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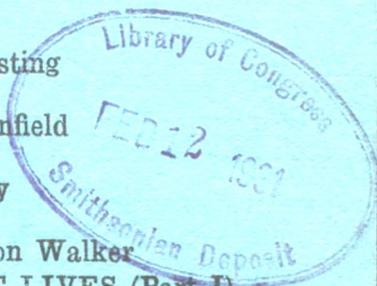
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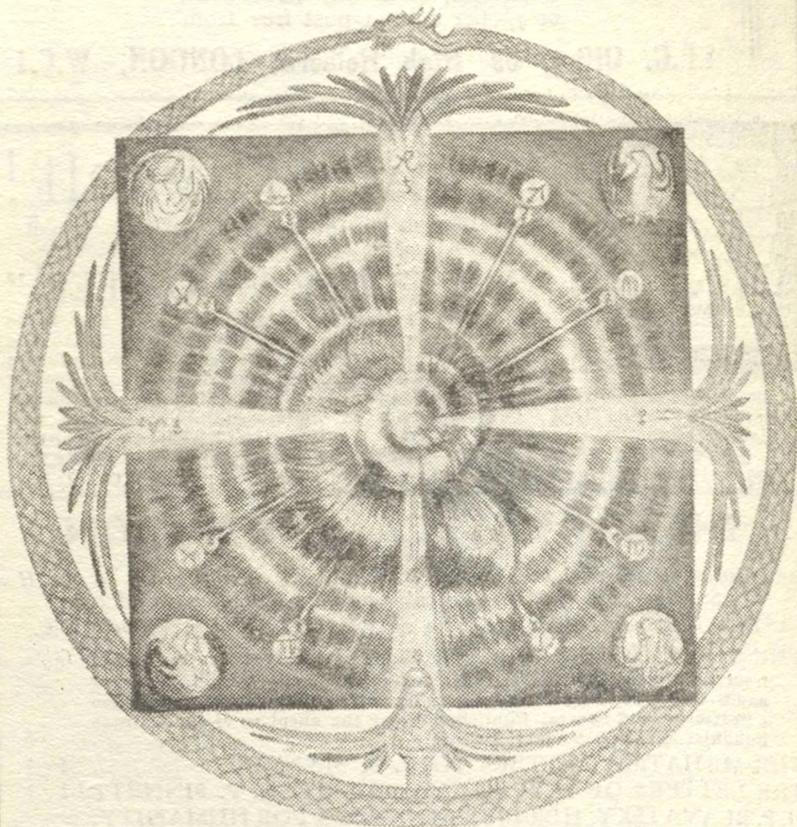
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VOL. LIII

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No. 3

EDITORIAL

A GOOD deal is heard in occult circles of what is generally known as "testing" or "tests". These terms have no reference to the methods adopted by psychical researchers for "testing" the genuineness or otherwise of the varying phenomena of mediumship, or other forms of psychic sensitiveness. Amongst occultists the words are almost unanimously taken to connote certain tests or trials which the aspirant to any degree of expansion of consciousness is obliged to pass successfully before it is possible for him to undergo the experience known as initiation.

Initiation in the true sense of the term is no mere form of ceremonial, even though in certain instances a symbolic ritual may be used as a means of conveying to the lower and as yet unilluminated mind some hint as to the nature of the truth which is thus adumbrated. Of the nature of such shadow-plays are the initiations of masonic and similar bodies, the kinship of which with certain forms of occultism is an open secret. With the type of occultism known as ceremonial magic, masonic and ecclesi-

astical ritual are more intimately related than with any other kind. Not all occultism, by any means, is of this nature. In regard to the more interior and vital form, with which alone, or at any rate primarily, the aspirant for spiritual unfoldment should be concerned, the outer life will probably be entirely destitute of ritual, although in dream-life or during meditation certain experiences of the higher consciousness may be interpreted to the lower mind either statically or dynamically by pictures; *i.e.*, in forms presented to the lower consciousness in the shape of, perhaps, a cross, a pentagram, or other generally-accepted symbol, or in the shape of a vision of an obviously allegorical type.

A great deal of misconception would be avoided if it were borne in mind more frequently that, in the absence of the awakened inner eye, no ceremony or ritual on the physical plane is more than a shadow. True it may be that tangible effects on the material plane may be produced alike by ecclesiastical ritual or ceremonial magic; but the very power to bring about such results by ritual implies on the part of the operator at least an inner awareness of the reality of the higher planes. He must be awake to the extent of being able to maintain consciousness, let us say, on the higher mental levels, even though he may be unable to impress directly his physical brain.

Under the stress of life in the great centres of modern civilization there are many who, with the higher consciousness awake and alert, are nevertheless denied any but the most meagre share in the consciousness of the Higher Self and its activities. Fragmentary and fleeting impressions, for the most part conveyed through symbolic dreams, provide the sole intimation that in truth the interests and doings of the personal self are of little or no account except in so far as they serve the purpose of the "divinity which shapes our ends", and which, in spite of the lure of the worlds of sensation, steadily and relentlessly presses the life and moulds it to the pattern eternal, conformity wherewith shall at long last terminate in that consummation and peace to which the great brotherhood of saints and seers have testified from time to time for the inspiration and encouragement of those still treading the weary paths of personal ambition, individual pleasure, and the million distractions with which the child-soul delights to toy, until the lesson of impermanence and worthlessness is brought home to the growing consciousness.

No clear conception of the nature of the testing of an aspirant to the mysteries of initiation may be arrived at without some understanding of the relationship between the lower and the higher consciousness, the personal and the Higher Self. True, the instructor or teacher on the physical plane may, and assuredly will, in the interests both of the pupil and himself, contrive certain means whereby, if possible without the knowledge of the candidate, some inkling may be gained as to the strength of his moral character, his self-control, and so on. But once more, as in the case of initiation itself, the testing may be of two varieties. It may have its origin on the physical plane, as in the case of a teacher or instructor, or it may originate on the inner planes, when Those who, of the Great Brotherhood, patiently watching over the budding flower of the neophyte's spiritual self, arrange for special forces to be brought to bear on the opening flower. These are the true tests, and they are aimed less at the personality than at the inner man himself. Subtle are they as the hidden weaknesses and deficiencies in the unfolding spiritual self, for the strengthening and correction of which they are designed, or, rather, to which they are directed. It is desirable to emphasize such a distinction, if only to avoid the erroneous conclusion that trials and temptations are artificially produced for the purpose of some kind of spiritual hot-house forcing. Nothing, perhaps, could be further from the truth. Life itself, and the material provided by the pupil's own past, furnish ample opportunity for the necessary tests; and in the great school of the Higher Self the whole term of a physical incarnation may constitute merely one stage in the learning of a particular lesson.

From the short-sighted personal point of view, a series of lives devoted to the firm establishment of perhaps only one spiritual quality may seem a discouragingly slow rate of progress. Indeed, we are often prone to characterize as "wasted" the lives of others which may have been devoted to the acquisition of some quality or qualities other than the one which is perhaps the subject of our own particular lesson in this incarnation. To forge for future use a keen-edged weapon of analytical intellect may be the task of one, even though he fail to recognize that "bent" for what it really is. To him, the rhapsodies of the devotee are meaningless, if not actually provocative of scorn. In the absence of compensating qualities, each is likely to antagonize the other. Too readily we take upon ourselves the right to judge our fellows. The aphorism, *tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner*, embodies a truth which it is well to bear constantly in mind.

THE LARGER
LIFE

The tests, then, of the unfolding spirit, no less than the initiations, are no mere artificial standards set up for the purpose of measuring the stature of a single personal life. They concern only those things which are eternal. The unfolding spirit must be tried as to its power to make subject unto itself the things of the lower worlds, where the interplay of the three gunas, or qualities of maya, makes ceaseless change. What is one incarnation that it should suffice for the growth of that "body, eternal in the heavens", to which the great Apostle refers? What is one earth life, that it should decide for ever the destiny of the immortal ego? Given no pre-existence, how shall the wisdom of the prophets, or the marvellous virtues of the saints be explained? A single incarnation is scarcely sufficient for the adequate acquirement of even one of the eternal qualities. "Flowers of Jesus", like every other flower, spiritual or material, have to grow; and a few short years of physical life, even when running into what is regarded as old age, are insufficient to explain the possession of inalienable spiritual qualities such as purity, prayerfulness, self-surrender, and so on, which are beyond the possibility of even a whole lifetime's effort permanently to acquire. The world of men is the veritable training school of the eternal Self, to which, again and again, the immortal one returns for the sake of experience, to be wrought into faculty. On the far distant horizon of the lower consciousness may sometimes be dimly sensed the light which is that of our star of Destiny, the resplendent spiritual self to which Wordsworth alludes, our "life's star" which "hath had elsewhere its setting and cometh from afar". How vastly removed is all this from the comparative trivialities of ecclesiastical, masonic, magical or other ritual.

The testing experiences of the true mystic or occultist—for there is little on the outer planes to distinguish the two—come only when the heart of man, like the stone of a fruit completely ripe, is in a condition to be withdrawn, without attachment, from the personal life. Like all similes, however, the present one should not be pressed beyond its proper limits; for the immortal spirit which is the kernel of the man, although completely distinct, does not necessarily cease to make contact with the lower worlds. Indeed, the silent and obscure servants of humanity are for ever coming back, at no bidding other than that of the spirit of Love of which they are part, to lead the lowly lives of the hidden helpers of mankind. It is the law of the higher life that except on rare occasions and for special purposes the power of the spirit is such

as to make the soul of the servant "appear as nothing in the eyes of men". Not ours yet, maybe, to make the choice whether or not we shall renounce the bliss of the beatific life, to return amongst our fellows for the sake of loving service. Not ours, perchance, even to be aware that life holds any deeper truths than those which conform to "common" sense—too frequently the antithesis of spiritual sense.

But whether or not we have yet awakened to the fact of the
 DIVINITY existence of a Reality hidden behind the veil of
 WITHIN outward things ; whether or not the wings of the
 EVERY MAN imagination are strong enough to enable us to soar
 into the majestic heights where dwell the saviours
 of the race, one thing is certain : that even now the germs of the loftiest divinity are within us, as surely as the splendour of the oak lies hidden within the unpretentious seed which often so ingloriously ends by becoming food for swine. Even now the map of destiny is being traced, and tarry as we may among the shadows, that destiny may in no wise be evaded.

What that destiny may be we, "down here", cannot even guess. Whispers reach the listening ear of two paths, the one a path of service which brings the man made perfect back to the service of his younger brethren ; and the other taking the man away to lofty spheres beyond the reach of human ken. "We", of the present personality, frankly, will never know. Not until, beyond the gateway of Initiation, we come into our divine heritage, shall we know anything of that life, of which only the slenderest hints from time to time filter through into the lower worlds.

