of filing a record of the lecture.

It is very necessary to beware of the subtle influence of suggestion arising from the use of notes. This practice carries with it the implied idea that the memory cannot be trusted, or of diffidence in other directions, and the subconscious is most quick to act upon these insidious suggestions ; whereas the dispensing with notes is, as it were, a profession of faith and a suggestion of reliance, and one that is likely to bring the subconscious up to the mark and make it give of its best. After some experience of purely extempore speaking, notes of any kind are apt to prove a definite handicap.

A further point in preparation is that it seems to me feasible and helpful to do much thoughtful preparation by definitely retiring, so to speak, into the subconscious. One gets almost into a semi-dream state, and perhaps to the household eye may even appear asleep in a particularly comfortable arm-chair, but the inner senses are working extraordinarily keenly and quickly. This may be much the same as the way in which in the half-state before waking in the morning we get the fine flow of imagination almost amounting to inspiration. I believe that as a definite practice this increased scope of subconscious working may be utilized, and that it is quite possible to carry through the results of such subconscious preparation into the consciousness. It is necessary to bring the matter thus into the centre of the field of waking attention in order to give it sufficient substance and consistency in the mind, and too long should not be allowed to elapse before this is done.

The " tuning " effect of recapitulating a thing to be remembered, just before going to sleep at night, is well known.



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The subconscious never sleeps, pertaining more to the immaterial as it appears to do, and in the fulfilment of its natural duty as the spring-cleaner and sorter-out of the débris of the day's experiences, it has a tendency to give special attention to the things specially impressed upon it before sleep supervenes. This trait again can be turned to advantage in preparation and assimilation.

Furthermore, just as in moments of emergency, in ecstasy, and in accident, we very frequently hear of the "flashing" of long-garnered memories mentally compressed into a moment of time, so I would suggest that there may be such a thing as "flash" practice and rehearsal. A portion of a lecture, a speech, or a musical composition that might take ten minutes at a normal pace, may be reviewed and rehearsed in this compressed but vivid fashion in the subconscious where the ordinary time-relationship seems to exercise no jurisdiction. Imaginative work is recorded in mind as well as the pictures suggested by sense impression, and since the object of all practice is to engrave a perfect mental record so that a perfect reproduction may be obtained for performance, this imaginative work may thus be used.

As has already been hinted, the delivery of a speech to make its due effect should be spontaneous and extempore. The structure of the speech should be prepared and very definite, but the details and manner of delivery should be left to the occasion. Hypnosis assures us experimentally that if a command be given to a hypnotized subject that he will deliver a perfectly fluent speech upon some given topic, he will be able to do so. The fluency will be there. But precisely the same relationship that thus exists between the operator and his subject must also exist between the conscious self as captain and the subconscious self as crew. Therefore if by suggestion we gradually build up a dominant idea in the mind that we shall always have the fluent word, the ready idea and phrase at our command, so it will be. This, I am aware, sounds like a fairy tale; but the logic is sound, and in practice it works. If my subconscious self is able to speak without any hesitation under the hypnotic suggestion of another person, it must be inherently capable of doing so; hypnosis adds not one jot to the powers, it merely relieves us of our purely gratuitous limitations. If my subconscious is inherently capable of this work, then it must learn to do it at my command, and this it can do.

Memory also is susceptible to the influence of suggestion. After the preparation work is done, the memory must be called upon, and relied upon to do its work. Suggestion may demand



that the whole subject shall lie out before the mental vision as a map, so that the due proportion of the whole be kept. But in this connection it must be observed that the whole nervous system is part of the bodily organism, and any physical shortcomings will naturally have their counterpart in the mind. Fluency of speech and idea must depend to a large extent upon keen and ready associations, and the effect of fear, fatigue, or lowered vitality from any cause is partly to inhibit this readiness and resource of association. Then, although the material is safely there, it does not spring readily to call. In such a case the speaker begins to "dry up," fears creep in and start an insidious mental paralysis, and then anything may happen.

The general health is thus a matter of paramount importance for the speaker, and the self-discipline entailed is by no means inconsiderable. My own experience is that speaking must be done almost starving, and with an absolute internal cleanliness of body. Under these conditions there is a clearness of the mental vision which is most exhilarating, and ideas flow with a freedom and ease that is even astonishing.

The one fatal thing, deadening above all else, is fear. A speaker simply cannot afford to fear, he must resolutely overcome it by dwelling upon the suggestion of courage and confidence until these ideas are firmly established. The mental attitude should be built up along positive and courageous lines for years; the self must not be given in to in little things or big, it must be schooled and trained, as Arnold Bennett says, "like a dog, and by the same methods." The speaker can scarcely expect ease of diction and fluent accuracy on the platform if his daily speech be haphazard, inaccurate, and eked out with gesture to explain his meaning. Neither can he expect to be free from fears on the great occasion if he be in the habit of giving in to his lesser difficulties; suggestion by word must be backed up by suggestion in deed if its effort and effect are not to be negated.

In public speaking the dual action of mind, conscious and subconscious, is very clearly to be noticed, for the thoughts are often very active, perhaps as much as a sentence ahead of the actual delivery of the words. There is the feeling of differentiation, or even of distance, between the part of the personality that is carrying on the thinking and that part which is responsible for the speaking; and yet the gap seems to be bridged quite definitely by some psychic element in the mind. The latter part—the subconscious—looks after the technical matter of the delivery in a kind of independent, semi-automatic manner. Dr. Crapsey



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is reported in *Religion and Medicine* (p. 26) as saying that "in preaching he usually had the feeling of standing a foot or two from the speaker (himself) and of listening to another voice, sometimes with surprise and even with disapproval." Again Dr. Hack Tuke, in *Sleep-walking and Hypnotism* (p. 81), records the experience of his hypnotic subject, Mr. North, who remarks: "I was not unconscious, but I seemed to exist in duplicate. My inner self appeared to be thoroughly alive to all that was going on, but made up its mind not to control or interfere with the acts of the outer self." These experiences seem to be along the same lines as those which I am endeavouring to indicate, and they show this dual working of the self as a feature that is not unknown, and perhaps not even infrequent.

This semi-automatic action of the subconscious is curiously illustrated in the way in which it will keep things going in words if the conscious self occasionally halts in thought. It will begin to "talk round" the subject, while the conscious mind is utilizing the breathing space to formulate the fresh idea. I have noticed this so very definitely on occasions that the conclusion is forcing itself upon me that circumlocution is a characteristic, and one of the special gifts, of the subconscious. Perhaps this explains some of the particularly roundabout and verbose material that is so frequently met with in automatic writing, and occasionally in the case of trance speakers, in reply to questions. It may be that here is another example of subconscious activity.

The natural attributes of this realm of mind are specially evident in dream, in the guise of dramatization, imagery, expansion, compression, symbolism, deduction, and analogy—and all these may be drawn upon as natural resources, and combined with the natural and developed gifts and intellectual resources of the consciousness.

Through the subconscious also the speaker gets in sympathy with his audience; its supreme sensitiveness enables him to get the "feel" of his hearers and to keep touch with them. Through this means also he gains the emotional appeal in a particularly subtle way; he is attuned to, and part of, the crowd, but he dominates and leads it. There are many other points of interest to which attention might be drawn, but treatment of these would necessarily exceed the limits of the present article. Such illustrations as have been brought forward may serve to show that by the definite enlistment of subconscious activity in speaking, a higher standard of platform work is not impossible of achievement.



## GRAPHOLOGY AND CLAIRVOYANCE

By THEODORE BESTERMAN

GRAPHOLOGY, as such, is both the youngest and the least reliable of divinatory arts. That it is the least reliable is not surprising since the handwriting is not static as are, for instance, the radical positions in a horoscope and the features of the head, but is in its essence dynamic. Circumstance and environment, health and disposition, education and status, play such a large part in the formation of the writing that the proportion of characteristics in any given signature due to innate qualities of the writer is smaller than is generally supposed. Thus, to be even fairly competent, a graphologist would have to master such an immense quantity of facts, that the justice of my claim that graphology pure and simple is unreliable will be readily granted.

The first book devoted to graphology was that written by Camillo Baldi under the name of *Trattato come da una lettera missiva si cognosca la natura e qualita dello scrittore* (Capri, 1622), that is, *How to judge by means of a letter the character and quality of the writer*. This work, however, contains only elementary propositions, the first serious consideration of the subject being given by Junan Harte in his *Examen de ingenios para les ciencias*, which was published a little later. Considerably before this Suetonius had written in his life of Augustus: "I have noticed chiefly this in his handwriting: he does not separate the words and does not carry to another line the letters which are too many for one, but he places them underneath and surrounds them with a line." But there is no evidence to show that the historian attached any importance to the facts he recorded. Passing over a few less noteworthy writers, the next important contributions are from Leibniz (*Opera*, vol. vi); Goethe and Lavater corresponded on the subject (*Werke*, iii. 1083; *L'Art de connaître les hommes*, iii. 123); Walter Scott has a long passage in which he analyses a character by means of the handwriting (*Chronicles of the Canongate*, chap. ii); Edgar Allan Poe was much interested in the subject and made a famous collection of autographs. Modern graphology, however, is founded on an anonymous German work entitled *Chiromatomanantie* which was published in 1862, and on a French book of 1870 by J. H. Michon. These



two books inspired Desbarolles, who wrote the first systematic work on the subject, *Les Mystères de l'Écriture*. Since then many works of varying importance have appeared, and many details of graphological observation are being empirically established. The chief exponents of this new science are now Georg Meyer and Ludwig Klages in Germany, Louis Vauzanges and J. Crépieux-Jamin (who is probably the greatest living authority) in France, and June E. Downey and Hugo van Hagen in the United States. In England interesting books have been published by Rosa Baughan, by Henry Frith, and quite lately by Arthur Storey.

These historical notes lead us to the book under present consideration, which, it will be noted, is entitled not "Graphology," but "Psycho-Graphology." \* Rafael Schermann, with whom this book deals, is a self-educated Pole (born in 1879) who possesses certain very remarkable gifts which fall readily into two categories: he can describe the character, circumstances, and sometimes the future of any person whose handwriting he is shown; and he can reconstruct (that is, write an exact imitation of) the handwriting of a person whom he sees. It should be said at once that there can be no doubt concerning the accuracy of these facts. It is equally certain that the theories put forward by Schermann to explain his feats are not acceptable.

Schermann is shown the handwriting of a certain person and at once exclaims, "This woman is going to poison her husband." He then explains that the would-be poisoner had unwittingly drawn the rough outline of a tilted bottle in her signature. Not to beat about the bush I can hardly conceive of a more ridiculous explanation. Space will not permit of a detailed analysis of Schermann's visions (I use the word advisedly), but the evidence shows that when Schermann is describing a person whose handwriting he has before him he is not, in fact, studying that writing but observing subjective, or even objective, hallucinatory pictures. The case is almost identical with that of Mr. Keuleman, who, when drawing the eye of a bird, found that the paper seemed to disappear to be replaced by hallucinatory visions. It is well known that nearly all clairvoyants require a stimulus to set their faculty in motion: I submit that the obvious explanation of the present case is that Schermann is endowed with cryptesthetic powers which are stimulated by handwriting.

\* *Psycho-Graphology: A Study of Rafael Schermann*. By Eugene S. Bagger. 7½ in. × 4½ in., pp. vi. + 138. London and New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons: 1924. Price 3s. 6d. net.



## WITCH-CATS IN SCOTLAND

By W. N. NEILL

MR. ALGERNON BLACKWOOD, in one of his short stories—*The Empty Sleeve*—has resuscitated an old freit that was at one time intensely popular in Scottish tradition. A violinist, named Hyman, was able to project his astral body in animal form. Billy Gilmer was keen-sighted enough to see this transformation taking place. To him Hyman appeared as a cat, while to the rest of the audience he was simply Hyman, human and a violinist. Some weeks later John Gilmer, Billy's brother, was awakened during the night by a noise in his flat, and seizing a Turkish sword that hung on the wall he entered the chamber whence the sound came. There he saw a dim figure moving about. The intruder was evidently after a valuable violin—a Guarnerius—that was kept in a glass case, and John was horrified to find that as the figure approached him it was that of a gigantic cat. He struck out at it blindly and it dropped to the floor on all fours, diminishing in size and endeavouring to escape. Just as it was passing through the door Gilmer slashed at it again and succeeded in wellnigh severing one of its fore-legs from its body. Months afterwards the two brothers met Hyman again. He had lost an arm, for one of his sleeves was empty.

The belief in shape-shifting carries with it the corollary that wounds received by a person while masquerading under animal semblance will remain on the body after its return to human shape. This phenomenon is termed "repercussion," and the best Scottish story illustrating it—as far as cats are concerned—is that of the witches of Thurso. It has indeed become a classic of its kind, Professor Tylor even finding a corner for it in his highly condensed *Primitive Culture*.

In the year 1718 the house of a mason, named Montgomery, in the Burnside of Scrabster, was "infested with cats to that degree that he nor his family were in safety to reside there any longer." Indeed, Mrs. Montgomery threatened to leave her husband and remove to Thurso, while one of the servants did leave in terror before the term of service agreed upon. Resolved to rid his dwelling of this feline plague, the man armed himself with sword and dirk and axe, and managed to kill two of the



cats outright and to wound several others. Shortly afterwards a suspected witch, Helen Andrew, died suddenly, while another woman with a similar reputation, named M'Huistan, committed suicide by throwing herself from the rocks into the sea. Next an old woman, Margaret Nin-Gilbert, who lived about a mile and a half from Montgomery, was seen to drop one of her legs as she was entering her own door—could it be gangrene or leprosy? According to the good old rule of “post hoc, propter hoc,” the identification of these three women with the stricken cats was inevitable. Margaret was put under arrest and confessed that she had been in Montgomery’s house in the likeness of “a feltered cat” and had been sorely wounded by his dirk. The poor old woman died in prison soon after her arrest, possibly through the disease from which she suffered, though it was reported at the time that she had been murdered by some of the women she had delated as her confederates and who were confined along with her.

Captain Burt, writing from the North of Scotland in 1730, tells a story of the same type which he had from a clergyman. A certain laird, whose wine was disappearing mysteriously,—through witchcraft, as he suspected—went armed one night to the cellar, where he expected to find the nefarious gang at work. Closing the door behind him, he found himself surrounded by cats, but laying about him with his broadsword he very soon cleared them out. Some drops of blood upon the floor showed him that his sword-play had claimed a victim. Next day the house of an old woman, notorious locally as a witch, was entered, and she was found in bed with one of her legs off. The first part of the tale is, as Mr. Kipling would say, “another story,” the old one of fairies or witches surreptitiously entering wine-cellars by night and making merry till morning. Aubrey has it in his *Miscellanies*, James Hogg in *The Witch of Fife*, and Thomas Ingoldsby in his *Legends*. In Highland variants when the witches visit the wine-cellars of London, Paris, or Bordeaux, they are usually in cat-shape, and Captain Burt’s tale is possibly a blending together of this type of legend with the Thurso case.

A similar story hails from the Lowlands. In 1752 Captain Archibald Douglas, accompanied by a sergeant, was on recruiting service in Jedburgh. The N.C.O. was intensely dissatisfied with his billet, which, he averred, was haunted. He had also learned that his landlord was gifted with second-sight, while the landlady was locally reputed to be a witch. Wearied by the sergeant’s incessant complaints, the captain resolved to spend the night



with him and see if there was any truth in his story. About midnight a huge black cat flew into the room through the window. The officer let fly at it with his pistol and shot off one of its ears. With a scream it vanished. Next morning, on visiting the kitchen, he found the landlady lying in a pool of blood which flowed from the side of her head. Removing her "mutch," or cap, he found that one of her ears had been shot away.