For the greater part, the more refined and intellectually advanced souls at the present time tremble on the brink of that larger and unknown life, hesitating to break with the consciousness to which they have for so long been accustomed. The step appears to be too much like a leap in the dark, and, further, from the standpoint of the personality, the entry into the wider life is signaled by the renunciation of much that makes "life", as generally understood, worth living. With the incorrigible optimism of sheer ignorance, the effort is frequently made—of course without success—to live in two worlds at a time ! Yet it should be obvious to the logical mind that on the threshold of a new order of life something of the old must be surrendered ; and surely the uniform and changeless testimony of all those who in the past have taken the step should be sufficient guarantee that it is one that leads not to death, but to more vivid life.

The truth is that the effort of breaking away means pain, and this is a thing which the animal within mankind keenly resents. "No man desires to see the Light . . . until pain and sorrow and despair have driven him away from the life of ordinary humanity." Here is the key to the nature of real spiritual tests. A soul which should long since have outgrown such things is, for example, held in thrall with the desire for riches, luxury, success. Through successive incarnations he has become instinctively adept in the art of acquiring the best things that this world can give. At last the Higher Self steps in. He succeeds—as usual—and wealth and luxury once more are his. But now his most cherished treasures are as dust and ashes; worthless, even hateful, to him. Surrounded on every hand by all the comforts that money can procure, his disgust may be so keen as to unbalance his mind, and "suicide whilst temporarily insane" marks the end of his present incarnation. Has the lesson been learnt? Probably the next life may prove that the weakness has been cured. So, too, we may picture one who has dallied too long with lust. His amours bring only trouble and disillusionment. Will he learn his lesson? If he face himself unflinchingly he will pass his test and find that the weakness which once was his has been transformed into power. Otherwise, pain and sorrow will dog his footsteps to the grave.

In that noteworthy and too-little-read occult treatise, *Through the Gates of Gold*, may be found a passage of wonderful power and irrefragable truth:

"In man, taken individually or as a whole, there clearly exists a double constitution. . . . Two great tides of emotion sweep through his nature, two great forces guide his life—the one makes him an animal, and the other makes him a god. No brute of the earth is so brutal as the man who subjects his godly power to his animal power. This is a matter of course, because the whole force of the double nature is then used in one direction. The animal pure and simple obeys his instincts only, and desires no more than to gratify his love of pleasure; he pays but little regard to the existence of other beings except in so far as they offer him pleasure or pain; he knows nothing of the abstract love of cruelty or of any of those vicious tendencies of the human being which have in themselves their own gratification. Thus the man who becomes a beast has a million times the grasp of life over the natural beast, and that which in the pure animal is sufficiently innocent enjoy-

ment, uninterrupted by an arbitrary moral standard, becomes in him a vice, because it is gratified on principle. Moreover, he turns all the divine powers of his being into this channel, and degrades his soul by making it a slave of his senses. The god, deformed and disguised, waits on the animal and feeds it.

"Consider, then, whether it is not possible to change the situation. The man himself is king of the country in which this strange spectacle is seen. He allows the beast to usurp the place of the god because for the moment the beast pleases his capricious royal fancy the most. This cannot last always; why let it last any longer?"

Why is it possible that such a state of affairs should exist at all? Because the power of the god within is limited by the dense matter of the vehicles through which contact with the life of embodied man is brought about. He is deceived, beguiled by the power of maya, led astray. When he begins to awaken, the man becomes conscious in the personal life of an inner conflict for which it is difficult to find any adequate explanation. A strange dissatisfaction and unrest begins to possess him. The old things lose their savour. Life is dull, and pleasure palls. He may not realize it, but the sleeping King is beginning to stir. When the Higher Self is wide awake, the personality with which in this incarnation he may be linked, frequently becomes the field of extraordinary contradictions and inconsistencies. The whole life may become a conflict of opposing forces. By the law of its own being, the Higher Self draws into its magnetic field those things from its own past which best subserve its spiritual purpose in its contact with the lower worlds. Trials and difficulties like bolts from the blue assail the bewildered combatant, and offer opportunities not only for working off past karma, but for gaining balance and power of resistance.

A study of *Light on the Path*, which, incidentally, belongs to the same stream of occult influence as *Through the CEASELESS EFFORTS Gates of Gold*, will reveal the fact that storm and stress are part and parcel of the inner life of the aspirant in whom the flower of the Spirit is unfolding. The first section of the above-mentioned book consists of aphorisms designed for the use of the accepted chela who is a candidate for Initiation. They are directed towards the personality. Unremitting effort to bring the lower self into complete subjection to the Higher is the keynote of this phase of the occult life. But ever before the eyes of the weary wayfarer "the dim star" of

Initiation sheds its radiance, with the promise of rest at long last, when the initial stage of the journey is ended. Then comes peace, and realization. "No metaphor can describe it. It is a messenger that comes, a messenger without form or substance; or it is the flower of the soul that has opened. It can be felt after, and desired, even amid the raging of the storm".

Storm! Thus early on the Path; but afterwards "a calm such as comes in a tropical country after the heavy rain"—and silence, which "may last a moment of time, or may last a thousand years. *But it will end*".

Again and again, it is said, the battle must be fought; and in the second section of the little manual the very first of the numbered rules refers to a "coming battle". The centre of conflict, however, has now shifted. The new set of rules are addressed to the higher consciousness. The power of the Higher Self begins to make itself felt in the lower worlds. In occult phraseology, the disciple "learns to speak"—in a language which is without words, and in a voice which is of the Silence. A hint as to the nature of this speech may be seen from the following comment by the transmitter of the rules.

"The disciple will . . . when the divine message comes to his spirit, forget himself utterly in the new consciousness which falls upon him. . . . He becomes as one of the divine in his desire to give, rather than to be helped. . . . His nature is transformed".

But even at such heights of achievement, when the pilgrim stands "on the threshold of divinity", even there, at the farther end of the Path, there is hint of a "final struggle".

Struggle! From the earliest stages of the Path, when the probationer passes through the weary process of purgation; struggle again, through the difficult and trying phase of partial and fluctuating illumination; struggle to the very end—Divine union, before which no enduring peace is possible.

Is the prospect too repellent and austere? In the absence of that irrepressible inner urge which drives the pilgrim in spite of his lower self onward and still on, the prospect is the reverse of alluring. Without that inner urge, he would never rouse himself from the stupor of personal life and begin the arduous journey. But once aware, even in the remotest depths of his consciousness, of his divine heritage, arise he must. Thereafter, all along the line the expanding soul is tried and tested, not with the artificial trials and tests of occult and other secret

societies—mere imitations of the real thing—but by life itself. Nor is any one event by itself to be considered as a special "test". Every moment of life is a test in one sense of the term. Every inner reaction to the circumstances of life, from moment to moment, increases or retards the rate of progress towards the distant goal.

The ascent of the slopes of the mystical mountain is arduous. Resting places are few and far between. Of foothold at times there seems to be scarcely none. Yet after a brief halt, barely sufficient to regain strength for the further stages of the upward climb, the spirit which knows no rest must resume the struggle, undeterred by storm and tempest, undistracted by the allurements of the many by-paths which hold promise of fleeting pleasure; straight on to the end. That end, of which all who have conquered speak in identical terms, whatever the colour of their race, and to whatever religion they may own allegiance, that end is:

"... peace and consummation sweet.

Obey!"

THE EDITOR.

A JEWISH Gnostic

By HUGH J. SCHONFIELD

ELISHA BEN ABUYAH is one of the most intriguing personalities to be found in any literature. He was a learned man, a Rabbi, who in the prime of life had the courage to unlearn one of the most intricate and comprehensive systems of theology ever evolved by the ingenuity of man, in order to obtain empirical evidence of the Divine existence and activity. The difficulties of his self-imposed task as he faced them when the fires of youth were already extinguished would seem to have found expression in one of the very few of his sayings which have been preserved: "Elisha ben Abuyah said, If one learns as a child, what is it like? Like ink written on clean paper. If one learns as an old man, what is it like? Like ink written on blotted paper."*

There is always something awe-inspiring in the picture of a man of seemingly settled convictions, acknowledged a doctor of divinity, suddenly conscious of the futility of the way he has for so long taught, abandoning his former religious associations, and going out less than the least of all his pupils to seek a more satisfying faith.

Elisha ben Abuyah stands before us at the beginning of his quest, a dark figure of doubt against a background of divine radiance, daringly sacrilegious of artificial sanctities, careless of tradition, contemptuous of sophistry, challenging his people's God to reveal Himself unequivocally. We shall look in vain in the Rabbinical records for the real reasons which moved him to take the decisive step; of spurious reasons suggested by his adversaries to blacken his memory we shall discover plenty. The charges of loose living levelled against him by the Talmudic writers have proved so misleading that Dr. Max Letteris in rendering Goethe's *Faust* into Hebrew has used his name for that of the principal character. The "Faust of the Talmud" is no true description of Elisha ben Abuyah; rather is he its St. Paul, with whom he has frequently been compared. Like the great Apostle of the Gentiles, he had been educated "as touching the Law a Pharisee . . . touching the righteousness which is in the Law, blameless."† He, too, had seen a light in the way

* *Aboth.* iv 25.

† *Phil.* iii. 5-6.

which completely changed the direction of his life : and he, too, as we shall see, had been " caught up into paradise, and had heard unspeakable words, which it is not possible for a man to utter."*

The animosity of the Rabbis against their errant confrère even extended to suppressing his name in almost every place where he is mentioned in the records. Instead of it they substituted the word *Acher*, which is Hebrew for " another." Some have thought that this expression was intended to distinguish Elisha ben Abuyah from Jesus, who is sometimes referred to under the disguise of *Peloni* " So-and-so," but this is entirely erroneous. *Acher* is an abbreviation of the colloquialism "*dabar acher*" (something else), or as we should put it " a horse of another colour."

Elisha ben Abuyah is nowhere mentioned in any contemporary document outside of the Rabbinical writings, and even in these he is mentioned but seldom. When we look up the references in the hope of discovering some biographical material or insight into his teaching we are very scantily rewarded. In almost every instance the notice is biased by theological animus, and even when this is not so, legends of a later date have coloured the passages, and we find ourselves with hardly any reliable data on which to build up a portrait of our subject. The best that we can do is to gather together the fragmentary remains and draw our own conclusions from them, bearing in mind the peculiar circumstances of the period. We have to face a position analogous to that of the Christian Gnostics and the Church Fathers. Elisha ben Abuyah was a contemporary of Basilides ; only Bishop Hippolytus, in his *Philosephumena*, has told us more about this great Gnostic teacher than both the Talmuds tell us about the Gnostic Rabbi.

But so little is generally known of Gnosticism in its specifically Jewish aspect that anything we can learn will help us to complete such theoretical impressions as we may have formed of this very remarkable divine philosophy.

The principal sources of information concerning Elisha ben Abuyah are the Palestinian and Babylonian Talmuds ; the former concluded in the Fourth Century A.D. and the latter in the Fifth Century. While both Talmuds consist of commentaries on the Second Century *Mishna* (the Oral Law applying the

* II. Cor. xii. 4.

Written Law of Moses to later conditions), a careful discrimination has to be made between their respective testimonies. If the Palestinian Talmud contains more folk-lore than the Babylonian, the Babylonian often suggests that recent conceptions were current at an earlier period than was actually the case.

The Talmud, it must be remembered, is a whole literature rather than a single book, and it is fortunate for our study, therefore, that nearly all the available material on the present subject is concentrated in a single chapter of this voluminous work—and that chapter acknowledged by all scholars to be the *locus classicus* of Gnosticism in the Talmud.

The *Mishna* on which the Talmud rests is divided into six *sedarim*, or orders, with an average of ten tractates to each. The second order is entitled *Seder Mo'ed*, on the Festivals, and its twelfth and last tractate is called *Chagigah* "Festival Offering." This treats of the duty of attending the three Pilgrim Feasts at Jerusalem, and the appropriate sacrifices to be brought on such occasions. The majority of the references to Elisha ben Abuyah are contained in the commentary on the second chapter of this tractate. The Mishnaic ordinance discussed, runs as follows :

"Men are not to expound unlawful unions with a company of three, nor the work of Creation with two, nor the Chariot with one ; but if a man do so, he must be a wise man, and one who has much knowledge on his own account.

"Everyone who meddles with these four things that follow, it were better for him that he had not come into the world, *viz*: what is Above, and what is Beneath ; what is Before, and what is After. And everyone who does not revere the Glory of his Maker, it were better for him if he had not come into the world."

Those who are familiar with Jewish mysticism will be aware that it concerned itself with two branches of study—Cosmology and Theosophy. The first, called *Ma'aseh Bereshith* "The Work of Creation," found its inspiration in the first chapter of *Genesis* ; the second, called *Ma'aseh Merkhabah* "The Work of the Chariot," sought to elucidate the mystery of the throne-chariot of God described in the first chapter of the book of *Ezekiel*. Of the two, the knowledge of the "Chariot" represented the higher degree of initiation. The Rabbis rightly discouraged mere idle curiosity in divine things, as it is said here, it were better for a man not to have been born than to meddle with the great mystery ; what is Above, and what is Beneath ; what is Before,

and what is After. It was into the fellowship of this mystery "which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God,"* that the author of the *Epistle to the Ephesians* declares that every sincere Christian can enter. "For this cause," he says, "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . that He would grant you, according to the riches of His Glory, to be strengthened with might in the inner man; that . . . ye may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height . . . that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."†

We have now to place the references to Elisha ben Abuyah in something like their proper sequence.

We know with certainty that he was born in Jerusalem before the destruction of A.D. 70. He was the son of a wealthy citizen, and was trained up to be a Rabbi. His later apostasy has been variously explained. On the one hand it is stated that this was due to his father having dedicated him to the study of the Torah from motives of personal aggrandisement rather than for the honour of God, and on the other hand to a pre-natal incident which is said to have taken place. According to this account, his mother when pregnant with him was one day passing an heretical place of worship, and was tempted to enter and eat of forbidden food (possibly the Christian *Agapæ*) which infected the child with foreign ideas.

Elisha ben Abuyah seems to have been marked out for mystical pursuits, for Rabbinical adepts frequently met at his home. On one such occasion two scholars were engaged in discussion and became so deeply involved in their subject, that, forgetful of the presence of uninitiated persons they began to speak of the heavenly mysteries. Immediately flames began to play about them so that the father of Elisha exclaimed in alarm, "Do you mean to set my house on fire?"

Elisha ben Abuyah made rapid progress in his divinity studies, and we may think of him as a young man learned in the Torah and found worthy to be initiated into the mysteries of the Creation and the Chariot. He was ordained a Rabbi and quickly rose to a position of authority, so that his judgment on difficult questions was greatly respected. His most famous pupil was Rabbi Meir, called the "Light of the Law," who remained devoted to him even after his rupture with orthodox Judaism.

* *Eph.* iii. 9.

† *Eph.* iii. 14-19.

It is impossible with the limited and rather intractable material at our disposal to do more than suggest the reasons which led Elisha to give up his chair at the College, and go forth on a lone quest of his own. Did he come under the influence of some Gnostic sect? There is a curious statement that "Greek hymns ceased not from his mouth, and that often when he stood up to go out of the College heretical books which had been concealed in his clothing used to fall from his lap." We shall revert to this question a little later; but it is fairly certain that the Hadrianic war contributed greatly towards changing his opinions.

When the revolt of Bar Kochba, the pseudo-Messiah, was suppressed with difficulty by the legions of Hadrian in A.D. 135, the very harshest decrees were enacted against the defeated Jews. The keeping of Sabbaths and Festivals and the practice of circumcision were strictly forbidden. Scrolls of the Law were burned, the Colleges broken up, and the Rabbis prohibited from teaching on pain of death. Secret gatherings for worship and study were held in caves and desert places after the manner of the conventicles of the Scottish Covenanters. Elisha ben Abuyah was profoundly affected by the situation. We can discredit the accusation in the Palestinian Talmud that he was one of those who betrayed his companions to the Romans for trying to keep holy the Sabbath Day; but he is also accused of persuading the young scholars to forsake their study of the Torah and engage in some worldly occupation. The reason given is that he saw how a man lose his life in the performance of a precept for which God had promised the reward of length of days. Here perhaps is a tradition with a substratum of truth in it. Many a man's faith at a time of crisis has suffered shipwreck because of failure to discern God's justice in the affliction of the innocent. In our own day not a dozen years have elapsed since similar doubts were freely expressed by quite religious people. We know that several of Elisha's fellow Rabbis discussed most earnestly the text of *Leviticus* (xviii, 5) "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them." "He shall live in them," they said, "not die in them." Finally, indeed, they publicly decreed that "Any sin denounced by the Law may be committed by a man if his life is threatened, except the sins of idolatry, adultery and murder."

We cannot entirely get rid of the evidence that for a time Elisha ben Abuyah gave himself up to a worldly life and altogether

forsook his divinity studies. His sensitive mind had received a shock which may well have driven him temporarily to the other extreme, as sometimes happens with very highly strung individuals. While he was fighting the dark demon of doubt, his pupil Rabbi Meir would not leave him, and frequently urged him to give up the struggle against Providence and become conformable to the discipline of the Torah. Several passages of the Talmud concern themselves with this period of Elisha's history, and they suggest that he was very conscious of the enormity of his conduct. The passages are worth quoting for their revelation of the master's state of mind, and the deep attachment of his disciple.

"Acher (Elisha ben Abuyah) asked this question of R. Meir, after the former had gone forth into evil courses, and said to him, What is the meaning of the passage, 'God hath even made the one side by side with the other?' Meir replied, Everything which the Holy One, blessed be He, created, He created with its counterpart. He created mountains, He created hills, He created seas, He created rivers. Acher said to him, R. Akiba thy teacher did not say so, but he explained it as meaning that He created the righteous, He created sinners. He created the Garden of Eden, He created Gehenna. . . ."

"There is a story about Acher, that he was once riding upon his horse on the Sabbath (an unlawful proceeding), and R. Meir was walking behind him to learn the Law from his mouth. Acher said to him, Meir, turn thee backwards, for I have already measured by my horse's hoofs up to this point the limit of a Sabbath day's journey. Meir replied, Do thou also turn thyself back. Acher said to him, Have I not already said to thee, I have heard from behind the curtain, 'Return, O backsliding children, except Acher.' Meir forced him to enter a place of instruction. Acher said to one child, Repeat to me thy verse. He said to him, 'There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked.' He brought him into another synagogue. He said to a child, Repeat for me thy verse. He said to him, 'For though thou wash thee with lye, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me.' . . . He brought him into another synagogue, until he had brought him to thirteen synagogues. They all repeated to him to the same effect. In the last one (the child) said to him, 'But unto the wicked (*welarasha*) God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, etc.?' That child was a stammerer. It sounded as if he had said to him, 'And to Elisha (*wele-elisha*) saith God.' Some say that there was a knife by his side, and that he was so incensed that he cut the boy in pieces and distributed the parts among the thirteen synagogues; but others say that he only *said*, If there had been a knife in my hand, I would have cut him in pieces.

The problem of God's justice, which so deeply concerned Elisha ben Abuyah, was intimately connected with the more difficult problem of the Divine Nature. We have noted that

Elisha was accused of reading heretical books in secret. Was he seeking through these a solution to the Great Mystery? Perhaps the first of the passages just quoted may furnish a clue. Why should Elisha ben Abuyah be interested in the text "God also hath set the one over against the other"? When we compare the reason given on the authority of R. Akiba, we are reminded of the teaching of the Græco-Ebionite *Clementine Homilies*. There the Apostle Peter discusses the justice of God, and puts forward the theory of pairs and opposites.

"But if anyone," says Peter, "according to the opinion of this Simon the Samaritan, will not admit that God is just, to whom then can anyone ascribe justice, or the possibility of it? For if the Root of All have it not, there is every necessity to think that it must be impossible to find it in human nature, which is, as it were, the fruit. And if it is to be found in man, how much more in God! But if righteousness can be found nowhere, neither in God nor in man, then neither can unrighteousness. But there is such a thing as righteousness, for unrighteousness takes its name from the existence of righteousness; for it is called unrighteousness, when righteousness is compared with it, and it is found to be opposite to it. Hence, therefore God, teaching men with respect to the truth of existing things, being Himself One, has distinguished all principles into pairs and opposites, Himself being One and sole God from the beginning, having made heaven and earth, day and night, light and fire (*sic*), sun and moon, life and death. . . . And if pious men had understood this mystery, they would never have gone astray. . . ."*

Here we are in contact with a definite teaching of the Gnostic schools, which in its non-Jewish form was sometimes associated with a dualistic conception of the Deity. Were the books which Elisha read Gnostic works? Possibly Christian-Gnostic documents. Rabbi Meir, the disciple of Elisha, was acquainted with and made a bitter word-play on the *Evangelion* (Gospel); *Aven-gilyon* "idolatrous-revelation," he called it. And we are reminded that Trypho the Jew of Justin Martyr's *Dialogue*, who was confessedly a refugee from the Hadrianic war, says "I am aware that your precepts in the so-called *Evangelion* are so wonderful and so great, that I suspect no one can keep them; for I have carefully read them."† This *Evangelion* was one of the books of the Minim (the Talmudic term for sectaries who were deists), and of the many passages in the Talmud where encounters with the Minim are referred to, the subject of discussion is frequently as to whether there are two Powers in heaven.