Such stories of witch-cats and repercussion could be multiplied indefinitely if one only collected a tithe of the tales illustrating this particular form of zoanthropy which are still current in Scotland, France, Guernsey, and Italy. Bodin tells, for instance, how the witches of Vernon who were tried in 1566 used to assemble in cat-form in an old ruined castle. Four daring men arranged to spend the night within those haunted walls, but to their cost, for they were assailed by myriads of these witch-cats. One of the men was killed by their onslaught and the others grievously wounded, but they managed to leave their mark on the cats. Next day a great number of the old women in the district were found to be suffering from ghastly wounds. Boguet has also several stories to the same effect, especially one dealing with the witches of Strasburg. A labourer belonging to that town was attacked by three huge cats, and in self-defence wounded them seriously. An hour later he was arrested on the charge of maltreating three well-known ladies of the town. The astonished man denied the charge vigorously and told the story of his encounter with the cats. He was able to produce proofs of his statement, and when the three women were medically examined they were found to be suffering from the wounds the labourer had inflicted on them in their cat-shape. Miss Frank Hamel gives some excellent little French stories on this subject in her *Human Animals* (Rider, 1915, pp. 106-9). That the transformation was still believed in by the Basques not so very long ago is evidenced by an experience of the Rev. Wentworth Webster while collecting material for his *Basque Legends* (1877). To give his own words: "Witches still appear in the shape of cats, but generally black ones. About two years ago we were told of a man who, at midnight, chopped off the ear of a black cat who was bewitching his cattle, and lo! in the morning it was a woman's ear, with an ear-ring still in it. He deposited it in the Mairie, and we might see it there, but we did not go to look as it was some distance off."

Such stories of repercussion in cat-form are, however, very scarce in England, although there are cases on record there of



repercussion manifesting itself in witch-hares and witch-toads. John Roby has a witch-cat tale of our type in his *Traditions of Lancashire*, which he connects with the notorious witches of that county. In the record of their trials, however, there is no mention of anything of the sort, and Roby has evidently borrowed his elaborate story from some other source. In England the witch's cat was more of an imp or familiar than a form of the witch herself.

There are stories of witch-cats also in Scotland into which the phenomenon of repercussion does not enter. Mr. E. F. Benson, in *The Room in the Tower*, has one of a lady who turned herself into a cat in order to maul, mangle, and murder an artist who had once been her lover and who is painting her portrait. The canvas she claws to pieces as well. It was with the same intent of committing murder, or at least malicious mischief, that the Scottish witches changed over into cats. The witch-trials supply abundant evidence of this, while tradition also lends its strong support.

The witches of Aberdeen in 1596 assumed the cat-shape in order to celebrate their orgies undisturbed around the Fish Cross. In 1607, Isobel Grierson—wife to John Bull, of all people—with her sister-witches entered the house of Adam Clark, in Prestonpans, in the likeness of cats, nearly frightening the life out of the said Adam and his spouse. In 1629, Isobel Young in East Barnes was accused of sending a sister sorceress in the semblance of a cat into a neighbour's house, whence she emerged through a hole in the roof and resumed her humanity on the tiles. An Alloa witch, Margaret Duchall, was in the form of a cat in 1658 when she destroyed a neighbour's cow, and later assisted in the murder of some small children. In the Edinburgh Town Council Records for 1661 we read that "wmquhill Jonet Allan, who is condemned and brunt for witchcraft, did delate Barbara Mylne, as one whom the said Jonet did once sie come in at the Wattergate in lykness of a catt, and did change her garment wnder her awin staire." Marie Lamont, the eighteen-year-old witch of Inverkip, near Greenock, went in 1662 with others, all transformed into cats, into a man's house and lifted a herring from the barrel. They all had a nibble at it before replacing it. Shortly after, the man's wife cooked and ate the same herring and at once became violently ill. In the same year, disguised as cats, crows, and hares, the Queen of Scottish witches—round whom the late J. W. Brodie-Innes wrote his wonderful tale, *The Devil's Mistress*\*—Isobel Gowdie and her "coven" entered a dye-house

\* London: William Rider & Son, Ltd. 2s. net.



in Auldearn and played such cantrips over the vat that it would only dye black, "according to the colour of the Devil," ever after. Isobel has left on record the magic words by which—thrice repeated—she transformed herself into a cat and back again. The first spell, slightly modernized, runs thus :

I shall go into a cat  
With sorrow, and sigh, and a black shot !  
And I shall go in the Devil's name  
Until I come home again !

The second also explains itself :

Cat, cat, God send thee a black shot !  
I was a cat just now,  
But I shall be in a woman's likeness even now.  
Cat, cat, God send thee a black shot !

But to realize what these witch-cats were really capable of doing in the way of mischief and murder we must visit the western Highlands. Dr. Norman Macleod, in his *Reminiscences of a Highland Parish*, tells the story of the sinking of the war-vessel sent to Mull by the King of Spain to avenge the murder of his daughter Viola by her rival, Mrs. MacLean of Duart. All the local witches were assembled on the shrouds of the doomed ship in the shape of cats, endeavouring to drive her to the bottom, but the captain's counter-magic was too powerful for them and they could not prevail. At last, the aid of the doyenne of Highland witches, Great Garmal of Moy, was enlisted. She made her appearance also on the top of the mast in the semblance of the biggest cat ever seen, and she had only commenced to sing one spell when the vessel sank like a stone beneath her feet.

A witch-cat story from Tiree has some resemblance to Heine's poem "The Erl King," but is much more gruesome. A man was riding home one night with his young son seated behind him. They met a multitude of cats. The boy had his hands clasped round his father's waist and the man, pressing them to his sides to ensure the boy's safety, set his horse to a gallop. The cats sprang, however, and fastening on the poor child they literally tore him to pieces. When the man reached home only the boy's arms were left, still tightly clasped around his waist.

A tailor, named Macilduinn, was busy one Hallowe'en completing an order. He was alone, for the rest of the family had gone to a party at a neighbour's house. As he sat sewing on the bed a number of cats entered and ate up the beef for next day's dinner. They then turned their attention to the tailor, one cry-



ing, "The back of my paw to Macilduinn!" while others, more bloodthirsty, screamed, "The front of my paw for Macilduinn!" The horrified man blew out the candle, rushed to the door and took to his heels. The cats pursued him as far as the neighbour's cottage, and long before he reached it his back was torn to shreds. He escaped with his life; but a certain woman was not so lucky. She caught a strange cat lapping up her milk and, naturally, rapped its nose upon the floor. The same night it returned with two other cats, bent on revenge. The two new cats were inclined to use only the backs of their paws to punish the woman, but the original criminal insisted on their using their naked claws, and the poor woman was speedily in ribbons.

The murderous ferocity of these Highland witch-cats compared to the milder nature of their sisters in the Lowlands almost leads one to think that it was not the common domestic cat that was the therianthropic shape chosen by the northern witches, but that of the spitting, swearing, untameable wild-cat which is a prominent representative of the Highland fauna to this day. The same conjecture may also explain the absence of the true werewolf from Scottish story, although the actual wolves persisted in its mountains and its moors till the eve of the Battle of Culloden. The wild-cat being comparatively common and noted for its cruelty and ferocity would be a far more suitable disguise for a witch than a sporadic and possibly timid wolf.

Witch-cats in England are few and far between. In behaviour, too, they are decidedly far less offensive than some of the creatures mentioned above. The famous Jane Wenham was said by Thomas Ireland, a witness for the prosecution, to have been one of a crowd of cats that cried and screamed around his house. When they were driven away it was to her cottage that they fled, and he swore positively that one of them had a face very like Jane's. In a letter, dated 1696, from a clergyman named Blackburne to the Bishop of Exeter, mention is made of a child bewitched by one Elizabeth Horner. The little girl of nine years "complained of being scratch't in bed by a cat which she said was Bett Horner." It is related that Ann Bodenham, the Salisbury witch, converted herself on one occasion into an enormous black cat, while so lately as 1830 there lived at Hastings an old woman who could effect the same transformation.

The belief in witch-cats is still firmly held in most of the Continental countries. Fontenelle relates that he was brought up in the belief that not a single cat could be found in the town on the Eve of St. John, because they all went on that day to



attend the Witches' Sabbath. Angelo de Gubernatis tells us, in his *Zoological Mythology* (1872): "In the Monferrato it is believed that all the cats that wander about the roofs in the month of February are not really cats but witches, which one must shoot. For this reason, black cats are kept away from the cradles of children. The same superstition exists in Germany." Regnard, the French dramatist, who visited Lapland in 1681, found the belief there also. In Japan, on the other hand, it is the demon cats that transform themselves into human beings, just as also the foxes and badgers do in that country.

Witches had excellent grounds for their partiality to the cat shape, for the example was set them by none other than the great witch goddess, Hecate herself. When the gigantic Typhon declared war on the gods they fled into Egypt, adopting various metamorphoses to conceal themselves from their foe. It was at this dangerous crisis that Diana or Hecate changed herself into a cat. One of Hecate's attendants also was Galinthias, who was changed into a cat for thwarting the wishes of Juno with regard to the birth of Hercules. Indeed, every moon-goddess was inseparably connected with the cat, and the moon-goddess was invariably adored by witches. The cat appears on the apex of the sistrum that Isis is represented as bearing in her hand, while Lilith, the Semitic Witch-Queen, is believed by the Sephardim or Spanish Jews to take the form of a great black cat, known as El-Broosha, when she steals her favourite prey, the tiny newborn infant. An animal shape so intimately associated with Diana and her sister goddesses was bound to be popular with the rank and file of the cult known as Dianism.



## CORRESPONDENCE

*[The name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication, is required as evidence of bona fides, and must in every case accompany correspondence sent for insertion in the pages of the OCCULT REVIEW.—ED.]*

### JOAN OF ARC.

*To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.*

DEAR SIR,—Will you permit a few words *re* your interesting "Notes" on Joan of Arc in the current issue of your Magazine? I am not learned in her history nor in that of her times, but am in a curious way interested, for occult reasons. You say "they," her Guides, "appear to have buoyed her up with false hopes." Now I remember that in Grace James' *Life of the Maid* it is stated that her mission should have finished with the coronation of the king; it was then her failure began because she disobeyed her voices. Moreover, were not some of her family then brought up from their obscurity in the country and ennobled?

The PERSONALITY of her Guides is a perplexing point. My private solution is that high Intelligences—Saint, Angels, Heroes—may possibly use lesser Beings in order to get certain work on earth accomplished, and to that end may give permission to use their name and power. The earthly agent is used—and discarded. Joan's voices were quite unreliable after that first mistake at Rheims, yet you say that the disaster and failure which followed her thenceforward were not "through any direct fault of her own."

Yours faithfully,

6 ORPEN AVENUE, ROSEHILL,  
BURNLEY.

A. L. GARDNER.

[What I intimated was that Joan's success would have continued if she had met with the support which she was entitled to expect from the king. I do not know what my correspondent means by "that first mistake at Rheims." Surely there was no mistake made there?—ED.]

*To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.*

DEAR SIR,—I read with deep interest your "Notes of the Month" in the July issue of the OCCULT REVIEW, particularly those in reference to Saint Joan.

You express surprise, and doubt the genuine character of Joan's guides, because they posed as her own two most familiar saints. This is not really surprising at all, but what we may expect. They were probably ministering spirits employed by High Powers or by a special Hierarchy on the Other Side to urge Joan on to the difficult and heroic



task which might end in her own downfall on earth. To do this they appeared to her in the loving and familiar guise of the saints she worshipped at home. I do not remember that These promised safety for her own physical life. She took that in her own hands.

In a way, my own psychic experience has been similar to Saint Joan's.

The SAME ministering spirit who has been with me for years first appeared at the ouija board as a Hindoo, and afterwards as "Lulu"—a spirit-girl known at that time in certain spiritualist circles.

As "Lulu" she is "the sweet guardian spirit" described in No. 1 Psychic Sketch in my booklet "Personal Psychic Experiences," published nearly nineteen months ago. She is now revealed to me as a spirit of much higher order than "Lulu"—who serves in the occult school of the Great Master, Jesus, to Whom all Christendom looks.

Why did she appear in these different presentments? Simply to bring me through certain phases of experience necessary at the time. Ministering spirits of this order often speak in parables. We find the same kind of teaching in the Bible.

All the wonderful experiences I am given now come solely in response to prayer and attendance at my Church services. I only went to séances for a time, before the war—never since.

Yours sincerely,

MAUD MARY RUSSELL.

OSCAR WILDE.

*To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.*

DEAR SIR,—Whether Oscar Wilde after two years in gaol had become humble, and in that way and others had advanced in character (which is the very pertinent question raised by Mr. F. C. Constable), they only could say who saw much of him during the two years and a half that remained to him of life. I only know that a year or so after his release Mrs. Wilde read me a letter from Ross in which he, having gathered from her that she was being swayed by the belief or hope that her husband had "found religion," warned her, with complete loyalty to Wilde, but with the evident desire to save her from the pain of disappointment, that this was merely a passing phase, and that Wilde had not found religion in the true meaning of the term. Humility is a thing that one doubts anyone who had come into the least contact with Wilde's masterful and impetuous personality conceiving him as capable of learning, granting that his will and spirit could be broken.

In regard to Mr. W. L. Hare's altogether admirable and suggestive endeavour to link Psychic Phenomena with the Will and the Life Force, I do not know if it will seem to him to bear on the matter at all, or whether indeed the point has already been made in print, but after viewing a collection of "spirit-drawings" I remember being struck by the to me remarkable resemblance of form and colour,



though of course on a large scale, in many of these drawings to the whorls and other designs to be found on butterflies' wings, frost-patterns, etc., etc., or wrought upon coloured sands by different violin notes. Though spiritualists hold that these drawings are produced under the direction of spirits, the impression left on me was that, anyway in the earlier stages of his work, what had really happened was rather that the doer of the drawings had got into touch somehow and had surrendered his being to the same creative force that is everlastingly busy at conferring shape and pattern on all objects in nature.

Yours faithfully,

BOURNEMOUTH.

O. HOLLAND.

### A FRIEND FROM THE OTHER SIDE.

*To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.*

DEAR SIR,—I do not write merely in order to substantiate the assertions of spiritualists, or from any other motive of partiality to any section of the believers in the reality of the psychic world. I merely set down as clearly as possible the details of a personal experience that may be of some slight interest to students of the occult.

On the 11th of April, 1918, my friend, H. W. H., was killed in action, somewhere in France. News did not reach me until about a month later. The strange part of this affair lies in the circumstance that the first intimation of the occurrence of his death came from my friend himself.

I was contemplating the beauty of the sunset, watching, incidentally, the evolutions of a bat that had recently issued from its diurnal resting-place in the depths of a hollow tree. Assuredly, I was not at the time in any kind of conscious contact with the vast domain of thought that embraces such themes as Death and the Hereafter.

Whilst engaged as I have just mentioned, the idea occurred to me :

"Beauty is a partial revelation of the hidden meaning of existence. As much of it as we are able to apprehend, quite likely."

"Yes," remarked a voice. "Beauty, and the great gift of cheerfulness. Optimism is near the heart of things. You will agree with this, when you have seen what I have seen."

I turned. There, standing by my side, I beheld the form of my friend concerning whose persistence after death I have no doubt whatever. Then, however, I did not know that he was dead.

"This is excellent," I exclaimed. "Why, H——, you have got leave. When did you come?" And I extended my hand to clasp that of my much esteemed friend who had appeared so mysteriously and unexpectedly. My hand closed on empty air. I was speaking to a spirit, intangible to our physical senses.

Before my astonishment had passed, the voice spoke again.

"This is permanent leave. I have finished for ever with the



tyranny of mundane circumstances. The mass of flesh and blood and sinew known as the body was levelled with the dust some weeks ago. This is a grander liberty than that for which we have been fighting." A laugh followed, and a snatch of song, jubilant and care-free as the winds of heaven. It was a song I have never heard before, and I do not remember the words of it.

Then came silence, broken only by the whirring of night-moths, called forth by the deepening shades.

Yours faithfully,

GLIFFORD W. GREATOREX, F.Z.S.