* *Clem. Hom.*, ch. xv.

† *Dial. c. Tryph.* ch. x.

Had Elisha ben Abuyah any leanings towards the doctrine of the Two Powers? In order to answer this question we must now quote the most famous passage concerning him; that of the four sages who entered Paradise in ecstatic vision.

“Our Rabbis have taught four men entered Paradise; Ben Azzai, Ben Zoma, Acher and Rabbi Akiba. R. Akiba said to them, When you approach the stones of pure marble, do not say, Water, water! for it is said, ‘He that speaketh falsehood shall not be established before mine eyes.’ Ben Azzai gazed and died. Concerning him Scripture says: ‘Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.’ Ben Zoma gazed and went mad, and concerning him Scripture says: ‘Hast thou found honey? Eat so much as is good for thee.’ Acher cut the plants. R. Akiba departed in peace.”

The Babylonian Talmud comments:

“‘Acher cut the plants’—He saw Metatron (the Angel of the Presence) to whom is given permission to sit and record the merits of Israel. Acher said, We are taught that in heaven there is no sitting down, nor anger, nor lack, nor weariness. Are there—God forbid!—two First Principles? They brought out Metatron and gave him sixty strokes with a lash of fire. They said to him, Why, when thou sawst him (*i.e.*, Elisha), didst thou not rise up? He was given permission to strike out the merits of Acher.”

Unfortunately for this commentary the Metatron idea was not current among the Jews so early as the time of Elisha ben Abuyah; yet the dualistic inference is much the same. “Acher cut the plants.” Those who have studied Jewish mysticism will know that a distinction was made between two heavenly orders of beings, the *Netiyoth* (plants)—those who are of the Divine Essence and yet have a distinct existence like the branches of a plant, and the *Nephridim* (separate ones)—such as the ministering angels who have no Essential connection with the Deity. Elisha’s error consisted in cutting the plants *i.e.*, in assuming the separate existence of two co-equal Deities, instead of merely distinct Intelligences in the one Essence of the same Deity.

Of the later life of Elisha ben Abuyah tradition tells us nothing. So much is clear, that he was a married man, that he lived longer than the Psalmist’s span, and that he was never reconciled to orthodoxy. There is a hint that he died at Rome; but this is unlikely.

The last word of the Talmud is a tardy acknowledgment of the greatness of a learned but wayward teacher.

"When Acher died, they said 'Let him not be brought into judgment, but let him not be admitted to the world to come.' Let him not be brought into judgment, because he studied the Law ; but let him not be admitted to the world to come, because he sinned. R. Meir said, 'It were good to bring him to judgment, but also to admit him to the world to come. Would that I might die, that I might cause smoke to ascend from his grave.' When R. Meir died, smoke ascended from the grave of Acher. R. Jochanan said, 'A mighty deed it was to consign his teacher to the flames. There was one among us, and we found not a way to deliver him. If I take him by the hand, who will snatch him away from me.' He also said, 'Would that I might die, and extinguish the smoke from his grave.' When R. Jochanan died, the smoke ceased from the grave of Acher. The public mourner uttered this expression over him, 'Even the keeper of the door of Gehenna stood not his ground before thee, O our teacher.'"

"A daughter of Acher came to Rabbi. She said to him, 'Rabbi, give me some food.' He said to her, 'Whose daughter art thou?' She said to him, 'I am the daughter of Acher.' He said to her, 'Is there still of his seed in the world? And yet it is written, He shall have neither son nor son's son among his people, nor any remaining where he sojourned.' She said to him, 'Remember his study of the Law, and remember not his deeds.' Immediately there came down fire, and consumed the seat of Rabbi. Rabbi wept and said, 'And if those who disgrace themselves through the Law are honoured thus, how much more those who obtain praise through their use of it?'"

HIDE AND SEEK

By TERESA HOOLEY

I came into Thy Church.
Blinded by incense, my eyes saw Thee not ;
Beguiled by music, my ears heard Thee not.
Yet Thou wast there,
For Thou art everywhere,
And yet not manifest unto me, O God.

I came out of Thy Church,
And, walking through the fields on the Sabbath day,
I saw, I heard, I found Thee by the way,
And Thou wast there,
My heart knew Thou wast there—
A fledgling bird in the daisies where I trod.

"CHRISTOS"

By EVELINE VERNON WALKER

ON the wings of the wind is Thy voice carried to me, oh, Divine
 Lover !

I see Thy beauty mirrored in the depth of the still lagoon ;
Thy Eternal Loveliness veiled for a while by the soft grey mists.
The sun is Thy halo, my Holy One, all Nature manifests Thy
 livingness and the dewy grass sparkles with joy at Thy
 approach.

In the bluebell wood I find Thee, where the sound of the busy world
 is not heard, and everything is enfolded in silence. Light
 and shade play hide and seek in this fair sanctuary of
 peace.

The great trees fill my soul with strength, their leaves tinted by
 Thy hand. The silence is broken only by the voice of the
 wood-pigeon calling Thy name, Hu—Hu—Hu, this is
 holy ground.

Out in the sunlight, the little daisy stars spring up to greet Thee
 and the pale spring blossoms are flushed with joy at Thy
 approach.

On the bosom of the fathomless pool the water lily rests, for ever
 hiding in her heart Thy Mystery.

The earth is full of Thy glory, oh Holy One. I hear Thy voice in
 the air, see Thy brightness in the water, and in the ether
 I sense Thee. When I awake the bird voices are carolling
 to Thee, of love, of hope, of spring ; as I lie down to rest
 I see the stars keeping watch over Thy sleeping world.

The sun gilds the day, the moon silvers the night, sunshine,
 moonshine, starshine, how they radiate Thy Beauty !
 When the mighty sun comes forth, the mists of morning
 melt away.

Oh, wind-swept heath, the fragrance of God is here ; bees are
 making melody in the scented thyme, a waft of wood-
 smoke brings back memories, and the aromatic scent
 from the pines rises as incense on the air.

Oh, lovely day, every sound is full of His Loveliness !

My Lord, I seek Thee up the golden Ray, into the Light that never
 was on sea or land !

MEMORIES OF PAST LIVES

By ANNIE BESANT, D.L. (President, Theosophical Society)

PART I

THERE is probably no man now living in the scientific world who does not regard the theory of physical evolution as beyond dispute ; there may be many varieties of opinion with regard to details and methods of evolution, but on the fundamental fact, that forms have proceeded from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, there is complete harmony of educated opinion. Moreover, the evolutionary idea dominates all departments of thought, and is applied to society as much as to the individual. In history it is used as the master-key wherewith to unlock the problems of the growth of nations, and, in sociology, of the progress of civilizations. The rise, the decay, the fall of races are illuminated by this all-pervading idea, and it is difficult now for anyone to throw himself in thought back into the time when law gave way to miracle, and order was replaced by fortuitous irregularity.

In working up to the hypothesis of evolution small indications were searched for, as much as long successions were observed. Things apparently trifling were placed on record, and phenomena apparently trivial were noted with meticulous care. Above all, any incident which seemed to conflict with a recognized law of Nature was minutely observed and repeatedly scrutinized, since it might be the indication of some force as yet undiscovered, of some hidden law working along lines as yet unknown. Every fact was observed and recorded, challenged and discussed, and each contributed something to the great pyramid of reasons which pointed to evolution as the best hypothesis for explanation of the phenomena of Nature. Your dog turned round and round on the hearthrug before composing himself to sleep ; was he not governed by an unconscious memory from the times when his ancestors thus prepared a comfortable depression in the jungle for their repose ? Your cat pressed her fore-paws on the ground, pushing outwards repeatedly ; was it not an unconscious memory which dominated her from the need of her larger predecessors encircled by the tall grass of the forest hiding-place, to flatten out a sufficient bed for luxurious rest ? Slight, in truth, are such indications, and yet withal they make up, in their accumulation, a massive argument in favour of unconscious memories

of past lives being wrought into the very fabric of the animal body.

But there is one line of questions, provocative of thought, that has not yet been pursued with industry equal to that bestowed on the investigation of bodily movements and habits. The questions remain unanswered, either by biologist or psychologist. Evolution has traced for us the gradual building of our now complex and highly organized bodies ; it has shown them to us evolving, in the long course of millions of years, from a fragment of protoplasm, from a simple cell, through form after form, until their present condition has been reached, thus demonstrating a continuity of forms, advancing into greater perfection as organisms. But so far science has not traced a correlative continuity of consciousness—a golden thread on which the innumerable separated bodies might be threaded—a consciousness inhabiting and functioning through this succession of forms. It has not been able to prove—nay, it has not even recognized the likelihood of the possibility—that consciousness passes on unbroken from body to body, carrying with it an ever-increasing content, the accumulated harvest of innumerable experiences, transmuted into capacities, into powers.

Scientists have directed our attention to the splendid inheritance that has come down to us from the past. They have shown us how generation after generation has contributed something to the sum of human knowledge, and how cycle after cycle manifests a growth of average humanity in intellectual power, in extent of consciousness, in fineness and beauty of emotion. But if we ask them to explain the conditions of this growth, to describe the passing on of the content of one consciousness to another ; if we ask for some method, comparable to the methods observed in the physical world, whereby we may trace this transmission of the treasures of consciousness, may explain how it made its habits and accumulates experiences which it transforms into mental and moral capacities, then science returns us no answers, and fails to show us the means and the methods of the evolution of consciousness in man.