#### PSYCHIC PHENOMENA.

*To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.*

DEAR SIR,—May I express my appreciation of Mr. Loftus Hare's brilliant and much-needed effort to classify the various psychic phenomena, whilst, as far as it is possible, assessing their value? It has always seemed to me that spiritualists and the S.P.R. lack a broad philosophical and scientific basis on which to build any intelligible and enduring structure. They seem to need a definite plan in which their accumulated facts and phenomena can find a natural setting. You, sir, have pointed out this deficiency on many occasions; and whilst it continues the less instructed will tend to associate psychism with spirituality; to confuse the supernormal powers of the mystic and true occultist with "the subnormal remains of other days"—to confuse, as Mr. Hare puts it, atavism with progress. There is a bewildering and bewildered crowd of us now groping in the mazes, and Mr. Hare offers both warning and light.

Yours faithfully,

J. SCOTT BATTAMS.

119 PRIORY ROAD, N.W.6.

#### THE BLAVATSKY ASSOCIATION.

*To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.*

DEAR SIR,—Numerous criticisms having appeared in various Magazines concerning the policy of this Association in excluding members of the Theosophical Society, I shall be glad if you will kindly publish the following general reply to such criticisms.

The ground taken in almost all cases of such criticism has been that by this exclusiveness we are controverting the principle of Universal Brotherhood: the foremost teaching of H. P. Blavatsky, whose teachings it is our object to promulgate. It is difficult to see, however, how this can be maintained unless the right of any Society or Association to use discrimination in the election of its members is denied on



the same ground. Why should we be denied that right? If we did not exercise that right in the broad manner of excluding all members of the T.S., we should have to exercise it in the more invidious manner of admitting some and excluding others. Perhaps it is thought that our exclusion of these is an act of condemnation. But even that is not the case. What we have to guard against by this exclusion is pretty generally known, and need not be dealt with here; but we must repudiate most strongly the idea that we regard all members of the T.S. as being tarred with the same brush. We may, in fact, admit at once that this exclusiveness is *our* loss, in so far as there are a great many earnest and devoted members of the T.S.—devoted to the pure teachings—who might possibly join us. Yet even these might unconsciously and unintentionally be a disturbing element in our Association.

We do not condemn anyone who elects to remain in the T.S.; neither do we do them any wrong or injury by excluding them from our Association. They are presumably as fully acquainted through the T.S. with the teachings of H. P. B. as they could be through us; and it is to be assumed also that in the T.S. they find their proper and congenial sphere of activity. If we were the *only* organization through whom the teachings of H. P. B. were available, the case might be different. H. P. B. says in *The Key to Theosophy* (p. 49): "We (the T.S.) have, strictly speaking, no right to refuse admission to anyone"; but in the same paragraph she admits that there are undesirables who might be asked to resign, "or, in case of refusal, be expelled." She says that this applies more particularly to the *Esoteric Section*. But we are not an Esoteric Section, nor are we any Section of the T.S., though I think that we may claim to be a part of the great *Movement* initiated by the Masters through H. P. B. That is quite another matter, and that *Movement*, as H. P. B. herself has pointed out, is quite independent of the success or failure of the T.S. as such.

Is it then contrary to the principle of Universal Brotherhood that we should exercise discrimination in the admission of our members, and decline to admit those who have a field of activity and instruction elsewhere? We do not think that a Guru would be accused of "a negation of brotherhood and an exaltation of separateness" because he would refuse to accept as a pupil one who was already the pupil of another Guru. We do not by our exclusiveness shut out anyone from the knowledge of the *Gupta Vidyâ*, nor do we see why those who have a field of knowledge and activity in the T.S. should desire to join us. We do not intend—as we are credited by the Editor of one Magazine—"to take the place of the T.S."; nor even to compete with it for members or for popular favour. We are simply an Association of students of the teachings of H. P. Blavatsky, desiring also to live up to those teachings, and with the further object of placing them before the world in their original pure and undiluted



form. To that extent we are propagandists, but we are not proselytizers ; nor shall we—as one imaginative Editor suggests—“bully” any member of the T.S. into leaving that Society in order to join us.

The T.S. has recently chartered a Lodge which excludes women. We should not conclude thereby that the founders of the Lodge condemn women in general, or indeed in any sense whatever, but only that the lines upon which they intend to work make it undesirable that women should be members. We think that they have a perfect right to do this without being judged as to their motives. Should not theosophists above all others refrain from *attributing* motives ? We have stated our case fairly and frankly, and ask to be taken at our word.

With the organization, policy, or work of the T.S. we have no concern, save only where corrupt texts of H. P. B.'s works are in question. Most of the criticisms launched against our policy are, in fact, based upon the idea that we must necessarily conform to certain “theosophical” ideas which have for so long a time been current both in the “Parent” T.S. and in the offshoots—several of whom claim to be the one and only original. Certain aims and objects are attributed to us in the first place which are quite foreign to us, and then the criticism is launched against these. It is amazing, indeed, in some cases to see what distorted ideas are attributed to us. These, I am afraid, we must assign to the warped “theosophical” imagination of their inventors. It is also amusing to find our policy condemned by certain Magazines which have been most prominent in their attacks on and condemnation of the T.S. in general.

We must absolutely repudiate the idea that our exclusion of T.S. members is a wholesale condemnation of such members ; nor do we consider—as one Magazine suggests that we do—that to remain in the T.S. is “disloyalty” to H. P. B. The bulk of our members are those who left the T.S. years ago, and who are glad to unite again for a work which they have always had at heart. We shall endeavour to keep our Association free from those elements which experience in the T.S. has shown to be a source of discord and disruption. We shall endeavour to do our work quietly and unostentatiously ; and we have certainly as an Association no intention of criticizing or condemning any “Theosophical” Society or Community. It may perhaps be as well to add that our Association as such cannot be responsible for the individual expressions of opinion of its members.

Yours faithfully,

IONA DAVEY,

*Hon. Sec.*

22 CRAVEN HILL,  
BAYSWATER, LONDON, W.2.



## PERIODICAL LITERATURE

THE most important contribution to the new issue of *THE QUEST* is Mr. Mead's study of the Slavonic Josephus and its account of the Baptist and Jesus. Our readers will know that *THE JEWISH WAR* and *THE ANTIQUITIES OF THE JEWS* were written by Flavius Josephus in the Greek tongue, but they may not be acquainted for the most part with the fact that the *WAR* was composed originally in Aramaic—extant no longer unfortunately in this form—and, as Mr. Mead tells us, was "circulated among the Jews of Palestine and Babylonia, doubtless to convince them of the futility of resisting the might of the Roman arms." The Greek version includes an account of all the religious and political movements in Palestine which were contemporary with the beginnings of Christianity, "even the most insignificant," but about Jesus of Nazareth and St. John the Baptist there is "not a single word." On the other hand, *THE ANTIQUITIES* contains "three passages of outstanding importance for Christian readers, seeing that they are the only external witnesses to Christianity from the first century." One of them is rejected generally as spurious; the second has a fair balance of probability and expert opinion in its favour; while the third is "wellnigh universally accepted as affording no grounds for reasonable scepticism." The testimony in the one and the silence in the other case constitute a curious problem. May it be that, as *THE JEWISH WAR* in its original form was intended for his own nation, Josephus omitted therein all references to personalities and to a movement which were hateful to those whom he addressed? May it be that in reconstructing a work for "the wider public of the Græco-Roman world" the "silence of Josephus" continued not so much by design as by the absence of any reason for introducing here what he had omitted with intention there? We do not know, but the altogether conjectural explanation which is thus offered may well enough have been put forward previously. Meanwhile Mr. Mead tells us that the subject has entered recently on "a new phase." A Slavonic or Old Russian translation of *THE JEWISH WAR* is "extant in a number of MSS.," and in this text there are three references to the Baptist, four to Jesus, and one to the first Christians. In 1906, "these eight pieces were excerpted from the rest of the text and made accessible for the general world of scholarship in German translation, whereupon it is said that they were immediately and almost unanimously dismissed as transparent Christian forgeries." But a reaction against this verdict was not long in coming; a careful analysis of the extracts showed that they were not the work of a Christian, but rather of a Jewish writer, and one, moreover, who had a basis in traditional material, who was trying to set forth things of which he had heard,



reporting current opinion and assuming the rôle of an impartial historian, not apart, however, from a certain sympathetic spirit. "His attitude," says Mr. Mead, "is thus in general that of a friendly Jewish outsider—a very difficult part for a Christian to play without betraying himself in some fashion as a believer in the full Christian claims." It may be noted here that in none of the extracts is Jesus called the Messiah. They say: (1) that "a man came forward," if "it is fitting to call him a man"; (2) that "his showing forth was more than that of a man"; (3) that at the same time he could not be called an angel—apparently because of the humanity which he shared with all; and (4) that he was "the doer of good" who was "delivered over to death through bribery."