When, in dealing with animals, science points to the so-called inherited instincts, it does not offer any explanation of the means whereby an intangible self-preserving instinct can be transmitted by an animal to its offspring. That there is some purposive and effective action, apart from any possibility of physical experience having been gained as its instigator, performed by the young of

an animal, we can observe over and over again. Of the fact there can be no question. The young of animals, immediately after coming into the world, are seen to play some trick whereby they save themselves from some threatening danger. But science does not tell us how this intangible consciousness of danger can be transmitted by the parent, who has not experienced it, to the offspring who has never known it. If the life-preserving instinct is transmissible through the physical body of the parent, how did the parent come to possess it? If the chicken just out of the shell runs for protection to the mother-hen when the shadow of a hawk above it is seen, science tells us that it is prompted by the life-preserving instinct, the result of the experience of the danger of the hovering hawk, so many having thus perished that the seeking of protection from the bird of prey is transmitted as an instinct. But the difficulty of accepting this explanation lies in the fact that the experience necessary to evolve the instinct can only have been gained by the cocks and hens who were killed by birds of prey; these had no chance thereafter of producing eggs, and so could not transmit their valuable experience, while all the chicks come from eggs belonging to parents who had not experienced the danger, and hence could not have developed the instinct. (I am assuming that the result of such experiences is transmissible as an instinct—an assumption which is quite unwarranted.) The only way of making the experiences of slaughtered animals reappear later as a life-preserving instinct is for the record of the experience to be preserved by some means, and transmitted as an instinct to those belonging to the same type. The Theosophist points to the existence of matter finer than the physical, which vibrates in correspondence with any mood of consciousness—in this case the shock of sudden death. That vibration tends to repeat itself, and that tendency remains, and is reinforced by similar experiences of other slaughtered poultry; this, recorded in the "group-soul", passes as a tendency into all the poultry race, and shows itself in the newly-hatched chick the moment the danger threatens the new form. Instinct is "unconscious memory", "inherited experience", but each one who possesses it takes it from a continuing consciousness from which his separate lower consciousness is derived. How else can it have originated, how else have been transmitted?

Can it be said that animals learn of danger by the observation of others who perish? That would not explain the unconscious memory in our newly-hatched chicken, who can have observed nothing. But apart from this, it is clear that animals are

curiously slow either to observe or to learn the application to themselves of the actions, the perils, of others. How often do we see a motherly hen running along the side of a pond clucking desperately to her brood of ducklings that have plunged into the water to the manifest discomposure of the non-swimming hen ; but she does the same thing brood after brood ; she never learns that the ducklings are able to swim and that there is no danger to be apprehended when they plunge into the water. She calls them as vigorously after ten years' experience as she did after the first brood, so that it does not look as if instinct originated in careful observation of petty movements by animals who then transmit the results of their observations to their offspring.

The whole question of the continuity of consciousness—a continuity necessary to explain the evolution of instinct as much as that of intelligence—is insoluble by science, but has been readily solved by religion. All the great religions of the past and present have realized the eternity of the Spirit : “God” it is written in a Hebrew Scripture, “created man to be the image of His own Eternity”, and in that eternal nature of the Spirit lies the explanation alike of instinct and of intelligence. In the intellect-aspect of this Spirit all the harvests of the experiences of successive lives are stored, and from the treasures of the spiritual memory are sent down assimilated experiences, appearing as instincts, as unconscious memories of past lives, in the new-born form. Every improved form receives as instincts and as innate ideas this wealth of reminiscence : every intellectual and moral faculty is a store of reminiscences, and education is but the awakening of memory.

Thus religion illuminates that which science leaves obscure, and gives us a rational, an intelligible theory of the growth of instinct and of intellect ; it shows us a continuity of a consciousness ever increasing in content, embodying itself in forms ever increasing in complexity. The view that man consists not only of bodies in which the working of the law of heredity may be traced, but also is a living consciousness, growing, unfolding, evolving, by the assimilation of the food of experience—this theory is an inevitable pendant to the theory of physical evolution, for the latter remains unintelligible without the former. Special creation, rejected from the physical world, cannot much longer be accepted in the psychical, nor be held to explain satisfactorily the differences between the genius and the dolt, between the congenital saint and the congenital criminal. Unvarying law, the

knowledge of which is making man the master of the physical world, must be recognized as prevailing equally in the psychical. The improving bodies must be recognized as instruments to be used for the gaining of further experiences by the ever-unfolding consciousness.

A definite opinion on this matter can only be gained by personal study, investigation and research. Knowledge of the great truths of Nature is not a gift, but a prize to be won by merit. Every human being must form his opinions by his own strenuous efforts to discover truth, by the exercise of his own reasoning faculties, by the experiences of his own consciousness. Writers who garb their readers in second-hand opinions, as a dealer in second-hand clothes dresses his customers, will never turn out a decently costumed set of thinkers; they will be clad in misfits. But there are lines of research to be followed, experiences to be gone through and analysed, by those who would arrive at truth—research which has led others to knowledge, experiences which have been found fruitful in results. To these a writer may point his readers, and they, if they will, may follow along such lines for themselves.

I think we may find in our consciousness—in our intelligence and our emotional nature—distinct traces from the past which point to the evolution of our consciousness, as the recurrent laryngeal nerve and the embryonic reptilian heart point to the ancestralline of evolution of our body. I think there are memories forming part of our consciousness which justify belief in previous existences and point the way to a more intelligent understanding of human life. I think that, by careful observation, we may find memories in ourselves, not only of past events, but of the past training and discipline which have made us what we are; memories which are embedded in, which form even the very fabric of our consciousness, which emerge more clearly as we study them, and become more intelligible the more carefully we observe and analyse them.

But for a moment we must pause on the theory of Reincarnation, on the broad principle of consciousness in evolution.

This theory posits a Spirit, a seed or germ of consciousness planted in matter, and ultimately, after long ages of growth, becoming ready to enter an undeveloped human body, connected by its material with three worlds, the worlds of mind, of desire and of action, otherwise called the heavenly, intermediate and physical worlds. In the physical world this growing Spirit

gathers experiences of varied kinds, feels pleasures and pains, joys and sorrows, health and illness, successes and disappointments, the many changing conditions which make up our mortal life. He carries these on with him through death, and in the intermediate world experiences the inevitable results of desires which clashed with the laws of Nature, reaping in suffering the harvest of his blundering ignorance. Thus he shapes the beginnings of a conscience, the recognition of an external law of conduct. Passing on to the heavenly world, he builds his mental experiences into mental faculties until, all the food of experience being assimilated, he begins again to hunger, and so returns to earth with the elements of a character, still enveloped in many-folded ignorance, but starting with a little more content of consciousness than he had in his previous life. Such is his cycle of growth, the passing through the three worlds over and over again, ever accumulating experience, ever transmuting it into power. That cycle is repeated over and over again, until the savage grows from the average man to the man of talent, of noble character; then onwards to the genius, to the saint, to the hero; onwards still to the Perfect Man; onwards yet, through ever-increasing unimaginable splendours, vanishing into blinding radiance which veils his further progress from our dazzled eyes. Thus every man builds himself, shapes his own destiny, is verily self-created; no one of us is what we are save as we have wrought out our own being; our future is not imposed on us by an arbitrary will or a soulless necessity, but is ours to fashion, to create. There is nothing we cannot accomplish if we are given time, and time is endless. We, the living consciousnesses, pass from body to body, and each new body takes the impress made upon it by its tenant, the ever-young immortal Spirit.

I have spoken of the three stages of the life-cycle, each belonging to a definite world; it must be noted that in the physical stage of the life-period we are living in all the three worlds, for we are thinking and desiring as well as acting, and our body, the vehicle of consciousness, is triple. We lose the physical part of the body at death, and the desire-part at a later period, and live in the mental body—in which all good thoughts and pure emotions have their habitat—while in the heavenly world. When the heaven life is over, the mental body also disintegrates, and there remains but the spiritual body whereof St. Paul speaks, "eternal in the heavens". Into that, the lasting clothing of the Spirit, are woven all the pure results of experiences gathered in the lower worlds. In the building of the new triple body for the

new life-cycle in the lower worlds a new apparatus comes into existence for the use of the spiritual consciousness and the spiritual body ; and the latter, retaining within itself the conscious memory of past events, imprints on the lower—its instruments for gathering fresh experience—only the results of the past, as faculties, mental and emotional, with many traces of past experiences which have been outgrown and remain normally in the subconsciousness. The conscious memory of past events being present only in the spiritual body, the consciousness must be functioning in that in order to “remember” ; and such functioning is possible through a system of training and discipline—yoga—which may be studied by anyone who has perseverance and a certain amount of innate ability for this special kind of work.

But in addition to this there are many unconscious memories, manifesting in faculty, in emotion, in power, traces of the past imprinted on the present, and discoverable by observations on ourselves and others. Hence memories of the past may be clear and definite, obtained by the practice of yoga, or unconscious but shown by results, and closely allied in many ways to what are called instincts, by which you do certain things, think along certain lines, exercise certain functions, and possess certain knowledge without having consciously acquired it. Among the Greeks, and the ancients generally, much stress was laid upon this form of memory. Plato's phrase: “All knowledge is reminiscence”, will be remembered. In the researches of psychology to-day, many surges of feeling, driving a man to hasty, unpremeditated action, are ascribed to the subconsciousness, *i.e.*, the consciousness which shows itself in involuntary thoughts, feelings and actions ; these come to us out of the far-off past without our volition or our conscious creation. How do these come, unless there be continuity of consciousness ? Any who study modern psychology will see how great a part unconscious memory plays in our lives, how it is said to be stronger than our reason, how it conjures up pathetic scenes uncalled-for, how at night it throws us into causeless panics. These, we are told, are due to memories of dangers surrounding savages, who must ever be on the alert to guard themselves against sudden attacks, whether of man or beast, breaking into the hours of repose, killing the men and women as they slept. These past experiences are said to have left records in consciousness, records which lie below the threshold of waking consciousness but are ever present within us. And some say that this is the most important part of our consciousness, though out of sight for the ordinary mind.

We cannot deny to these the name of memory, these experiences out of the past that assert themselves in the present. Study these traces, and see whether they are explicable save by the continuity of consciousness, making the Self of the savage the Self which is yourself to-day, seeing the persistence of the Individual throughout human evolution, growing, expanding, developing, but a fragment of the eternal "I am".

May we not regard instincts as memories buried in the subconscious, influencing our actions, determining our "choices"? Is not the moral instinct Conscience, a mass of interwoven memories of past experiences, speaking with the authoritative utterance of all instincts, and deciding on "right" and "wrong" without argument, without reasoning? It speaks clearly when we are walking on well-trodden ways, warning us of dangers experienced in the past, and we shun them at sight as the chicken shuns the downrush of the hawk hovering above it. But as that same chicken has no instinct as regards the rush of a motor-car, so have we no "voice of Conscience" to warn us of the pitfalls in ways hitherto unknown.

Again, innate faculty—what is it but an unconscious memory of subjects mastered in the past? A subject, literary, scientific, artistic, what we will, is taken up by one person and mastered with extraordinary ease; he seizes at sight the main points in the study, taking it up as we, apparently, but so rapidly grasping it that it is obviously an old subject remembered, not a new subject mastered. A second person, by no means intellectually inferior, is observed to be quite dense along this particular line of study; reads a book on it, but keeps little trace of it in his mind; addresses himself to its understanding, but it evades his grasp. He stumbles along feebly, where the other ran unshackled and at ease. To what can such difference be due save to the unconscious memory which science is beginning to recognize? One student has known the subject and is merely remembering it; the other takes it up for the first time, and finds it difficult and obscure.

As an example we may take H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*, a difficult book; it is said to be obscure, diffuse, the style to be often unattractive, the matter very difficult to follow. I have known some of my friends take up these volumes and study them year after year, men and women, intelligent, quite alert in mind; yet after years of study they cannot grasp its main points nor very often follow its obscure arguments. Let me

put against this my own experience of that book. I had not read anything of the subject with which it deals from the standpoint of the Theosophical books I had read—except *The Occult World*—and it came into my hands, apparently by chance, given to me to review by Mr. Stead, then Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*. When I began to read that book I read it right through day after day, and the whole of it was so familiar as I read that I sat down and wrote a review which anyone may read in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of, I think, February or March, 1889; and anyone who reads that review will find that I had taken the heart out of the book and presented it intelligently to the ordinary newspaper reader. If I had been given a book of some other kind I might have stumbled over it and made nothing of it at all; but as I read I *remembered*, and the whole philosophy fell into order before me, although to this brain and in this body it came before me for the first time. I allege that in cases like that we have a proof of the accuracy of Plato's idea, mentioned already, that all knowledge is reminiscence; where we have known before we do really remember, and so master without any effort that which another, without a similar experience, may find abstruse, difficult and obscure. We may apply this to any new subject easily; if not, taken as a new thing, we must learn step by step, and gradually understand the relation between the phenomena studied, working it out laboriously because unknown.

(To be continued)

"THE BELOVED OF PTHAH"

By EDITH K. HARPER (Author of *St. Francis of Assisi, etc.*)

"TO gain the friendship of a cat," says Théophile Gautier, "is a difficult thing. The cat is a philosophical, methodical, quiet animal, tenacious of its own habits, fond of order and cleanliness, and it does not lightly confer its friendship. If you are worthy of its affection a cat will be your friend but never your slave. . . . Sometimes he will sit upon the carpet in front of you, looking at you with eyes so melting, so caressing and so human, that they almost frighten you, for it is impossible to believe that a soul is not there!"

This ardent enthusiasm of the famous French romanticist well expresses the mysterious sentiments with which, from prehistoric times, mankind has regarded the Cat. In a recently published work* Mr. M. Oldfield Howey—that indefatigable authority on Myth and Magic—has gathered together a fascinating array of historical facts and traditions of cat-lore that will be of great use to students of comparative religions, while delighting pussy's friends and possibly even compelling a grudging interest on the part of those who are adamant to her blandishments. "The Cat", we are told, "is the symbol of Good and Evil; Light and Darkness; Christ and Satan; Religion or Black Magic". The graceful creature was known to the Egyptians as a domesticated animal some four or five thousand years ago, but was much more than a mere household pet to those worshippers of the Sun and Moon. Did the cat not symbolize for them indeed at least one aspect of Isis "who" (I quote Mr. Howey) "as the Moon, or the Cat that represented the Moon, was especially adored in the city named after Bubastis—Aboo-bast, the City of Pasht. Here the worship of Bast dates from a remote antiquity, and the Cat was held in such reverence as her symbol by the citizens that deep mourning followed the death of the sacred animal". To the student of symbolism the theme assuredly offers a wealth of fascinating speculation, for, "the subjects to which the Cat Symbol introduces us are themselves so tremendous that scarcely one of them could be exhausted by a lifetime's exclusive devotion".

*"The Cat in the Mysteries of Religion and Magic", by M. Oldfield Howey, author of "The Horse in Magic and Myth", "The Encircled Serpent", etc. London: Rider and Co., Paternoster Row, E.C.4. Price 15/- net.

In the age-old changing medley of Egypt's tutelary deities we glimpse a Trinity—Pthah, Pasht, and Sekhmet, of whom Pasht with her cat or lioness head is perhaps least difficult to visualize. "She is identified", Ruskin tells his girlish listeners in *Ethics of the Dust*, "with the Greek Artemis, especially in her offices of Judgment and Vengeance. She is usually lioness-headed, sometimes cat-headed, her attributes seeming often trivial or ludicrous unless their full meaning is known. . . . The Cat was sacred to her; or, rather, to the Sun, and secondarily to her. She is always the companion of Pthah (called The Beloved of Pthah, it may be as *Judgment* demanded and longed-for by *Truth*). There are more statues of Pasht in the British Museum than of any other Egyptian deity, several of them fine in workmanship, nearly all in dark stone, which may be, presumably, to connect her, as the moon, with the night; and in her office of avenger, with Grief." Among the many fine illustrations in Mr. Oldfield Howey's book are several of these statues of Pasht (or Bast), one of them representing the goddess holding a sistrum in her hand, with four small cats sitting at her feet. It is amusing to note that the dress of Pasht is an almost exact counterpart of the modern sleeveless and tight-fitting "one-piece frock" with V-shaped neck, with which we are so familiar nowadays. Have we here the prototype of the Parisian *couturière*? Undoubtedly! Herodotus has left it on record that the festivals in honour of Pasht (celebrated at Bubastis in April and May), were more popular with the ancient Egyptians than any other of their numerous feasts. There were brilliant water pageants, attended by thousands of men, women and children; "and", comments the Greek historian, "a greater consumption of wine takes place than during the whole of the year". Prohibition was evidently unknown on the banks of the Sacred Nile.

When the crude gropings of the prehistoric mind sought to follow the soul after its separation from the material body, the Cat was specially provided for. "Few if any", quotes Mr. Howey, "are the creeds that can equal the Egyptian depiction of a future life for our feline friends. . . . The certainty of its reality was so firmly established in the Egyptian mind that no effort imagination could suggest as likely to help the little pilgrims on the farther side of death was spared by their faithful human friends". Gods and goddesses met them, holding their little paws and guiding them along "The wonderful pathway of the Soul" (or Ka), and "the offering that had been deposited in the tombs magically attended them to sustain them on the journey. At the

confines of the sky they found a ladder erected, but the gods held it firm and they scaled it without mishap. If on the last rung the feline pilgrims, still timid as when on earth, hesitated, the gods Horus and Set held them each by one of their paws, and hoisted them, all fluttered, into Paradise".

We seek in vain to probe backward to the beginning of those mysterious cults. Again I quote Mr. Howey: "The worship of sacred animals commenced in Egypt before the dawn of history and survived for many thousands of years in conjunction with later creeds. It probably originated before the earliest civilization of which we have any relics". Each later theology incorporates something of the old, and dualism is ever present. Pasht, for instance, exemplifies both sun and moon "and all that was symbolized by them for the Egyptian mystic, especially the essential unity of the light proceeding from them both. As the Cat sees in the darkness, so the Sun which journeyed into the underworld at night saw through its gloom. Bast (or Pasht) was the representative of the Moon, because that planet was considered as the Sun-god's Eye during the hours of darkness. For as the moon reflects the light of the solar orb, so the Cat's phosphorescent eyes were held to mirror the sun's rays when it was otherwise invisible to man. Bast as the Cat-Moon held the sun in her eye during the night, keeping watch with the light he bestowed upon her, whilst her paws gripped and bruised and pierced the head of his deadly enemy, the Serpent of Darkness. Thus she justified her title of the Tearer or Render, and proved that it was not incompatible with love".

It is a far cry from Ancient Egypt to the Middle Ages. Very different from the Veneration of Cats by these pagan children of the Nile, was the attitude of Mediaeval superstition towards a creature which was held by Christendom's travesty of the Divine Master's message of Compassion to be the living embodiment of evil. Cats, black cats especially, were "limbs of Satan", witch's familiars, warlocks in feline form.

This, as we know, led to the atrocious cruelties of the Middle Ages and onward to times still nearer to our own. All readers acquainted with the mass of documentary evidence concerning trials for so-called witchcraft will recall these records, one more dreadful than another, revealing the mad frenzy of which bigotry is capable. Mr. Howey gives an extensive list of authorities, indeed each of his chapters, dealing as it does with some different aspect of the cat subject, is supplemented by the fullest biblio-

graphy. He quotes the following account of Cat sacrifice from Moncrieff's *Lettre sur les Chats* :

"Il se passe à Metz tous les ans, une fête qui est à la honte de l'esprit : les magistrats viennent gravement sur la place publique exposer des chats dans une cage, placée au dessus d'un boûcher auquel en met le feu avec un grand appareil et le peuple, au cris affreux que font les bêtes, croit faire souffrir encore une veille sorcière qu'en prétend s'être autrefois metamorphosée en chat lorsqu'en allait la brûler".

This frightful custom still persisted in 1750 at Metz, it is stated, as one of the special celebrations of the Feast of St. John, till at length a certain kind-hearted lady (la Maréchale d'Armentières), prevailed on her husband to suppress those "useless hecatombs of cats". May she be blessed for ever ! But how much better are we to-day, I wonder ? At any rate, when poor Reynard yields his last breath at the "kill", the enthusiastic field has not the poor excuse of believing (with the Church's sanction), that the neighbourhood has been rid of a witch !

"It will probably surprise some of my readers", goes on Mr. Howey, "to find Britain mentioned as the headquarters of evil spirits, but we must remember that from prehistoric times the Highlands and Islands of Scotland were the home of the Supernatural. It would seem as if the inhabitants of these wild regions had succeeded in establishing a sympathetic and strong rapport with the unseen worlds of magic and miracle which elsewhere is unparalleled". Coming southward, he declares, "The building of Westminster Abbey was the occasion of a feline sacrifice in a Christian Church. One of the exhibits in the once famous collection of curiosities, formerly on view in Don Saltere's Coffee-House in Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, was a starved and shrivelled corpse of a cat, which had been found between the walls of the Abbey when the East end was being rebuilt. Apparently the cat had been walled up alive".

But while we shudder over those bygone horrors practised in the name of religion, it is good to remember that humanity has struggled through them into a gradual realization of all that is meant by the Golden Rule. When we look at the Church's beautiful representations of The Manger at Christmas-tide we see that the dumb animals are given a place of honour near the Holy Child, as though silently claiming their share in the Glad Tidings. Perhaps St. Francis may have had this in mind when he made the first Christmas Crib among the hills at Greccio, so

that people might learn from it to be tender to "our brothers the beasts".