It does not appear that German criticism has proceeded farther than the point reached in 1908, which brought before New Testament scholarship at large the possibility of our being confronted by "early external traditions . . . of extraordinary interest" and deserving "the careful attention of all students of Christian beginnings." If it be asked how Slavonic interpolations brought into a Slavonic translation of Josephus can be regarded as embodying early traditions, the answer is that the pieces in question are like the general text itself, translations from the Greek, this being the universal agreement of German criticism. The grounds of such view are set out with sufficient fullness, but it will serve the present purpose to indicate that when the Veil of the Temple is mentioned in one of the extracts the original Greek term is retained. If it be asked, on the other hand, in virtue of what canon of criticism Greek interpolations of Josephus which no one has seen can be denominated late or early, the extreme difficulty and besetting problems of the research begin to emerge: it would appear to be a question of internal evidence in the absence of all other, and on such a basis any generally agreed settlement may well enough be remote. Meanwhile Mr. Mead's lucid presentation of the issues under their chief aspects is a valuable contribution to the subject which enables the ordinary literate reader to see exactly how it stands and to reach what point he can amidst its "welter of inconsistencies." As regards the excerpts themselves, they embody (1) an account of St. John Baptist, his preaching and rebuke of the authorities; (2) his interpretation of a dream of Philip; (3) his denunciation of Agrippa, followed by his own execution; (4) an account of the ministry, trial and crucifixion of Jesus; (5) a note on the treatment of the first Christians; (6) another—curiously confused—on the trilingual inscription concerning Jesus; (7) a recitation of portents at the death of Jesus, including the rending of the Veil of the Temple and reports of his resurrection; (8) a sentence interpolated after the account of a prophecy about a world-ruler, as given by Josephus and by him referred to Vespasian; but the interpolation says that it was understood of Herod by some and by others of "the crucified wonder-doer Jesus." In respect of one and



all, these accounts do not reflect New Testament narratives: "on the contrary, there are entire novelties and wide divergences" which exclude the canonical versions in several cases. The first impression that they create on the mind of an unbiassed but not expert reader is that they are in reality early, and not impossibly belonging to the Josephus period in a broad sense; their importance in this case can scarcely be over-appraised.

Other articles in *THE QUEST* are Mr. A. G. Widgery's very thoughtful study of Modern Realism and the Knowledge of God, Mr. E. Sharwood Smith's Sex-Love and God-Love, a challengeable essay, the adequate consideration of which would take us far afield, and—chief among all—an examination of the Biological Setting of Psychical Phenomena by Prof. Hans Driesch, who is one of the Gifford lecturers and Professor of Philosophy at the University of Leipzig. He affirms that "the actuality of psychical phenomena is doubted to-day only by the incorrigible dogmatist," and accounts for their hard struggle to gain recognition by the fact that they "refused to dovetail with orthodox psychology and natural science," at least so far as the end of the nineteenth century is concerned. Since that time the latter have assumed a different aspect, and Prof. Driesch undertakes to show that since the abandonment of mechanistic doctrine and the association-theory, with the consequent rise of a new analytical and experimental biology, it has become possible to connect psychical phenomena on their physical side with official natural science.

As that which is most important to us is that which lies nearest to our own concerns, we are drawn more especially to three articles in *THE HIBBERT JOURNAL*. There is that of Principal J. W. Graham on George Fox, simply a biographical sketch, and there are a multitude already in its likeness, but we question how many can approach it in acuteness and grasp of subject. It opens excellently with a picture of the time when Fox began his ministry, and it ends strongly on a high note of hope that "the world will not cease to count" upon the Society of Friends, which is "neither dead nor dying," which holds with confidence to its ancient faith and yearns for future service "in many armies of goodwill." If it continues to look now as it looked in his day under his guidance to the life of real experience in things of the spirit and not to "airy notions" "about it and about," the hope is well founded and must be justified surely by events to come. There is also a paper by Prof. E. J. Price on the Psychology of Religion and its limitations, with the contention in chief of which we are in cordial and full agreement. It is pointed out that while religion itself is "concerned with a spiritual world that transcends the individual," the psychology of religion can deal with religious phenomena "only in so far as they are factors within the conscious process, and find their explanation therein." In other words, its function is "to examine, classify and formulate the mental processes involved in religious experiences," the final interpretation of which



must be surrendered to "higher discipline." Within its own measures it can "neither prove nor disprove any religious interpretation of the world and of life," and when it claims so to do "it is acting *ultra vires*." It can never "take the place of the philosophy of religion"; it can never explode theology; "the final implications of religious experience" lie beyond its province. God is not an object for psychological science any more than He is for those sciences which are called chemical and physical: it is the same also with His activities, whether in the world without or in that world which is within. The third article is that of Prof. G. H. Langley on the Interpretation of Religious Experience, proceeding from the firm basis of Christ-testimony to a study of the intimate relation between that spirit which is human and the Divine Spirit, and dealing in the first place with modern notions of the universe as emanating from space-time. We may pass over this portion to reach the grounds upon which, in the writer's view, "spiritual experience points the existence of its object." He cites the unvarying mystical claim to "enjoy the presence of God," and maintains that there is "no right to deny the validity of such experience" on the part of those who have not shared therein. He cites also the phenomena of "conversion" as evidence of "the actual existence" of a present Spiritual Power, and defines the term as "a change from a direction determined by inherited instincts and the natural environment to a new direction determined by moral and spiritual values." After the testimony of Christ there is presented that of Plotinus on the seeking and finding of the One, of Plato on the relation of Reason to the Good, and then of Wordsworth and Browning. Here is a leap over centuries, but the study of Wordsworth is both intimate and suggestive as a poet's realization of that which opens to a seer in the awakening of Spiritual Love and its revelation of "a meaning in Nature and Man which no searching of the pure intellect could find."

Among other articles in THE HIBBERT JOURNAL that of the Rev. Principal H. D. A. Major on English Modernism is an admirable presentation of the subject, indicating its distinction from Liberal Protestantism and from Modernism in the Roman Communion, the debt to which is recognized. Professor Eugène de Faye discusses the influence of Greek Scepticism on Greek and Christian Thought in the first and second centuries, holding that it has been underrated so far as early Christianity is concerned. Prof. B. W. Bacon presents new considerations on the Nature and Design of Q, the technical designation for the Second of those missing Synoptic Sources "out of which our extant Gospels of Mark, Luke, and Matthew have been compiled." It is an important contribution to its difficult and problematical subject, and if borne out in its view by future research it will prove a valuable help in reconstructing the lost document. Mr. L. P. Jacks is clear and trenchant, as usual, on the Vicious Circle of Mass-Production, and he is also much nearer to our own interests



than would appear on the surface of his title, for the paper is an attempt to reconcile or bring into working harmony the unescapable need of saving the souls of men and that of feeding their bodies. Mr. Jacks says that in reality these are two processes which God joined together and man has put asunder, for between bodily toil and soul-culture there is a relation which holds good for all time, "which no social system, however cunningly devised, can ever abrogate or supersede." There is, lastly, an outline of present Spiritual Conditions in the United States, by Mr. S. K. Ratcliffe, which does more than deserve reading, for it is illuminating in grasp and insight.

THE THEOSOPHIST in its last issue presents what is termed a Zoroastrian solution of the problem of good and evil, as unfolded in the Gāthās of Zarathustra. The explanation is (1) that "evil is necessary in the universe, so that good may finally emerge triumphant"; (2) that evil in itself has a mere negative existence, and in this sense (3) that the two are contrasted in the sacred texts as "Life" and "Not-Life." It is affirmed also that Zoroastrian philosophy was by no means dualistic originally, whatever it became subsequently. There are no two co-eternal and co-equal powers at war with one another for ever. As indicated already, the conflict postulated between them "is bound to have an end" and can end in one way only. Moreover, the two spirits, principles or qualities emanate from or are created by an eternal Lord of Life, denominated Ahura Mazda. . . .

An article in THEOSOPHY of Los Angeles describes birth into this world as the result of a spiritual entity or soul seeking conditioned existence. As it is obvious that in the logic of things such a quest must be assumed to have a purpose in view, the speculation suggests an "overwhelming perception by the soul of the need of another soul." Whether in earthly incarnation this end is attained does not appear in the unreasoned fantasy, for it proceeds to consider the mystery of the Divine Birth which is the way of return to the "knowledge," "power" and "outlook" of the antenatal state, wherein the soul apparently possessed everything and had therefore nothing to desire. . . . In its recent issue THE ISLAMIC REVIEW has published certain studies of Gazzali and his notions on the Reality of the Soul. It is said that "the object of man's existence is to know the excellence of proximity to God," and that this is taught by the Prophets. We appreciate the doctrine within its proper measures, but it would appear that the Prophets in question were unacquainted with the true end of Mysticism. It is said also that there is a sense in which the soul is not created because it is "not subject to measurement or division," but it is created in another sense because "it is neither original nor everlasting." It is an "embryo" in which "the Spirit manifests."



## REVIEWS

ESCAPE AND OTHER VERSE. By Michael Juste. Leeds: The Swan Press, 52 Bellevue Road. Pp. 20. Price 1s. net.

ADMIRERS of the ultra-modernists may be inclined to sneer at this unpretentious little booklet, and to accuse its author of the unforgivable fault of being "hide-bound by tradition." Certainly the influence of Shelley and Keats is to be found in these verses, but after the strange feats and freaks of some modern poets it is quite refreshing to come across one who is not afraid to write of such things as "faerie stores of limpid wine," of "deathless spring" and "dim elusive tunes," of "beauty's fount," and "silver solitudes." If the author is young, as seems probable, we see here the promise of real poetry, and some achievement also—for "The Dead Planet," "Song of the Sylphs," and "The Mystic's Vision" have an undeniable beauty. All lovers of poetry who are weary of the rhymeless, jerky and unmelodious collections of words which nowadays strive to pass under that great name, should buy this little book. They will find much to please them in its twenty pages, and perhaps even a doorway of "Escape" by means of which they, too, may

"sight the gold-edged shores of dream,  
And bathe in coloured foam."

E. M. M.

PEOPLE OF OTHER WORLDS. By Vesta la Viesta. Published by Geo. T. Funk Press, 131 Christopher Street, New York. Price \$1.00.

THE author of this weird Pamphlet is described on its cover as "The Cosmologist and Planetary Explorer." She announces that she has visited each of the planets of our solar system, not omitting the sun itself, of which she tells us the inhabitants are about eight feet tall, self-luminous and bald-headed. The moon also was honoured by a visit. The inhabitants of the various planets, their manners and customs, are described with a flamboyant disregard of anything like probability or even possibility. If only such celestial globe-trotters would consider anything approaching likelihood, they would look further afield and pick their planets in other solar systems! The most racy and entertaining of this intrepid lady's explorations is that of the nether world, or "Helldom," an account of which was vouchsafed by her to an interviewer, and is included in the present volume. We are told that Madame Viesta "was spiritually prepared by the Prince of Inferno to pass into Hell." This is quite likely, and one suspects the late Baron Munchausen also to have had a hand in the affair! Asked by the interviewer her reason for making these aerial flights, Madame Viesta admitted the laudable desire to find out how conditions on our earth might be "improved." Like Dante, she recognized many inhabitants of the nether regions. She conversed with "an unfortunate scholar in Hades," who is evidently now occupied as "Chief Roaster," for as "Fan Hothead, Chief Roaster," he signs the



letter he entrusted Madame Viesta to transmit to his "soul-mate" on earth.

All the proceeds of the sale of this work, we are told, are to go toward forming a "Cosmic Centre," or "Telepathic College," in New York, where among other things you will learn: "How to attune the divine revelator, the telepathic code, and How to be your own Seer."

Presumably all this nonsense is a practical joke, and not a clever one, otherwise the book would be blasphemous. EDITH K. HARPER.

LUCKY CHARMS AND OMENS: What They Mean. A Dictionary of Superstitions. By "Eala." London: C. Arthur Pearson, Ltd., Henrietta Street, W.C.2. Price 1s. 6d. net.

As an entertaining collection of time-honoured and widely-held superstitions this little volume is a useful addition to the reference bookshelf. Looking through the pages the reader will find many of his pet beliefs concisely noted: the white speck on the thumb-nail promising a gift; the presage of scandal heralded by the spilling of ink; and the unlucky hap of viewing the new moon through glass. These and a hundred other superstitions of general acceptance are duly chronicled, but in addition to these "popular" beliefs and traditions, the author has recorded a large number of less well-known fragments of folk-lore of old-world usage gathered from the Highlands and other parts of the world where fancy, imagination and mystery claim their own. It may be observed that not all the charms and omens in the book are "lucky." We are warned against a pricking sensation in the thumbs; writing a letter on a white table-cloth; burning green leaves; or having three candles lit at the same time. "Eala" further enlightens us upon the lore of flowers, precious stones, moles, warts, days and numbers. There are fully three sixpenn'orths of value in this little book. P. S. W.

A CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ OF WORKS ON THE OCCULT SCIENCES. By F. Leigh Gardner. Vol. I. Rosicrucian Books. Second Edition. Privately Printed. Demy 8vo, pp. xxiii + 101.

THE original issue of Mr. Leigh Gardner's useful compilation took place more than ten years ago and has been out of print for a considerable time. Its reappearance in the present convenient form will be welcome to a new generation of students, and its recommendation to their notice is therefore scarcely needed. The form adopted is that of a simple alphabetical list, under authors' names, when known; otherwise under the first letter of initials; or in the case of anonymous works, under the first word of the title. Almost obviously, there is no pretence of comprising all that has been written on the Rosicrucian subject, and every experienced reader will be able to provide additional items which are known personally to himself: what is more to the purpose is that it can scarcely fail to extend the bibliographical knowledge even of the most experienced. The compiler, for the rest, has depended largely on that which he has learned at first hand as a collector during a period of more than thirty years and, this apart, has drawn from the important section on Rosicrucian Literature in the Masonic Bibliography of Kloss. With the recent and much larger undertaking of Wolsftieg he does not appear to be acquainted, or at least has not referred to it; but though Wolsftieg marks an epoch on the Masonic side of Research, he has not, after all, contributed extensively—



beyond Kloss—to that of the Rosy Cross, and in his case also it would be easy to extend the items. There is a work which remains to be done, but it lies outside the measures of the present volume: I refer to a critical account of the literature in chronological form; but the task involved would be one of peculiar difficulty. It would be impossible here for want of adequate materials, though the interest exists in England, while in Germany, where materials abound, it is to be questioned whether there is sufficient interest to justify or promote the task. It may be mentioned that three MSS. of Eliphas Lévi, enumerated by Mr. Gardner as things that “have never been published”—i.e., *Le Grand Arcane*, *Le Livre des Sages* and *Les Portes de l'Avenir*—have all been issued in France, presumably since the appearance of Mr. Gardner's contribution to *Bibliotheca Rosicruciana* in its original form.

A. E. WAITE.

THE LAST KNIGHT AND OTHER POEMS. By Theodore Maynard.  
Published by Erskine Macdonald, Ltd. Price 6s. net.

MR. MAYNARD may be described as a Catholic mystic. He wields his pen with much delicacy and a refined restraint masking fervent devotionism. When he has mastered his art still more and eliminated an occasional trivial phrase for an apt one, we shall gain a poet of standing. His “Aubade” is lyrical and charming, but “Scimitar” is more unfamiliar to his mood and style. In “Summer Rain” he is signally successful, whilst “Sun” has a befitting majesty.

It is a book of verse one cannot lay down lightly.

REGINA MIRIAM BLOCH.