It is a relief to turn to the cat of to-day, cherished monopoliser of the hearthrug, condescending recipient of choicest dainties in fish and cream, who, since 1871, has had a special show all to herself at the Crystal Palace. Comparing her with the dog, a recent writer in *The Morning Post* observes: "Cats are strangely secretive and distrustful of other creatures. . . . We know that there are exceptions, and it may be that domesticity is gradually changing cat mentality". Even so, she carries with her the unsolved mystery of her origin and her share in the glories of Ancient Egypt. Nor do we suppose that Death, for her, is the end of all. Persons endowed with "the two sights complete" (as it is called in the Scottish Highlands), have seen, and do see, that which tells them that our pets, the creatures we have loved, will still be with us in the Land of Light, where:

"Among the many mansions of the City
That will have room for all,
The Master Builder's added in His Pity,
Kennel and bench and stall."*

* "Fulfilment", by Kathleen Conyngham Greene.

POWER CENTRES OF BRITAIN

By DION FORTUNE

THERE is an immensely interesting task that is crying out to be undertaken. It is the charting of the power-centres and holy places of Britain. It is a vast task, however—so vast that it is beyond the unaided scope of a single pair of hands. I am therefore appealing for help to all who are interested in our native esoteric tradition. There are several ways in which they can do this. They can send references from books relating to our power-centres. They can send records of psychic experiences obtained at power-centres; and they can send photographs. Let me outline the nature of the task and the divisions into which it falls.

Before Augustine landed in Kent and organised the scattered churches of the west and north and converted the heathen tribes of eastern England, making Canterbury his headquarters, there was an active spiritual life in these islands, both Christian and pagan. It is this dual tradition, the one blending harmoniously in the other without persecution, which is our real esoteric heritage. The Anglo-Saxon never took too kindly to Roman Christianity and his country was always an uneasy see to rule for St. Peter.

Our native church is Celtic, and our native esoteric tradition is both Celtic and Nordic, for the Vikings carried their gods among us when they came raiding. They were closely kin to us in blood and in thought; and our land, only separated from theirs by the shallow North Sea in comparatively recent times as geology reckons time, is of the same geological formation. Consequently their mysteries readily struck root here and flourished, just as the raiders themselves readily intermarried with the women of the tribes and settled down as good Britons when once the first raiding impulse had spent itself.

Another line of contact, however, has also to be taken into account. When the Roman troops were garrisoning Britain they established not only the official temples of the gods, but numerous lodges of the pagan mysteries, which were exceedingly popular among the soldiers when the declining Roman culture had made of official religion a barren and degraded thing.

Of these cults, Mithraism was by far the most popular. In

fact at one time it was a question whether the Bull or the Lamb should rule Europe. It is only because the priests of the finally victorious Lamb were at great pains to destroy every relic of their most dreaded rival that we fail to realise how prevalent and how noble was Mithraism.

There were other and more esoteric cults as well as Mithraism, however, which were current among the Roman troops, especially the officers. These were derived from Egypt and the East. The strange gods we read of in the Old Testament had their adherents; and there were groves of Ashtoreth and altars to Helios in these islands. I was told by an advanced esotericist and scholar in these things, Mr. Brodie Innes, that wherever we find the place-name Coldharbour, we shall also find traces of serpent worship.

These contacts, however, always remained alien and exotic. They never struck root in our English soil. Moreover, they were introduced to these islands in the days of their decadence. It is generally agreed among psychics that the forces that linger about the sites of their altars are not wholesome and may be positively inimical. This is not the case with the old temples of Druidism, which, though the forces are crudely elemental, are never innately evil, though they may be so strong as profoundly to disturb sensitive people who are unused to handling such potencies.

The things we have to look for are comparatively simple. First among these, of course, are the standing stones of the Druids. These are shown upon Ordnance maps and are therefore readily traced. Earthworks such as tumuli and long barrows may or may not have occult significance. It depends upon who was buried beneath them. The grave of a high priest or a great chief may have been consecrated by rites similar to those of the tombs of the Pharaohs. In any case, however, these places have no personal significance for us, and the forces are invariably inimical, being designed to protect the grave from despoilers.

Wells and springs are frequently found to be magnetic centres, especially if they are marked by well-heads formed of very large blocks of stone worked in a primitive manner. Where there is a local tradition of well-dressing upon Midsummer Day or May Day, or any other high festival, we can be pretty sure that we are on the track of something interesting. We must not, however, allow ourselves to be misled by modern revivals of the practice, which are principally concerned with the making of

garlands and forming of processions for the school children, and may be merely pretty fancies on the part of some local enthusiast for rural arts, and have no root in tradition.

High places also play an important part in the mystica tradition. The key-peak of a range or an outstanding headland is exceedingly likely to be a place of ancient worship, and it is well worth while searching it for the remains of earthworks or fallen altar-stones which can be recognised by being roughly rectangular and tooled, or even by being of an alien stone to the local rock. Tradition and place-names also afford us valuable clues.

Trees and groves played an important part in some of the ancient rites, but these can only be traced in tradition, for the original trees have long since died and their descendants have spread into woods and lost their original ring-formation. The trees usually sacred to the mysteries were the oak, the thorn and the ash.

We also do well to seek for crypts and to examine the traditions connected with them, for these crypts were usually used for initiations. It was the wily custom of the Roman Church to adopt and absorb the holy places and holy persons of the pagan faiths among which she came, knowing that it was impossible to wean the average pagan from his religious habits, which were often closely associated with fairs and social customs. When the wholesale conversion of tribes took place at the orders of their chiefs, no more than a handful cared anything for Christianity as a religion, and so long as they were allowed to meet at the holy places to which they were accustomed, they were little inclined to be critical if the rites performed were novel, provided certain important elements were not absent. So we find that on certain holy days very queer things indeed are introduced into Christian churches as part of the celebration. Into Old St. Paul's a stag was led once a year.

Where we meet these ritualistic oddities we may be pretty sure that we are upon the site of an ancient power-centre sufficiently important to be placated.

The pagan temples of the British tribes had no pretence to architecture, being merely wattle or wooden structures that have left no trace. The Romans, however, were nothing if not builders, and their mystery rites were usually celebrated in crypts below the ground level. The Saxons copied them, and such chieftains and men of influence as had a taste for preserving

the ancient pagan faith after Christianity became sufficiently established to be able to persecute built for their ceremonies crypts after the Roman pattern.

Many of the Roman mystery temples were incorporated into the fabrics of our great cathedrals, for though the builders would readily pull down an unsuitable structure, there was little motive for filling in an unwanted crypt. It was therefore left intact and used as a lumber store. In other cases it was used as a dump for builders' refuse and subsequently walled up and forgotten, to be discovered, perhaps, centuries later, when repairs were in process. There must be many such crypts that have not yet been rediscovered.

Other crypts, in the form of very superior cellars, with ecclesiastic influence about their architecture, have been found in ancient granges and farmhouses, no doubt the private mystery temple of the carl or thane who once had dwelt on that site. Occupation tends to remain faithful to spots once chosen. Unless the habits of a people or the nature of the land changes radically, spots once occupied are seldom deserted, for the good reason that human habitations must always be placed in relation to a steady, pure, and sufficiently plentiful water-supply, and such are not too numerous.

Another curious minor type of power-centres are the chapels of the Knights Templars. They are scattered here and there all over Europe, for the Knights were an exceedingly powerful body in their day and held an immense amount of land. They brought back occult knowledge from the East, and became so powerful that the Pope eventually called for a united effort of the monarchs of Christendom to stamp them out. The monarchs were nothing loth, for the Templars had great possessions. These old chapels and consistories sometimes became chapels of ease to parish churches, or were put to base uses as barns; it was seldom, however, that anyone cared to use them as dwelling-houses, so their architectural features are usually still recognisable.

In addition to tracing and classifying according to their contacts the ancient power-centres of Britain, we must note their relationship to the different types of country, for natural formations have an important bearing upon occult work. Chalk will yield us one type of influence, the sandy barrens another. The latter, by the way, usually have Nordic affinities, like Thursley, near Hindhead, which by interpretation is Thor's ley, or field. Coldharbours are almost invariably on clay.

There are certain well-known holy centres in these islands which are of value in helping us to understand the nature of the ancient contacts because their history is well known. Glastonbury, Iona, and Lindisfarne are the three of chief importance to Celtic Christianity. Stonehenge and Avebury are our chief sun temples. St. Albans has some important Nordic contacts about which very little is known. There is good reason to believe that Winchester has affiliations with the Mystery School that hid itself behind the Arthurian legends, and so, too, have Caerleon-on-Usk, Avalon itself, Camelot, and Tintagel.

Snowdon is the supreme holy place of Druidism in these islands, being older and even more sacrosanct than the great sun temples on the chalk, for it was the very home of the gods themselves, and there Keridwen brewed mistletoe juice in her cauldron, which was the veritable prototype of the Graal itself, the cauldron that was captured by Arthur during the Harrying of Hell, when the heroes of Britain descended to the underworld.

There is Plynlimon, too, the great mountain mass that crowns the uplands of mid-Wales, the king-peak of that tangled and broken country which has practically no roads that a car can travel and is wilder and more solitary even than the moors of the West. Here is virgin soil for the explorer. Little has been done towards finding its antiquities, and cairn and stone and earth-work guard their secrets. There must be tarns of sacrifice among the hills that may be known only by the lore of place-names; there must be cliffs where men leapt or were flung to their death as sacrifices to the Lord of Air.

And not only are these things of antiquarian interest, but they are of immediate importance to whosoever wants to experiment with our native esoteric tradition. There is much that could be devised in the way of research and experiment when once we have begun to locate these power-centres; for not only are the centres themselves of importance, but there are lines of magnetic force stretching between them. These lines form curious patterns upon the map when they are drawn out with ruler and compass, but we only know a few of them.

There are some exceedingly interesting books that have a bearing upon this subject, and of these I will name but three: *Atlantis in Britain*, by Spence; *The Green Roads of England*, by Hipsley Cox; and *Downland Man*, by Massingham. Read these three books and then look around your own district and report what you find.

SOME PHILOSOPHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE THEORY OF RELATIVITY

By H. STANLEY REDGROVE, B.Sc., A.I.C.

PART III

THE RELATIVITY OF EXPERIENCE

I DO not know whether it is because he was a bishop, because he lived a couple of centuries ago, or because he wrote a rather foolish work on the virtues of tar-water. The fact remains that the philosophical ideas put forward by Berkeley in his *Essay towards a New Theory of Vision*, *Treatise concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge* and *Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous* do not receive that degree of attention which undoubtedly they merit. It may be a case of "another injustice to old Ireland". At any rate, his works are easy enough to come by, seeing that they are included in the well-known "Everyman's Library". But, by some curious irony of fate, Berkeley is persistently misunderstood—he is regarded as the author of a highly abstruse metaphysical system, whereas actually he aimed at a simplification, at a dispersal of the metaphysical fog in which the ingenuity of man's mind had enveloped its experiences.