FOUR-DIMENSIONAL VISTAS. By Claude Bragdon. Second Edition.  
7½ ins. × 5 ins., pp. 155. London: George Routledge & Sons,  
Ltd., Broadway House, 68-74 Carter Lane, E.C.4. Price  
6s. 6d. net.

THIS is not the first occasion on which I have had the pleasure of commending the work of Mr. Claude Bragdon to readers of the OCCULT REVIEW. In particular I called attention to the first edition of this exceedingly interesting and thought-provoking work on the Fourth Dimension in the course of an essay on “The Problem of Time and Space,” published in the issue for December, 1920. A new edition of the book is very welcome, especially in view of the greatly increased interest now taken in the subject. As an introduction to the study of the Theory of Relativity the work can be warmly commended, and for such students of philosophy as are dismayed by mathematics it may even serve as an alternative. “The fourth dimension” is referred to no longer as an hypothesis, but as a fact, since it is now known, as a result of the work of Einstein and Minkowski, that the fourth dimension is time; and the possibility begins to emerge of the existence of still “higher” dimensions. Such ideas as these bestow on the mind a new freedom, and Mr. Bragdon, keenly alive to the fact, opens his work with an essay entitled, “The Quest of Freedom.” “Far from the Higher Space Hypothesis complicating thought,” he writes, “it simplifies by synthesis and co-ordination in a manner analogous to that by which plane geometry is simplified when solid geometry becomes a subject of study. By immersing the mind in the idea of many dimensions we emancipate it from the idea of dimen-



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H. S. REDGROVE.

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lesson in mutual indulgence and tolerance in regard to this question, so long, so fiercely, and so uselessly debated." Though written in a popular and somewhat flowery style—the moon, for instance, being compared to "a curved eyelash fallen from the eyelid of some blonde goddess"—there are a good many pages dealing with technical details rather beyond the grasp of the ordinary lay reader, and M. Nordmann has not been altogether fortunate in his translator. A desire to be strictly literal sometimes results in phrases that are not really English at all. But the book is full of interesting suggestions and explanations, for, while careful not to commit himself too definitely, the author is not sceptical as to the possible existence of life and intelligence in other heavenly spheres, and is fully conscious of the vastness and wonder of the science which he expounds. "The determinism of the world . . . may prove on reflection to be the sublimest manifestation of the Divine. The universe is . . . orderly, coherent, harmonious, governed by inexorable laws and not by particular whims. . . . That is the ineffable mystery, the sublime revelation."

E. M. M.

THE RELIGIOUS MYSTICISM OF THE UPANISHADS. By R. Gordon Milburn. London: The Theosophical Publishing House, 9 St. Martin's Street, W.C.2. Price 3s. 6d. net.

THIS little book aroused my immediate interest as I am the proud possessor of an edition of the Upanishads in English in two volumes, which I understand is somewhat difficult to procure, and they have long ago enlisted my critical admiration. They contain that purity of monotheistic thought which we find in Sir Monier-Monier Williams' renderings of classical Rig-Vedic hymns, and the high ethical quality of the earliest Brahmanic philosophy. A few years ago a dainty compact edition of the *Samhita* was made accessible to the general public, but as we have but few publications of the same calibre, the present work on the collective Upanishads is particularly welcome. It is full of exalted and exultant teachings to gladden the weary of heart, the burdened in spirit:

"When a man's soul through knowledge has become  
One with all creatures, what infatuation,  
What lack of happiness, can then be his  
Now that he sees the unity of all?"

"For such a man has reached the shining One,  
The Incorporeal, the Unimpaired,  
The Bodiless, the Pure, the Untouched by sin,  
Who is the Teacher, the All-Wise, the Encircler,  
The self-existent One, who has assigned  
To each his purpose for the eternal years."

This quotation from the Isha Upanishad will serve to show that Mr. Gordon Milburn has achieved his task of commentary and elucidation with artistic sympathy and unbiased broadmindedness.

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LA VOIE DU CHEVALIER. By Victor Morgan. Nîmes: Imprimerie Coopérative "La Laborieuse." Pp. 248. Price 7 fr. 50 centimes.

THE young Frenchman who wrote under the pseudonym of "Victor Morgan" was in real life a naval lieutenant named Nicolas Benoit, and



fell in December, 1914, when leading an attack on the enemy trenches north of Dixmude. It is interesting to learn that some years before the war the German Emperor awarded him a medal (which he never wore) for an act of bravery in connection with a fire in German East Africa; and even more interesting that his work of founding a French Boy Scouts organization arose out of a visit to England in 1910, when he was immensely struck by the results obtained through Baden-Powell's methods.

His book has for sub-title, "Experimental Self-Education," and it consists of fifteen lessons on such subjects as the superman, the power of faith, memory and imagination, psychic forces, concentration, the law of Karma, marriage, and prayer. Over and over again he holds up, as ideals to be followed, Napoleon, Joan of Arc, Alexander the Great, and, in one instance, Kitchener—all warrior types—while he is insistent on the need to develop will-power and self-reliance, and to believe that "what you desire to accomplish you *can* accomplish." After the claims made for the book in the introduction, it is a little disappointing to find that its contents consist, for the most part, of simple theosophy mingled with the now so familiar American "New Thought" teachings. There is nothing really new in it except perhaps the belief expressed at the end—that the New Race now being born in various parts of the world is to have its home in France and Northern Africa, on the site of ancient Atlantis, and that France is to be "the centre, the creative element, which will draw around it all that Spain and Italy and the other European races contain of what is worthy to endure and to be re-born." No doubt "Victor Morgan" was himself an inspiring and lovable character, and the ideas expressed in his book when it first appeared some twelve years ago would then be more novel and striking than they are to-day. In the interval so many of the same kind have been published that its appeal is inevitably weakened, but it may be hoped that it will find its own public in France and have the encouraging and ennobling effect so ardently desired by its author.

E. M. M.

L'IDÉAL INITIATIQUE : Tel qu'il se dégage des Rites et des Symboles.

Par Oswald Wirth. Paris : Aux Éditions Rhéa. Pp. 88. Fr. 4.

FEW among the countless writers who have dealt with the theme of Initiation have written with so subtle an understanding of the subject, or compressed so much wisdom into so small a compass, as the author of this arresting little volume. Explaining the purpose of his work in a brief Foreword, M. Wirth comments somewhat caustically upon the many "false prophets" who pose as Initiates having access to high mysteries that are hidden from ordinary mortals, and he declares that "en présence d'un trop grand nombre d'élucubrations malsaines, qui préconisent le développement d'un état hallucinatoire envisagé comme la conquête d'un privilège initiatique, il est bon de formuler les principes de la *saine et véritable Initiation traditionnelle*." His book, containing a series of articles published from time to time since January 1922 in the magazine *Symbolisme*, is certainly in welcome contrast with the uninspired histories and extravagant speculations which make up the main body of initiation literature, and is remarkable not only for its lucid and suggestive interpretation of initiatory rites, but also for its penetrating exposition of the



relation which exists between initiation as a ceremonial experience and initiation as a spiritual achievement.

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POEMS. By Evelyn C. M. Davis. London : Erskine Macdonald, Ltd.  
Pp. 48. Price 2s. 6d. net.

THE first verse of Miss Davis's "Invocation" expresses very fitly the general spirit and intention of her work :—

"Poets! the heavens are yours; are your eyes holden  
That you make all your songs of little things?  
Of gold and sun, the sun is the more golden!  
You play with dust of earth, who should have wings!"

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THIS pamphlet is a criticism of Theosophy written by a gentleman who is apparently a Roman Catholic and who is evidently sincere in his opinions. To that can only be added that the criticism never descends to mere vulgar abuse. For the rest, the pamphlet contains an average of three mistakes to the page. I instance the first four; these occur in the first two paragraphs: (1) The Great White Lodge is not composed of "supermen, adepts, initiates"; (2) The Great White Lodge does not claim to be "possessed of all knowledge on every subject"; (3) Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott are not "known to Theosophists as *The Masters*"; (4) a belief in the Masters is not "fundamental to Theosophy." I need add nothing to show that such ignorant criticism cannot be seriously considered.

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