The Theory of Relativity, however, as I shall hope to indicate in this paper, makes it impossible to ignore Berkeley: its implications agree so admirably with certain of the leading tenets of his philosophy, which, so to speak, it rounds off by supplying the necessary mental apparatus for dealing with the immaterial world of experience.

"The immaterial world of experience". In what sense is it true that Berkeley denied the existence of matter? Here, indeed, is the whole crux of the question, around which an amazing growth of misunderstanding has sprung up—a growth which it is by no means easy to destroy.

Good, plain Dr. Johnson replied to Berkeley's philosophy by means of a tremendous kick at a large stone, exclaiming: "I refute it thus!" It is clear that, to Johnson, matter meant a tactile experience; and to the plain-thinking man of common-sense this is what matter always means: an experience, and especially, where there is any possibility of doubt, a tactile experience.

Now Berkeley has no quarrel whatever with the plain-thinking man of common-sense. He never denies the reality of experience: he affirms it. His philosophy has no affinities with those systems, such as "Christian Science" and certain Eastern modes of thought, in which the world of experience is envisaged as a world of illusion. If Materialism meant, as the plain-thinking man of common-sense is apt to think it means, a belief in the reality of experience, then Berkeley would be correctly described as an out-and-out materialist.

Actually, however, Materialism means nothing of the sort. Matter, to the materialist, is not an experience, but an unknown and unknowable cause of experience—unknown and unknowable because the progress of physical science has divested matter of every property whereby it might be known.

A distinction, which is of great importance in the history of Materialism, is that drawn between what are called the primary properties and the secondary properties of matter. The materialist is obliged to admit that the secondary properties are not really properties of matter. They are, he would say, impressions produced on us by matter in virtue of its primary properties. Hence, since, *ex hypothesi*, the real world is the material world and not the world of experience, they have the character of illusions.

Thus matter is, in itself, neither hot nor cold, neither soft nor hard, neither white, black, red, yellow, green, blue, violet or any other colour. It has no odour or taste, is neither shining nor dull. These are all secondary properties, impressions produced on us by the ultimate particles of matter in virtue of their primary properties, their shape, size, mass and motion.

The Theory of Relativity, however, has divested matter even of its few primary properties, and the concept vanishes into nothingness.

To explain fully how this has been achieved is naturally beyond the limits of this necessarily brief and non-mathematical treatment of the subject. I shall, however, endeavour very shortly to describe why we are compelled to admit that a material object possesses in itself no definite shape or size, but only a shape and size relative to an observer, a shape and size which may differ, like, for example, the colour of an object, according to the conditions under which it is observed.

Suppose I am walking along a straight road at three miles an hour whilst a motor-car is travelling towards me at thirty

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miles an hour along the same road. According to Newtonian mechanics, the rate at which the motor-car is approaching me is thirty-three miles an hour, or, in other words, the sum of my rate and the car's rate measured in opposite directions along the road. This seems a very sensible answer; and it is a very sensible answer on the basis of the materialistic philosophy.

Actually, experiment confirms it. But the question arises: Is the confirmation real or illusory? I mean: Might not the agreement between theory and practice be due to the very small velocities involved? Is it not possible that the real velocity of approach is not quite thirty-three miles an hour, but differs from it by an amount too small to be appreciated.

Michelson and Morley's famous experiment conclusively answered this question in a sense unfavourable to the Newtonian hypothesis. In this experiment, the pedestrian was replaced by the moving earth and the motor-car by a beam of light emitted from the sun. The result showed that a ray of light impinges on an object with precisely the same velocity as that with which it is emitted from the source no matter whether this object be approaching the source or not.

To explain this extraordinary result, which threatened to overturn the whole of classical mechanics, it was first suggested by Lorenz and FitzGerald that, when a body moves, it undergoes a slight contraction in the direction of its motion. Apart, however, from the difficulty of devising a mechanism which would produce exactly the right contraction, this hypothesis suffers from another serious objection.

Suppose two bodies are moving relatively to each other. Which undergoes the contraction? The one which is really moving, that is to say, moving with respect to the universal ether, supposed to be absolutely motionless. But how are we to determine which one this is? No answer is forthcoming.

If A is one of the bodies and B the other, then from the standpoint of an observer on A, it is B which undergoes contraction. But from the standpoint of an observer on B, it is A which is contracted. The two seemingly contradictory statements have equal claims to be considered correct. Then is the contraction only apparent, not real?

Even the supposition of an apparent contraction is not perfectly satisfactory. It implies that the body really does possess a definite size and shape, which appears to change when

it moves relative to an observer. In fact, however, the observations of a person stationary with respect to the object have no higher claims to be considered valid than those of another who is moving with respect to it. We are driven to the conclusion that bodies, in themselves, have no size or shape. They possess these properties only for observers, the sizes and shape being relative to the observer.

A similar conclusion holds good in the case of mass, that property of bodies which manifests itself in weight.

In seeking to find reality in a world of matter external to the mind, matter gradually evaporates until there is nothing left in our grasp. A property-less unknowable, to say the least, is not helpful to thought. We must return to the common-sense view, the non-metaphysical view, the Berkeleian view, and believe in the reality of experience itself.

Yet we feel the need of a common bond, a ground of unity correlating my experience with yours. We cannot rest content with the view that each one of us inhabits his own world absolutely distinct from the worlds of all others. Distinct these worlds undoubtedly are, possessing a reality for each one of us alone. Nevertheless they are not absolutely distinct. Were this the case, human intercourse would be impossible.

What is the connecting link between them? Materialism would have us believe it to be matter—a non-mental realm which somehow creates a rich world of experience for each one of us. But, as I trust I have made plain, the metaphysics of Materialism must be rejected as quite unsatisfactory.

Berkeley found the ground of experience in the mind of God. Perhaps, in the end, we shall return to Berkeley's view, at any rate in the sense of acknowledging Mind to be the ultimate reality of all things. But Berkeley's conception of the mind of God—possibly the real weakness in his philosophy—is open to serious criticism. His God is too much like a machine which regularly grinds out ideas according to some determinate plan.

What has the Theory of Relativity to offer? Mathematical equations; perhaps, if Einstein is correct in his latest views, one equation at the basis of all the diverse phenomena of the Universe.

An illustration of a relatively simple character from the special or restricted theory of relativity may help to make clear what is meant.

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Since objects are shapeless and sizeless, except for observers, having shape and size only relative to these, if two observers accurately record two events, their measurements will not necessarily be the same. Let one observer arbitrarily choose three directions in space and measure the distance in feet between the two events along these directions, calling his results X, Y and Z. Let him also measure the time in seconds between the occurrence of the two events, calling this result T. Let the second observer follow a similar procedure, calling his results, x , y , z , and t . Then, assuming the observations to have been accurately made, it by no means follows that X, Y, Z and T will be identical with x , y , z and t . If one observer is moving with respect to the other, for example, their time-measurements, if quite accurate, will certainly be different; although if they are not so moving these two measurements will be identical.

In any event, however, providing always that the work is accurately done, the following equation will hold good:—

$$X^2 + Y^2 + Z^2 - (cT)^2 = x^2 + y^2 + z^2 - (ct)^2$$

where c equals the velocity of light in feet per second, that is to say, is the factor necessary to convert seconds into the time-units corresponding to feet.

All methods which have hitherto been essayed to compel the Universe to yield up its secrets, except the mathematical methods of the Relativity Theory, have failed. Mathematics alone seems to promise a complete solution.

What is the meaning of this? The point is finely handled in the closing chapter of Sir James Jeans' recently published book, *The Mysterious Universe*. "The universe", he writes, "begins to look more like a great thought than a great machine. Mind no longer appears as an accidental intruder into the realm of matter: we are beginning to suspect that we ought rather to hail it as the creator and governor of the realm of matter—not, of course, our individual minds, but the mind in which the atoms out of which our individual minds have grown exist as thoughts".

In short, Jeans asks us to envisage the Universe as the creation of the Great Mathematician, the work of a mind having something in common with our own, "not so far as we have discovered, emotion, morality, or æsthetic appreciation, but the tendency to think in the way which, for want of a better word, we may describe as mathematical".

This is, in essentials, a return to the Berkeleian point of view, but a Berkeleianism enriched with all the thought-apparatus of modern mathematical physics.

Certain is it that The Theory of Relativity strikes deep at the roots of Materialism, certain is it that it makes acceptance of Berkeleianism easy. We may hesitate to go the whole way. But at least we must accept the fact of the relativity of experience, a relativity which by no means deprives experience of reality, but grounds it in a universal reality which is immaterial and akin to mind.

THE VISION OF BUDDHA

By STANTON A. COBLENTZ

Sometimes I wish I knew what mystic light
 Flashed to the brooding Buddha long ago,
 When, praying for some superhuman sight
 To pierce the unfound root of human woe,
 He mused beneath green leaves, and watched the flight
 Of cloud and star and many a sunrise glow,
 Clasped in calm thought, till, in a startling blaze,
 World-flooding knowledge swept across his gaze. . . .

Knowledge whose beams he would but half impart
 Of some Nirvana suffering man might gain
 When with pure vision and uncovetous heart
 He passed above the claws of strife and pain,
 Passed for all time from field and house and mart
 Into some realm where night and Lethe reign. . . .
 What realm? and where? Some bourn all seekers crave
 After the dark, beyond the doorless grave?

What realm, what realm? A depth we sometimes feel
 Locked in ourselves, like sea-floors under sea? . . .
 A vast of sparkless gloom that might reveal
 The frightening greatness of eternity? . . .
 Whose foggy gulfs and silences conceal
 All worlds that are . . . compressed in you and me?
 Is this the vision? . . . Clouds grow dense. How few
 See the star-kindled flash that Buddha knew!

THE SECRET BOOK

By ARTHUR EDWARD WAITE

M. VULLIAUD is known in France by an authoritative work in two volumes on *La Kabbale Juive*, which should have put an end once for all, and perhaps has, to the nonsense written on the subject, from the days of Éliphas Lévi, by the occult schools of Paris, which knew neither the texts of the Secret Tradition in Israel nor their critical history. It came about for this reason that in the spacious pre-War days, when Paris had a Metropolitan Council of the Martinist Order under the auspices of Dr. Papus, a *Société des Hautes Études*, an *École Supérieure* which conferred diplomas, an *Ordre Kabbalistique de la Rose Croix*, so on and so forward, there arose a certain M. Chateau who produced a translated Zohar in a modest octavo volume, and it was accepted implicitly by Papus as the whole of that colossal ingarnering. It comprised actually and solely three distinct tracts imbedded in the Zohar and done into French from a Latin version of Baron von Rosenroth, produced in the late seventeenth century and familiar to students of the subject in that historical collection which he called *Kabbala Denudata*. So much for the Zohar in French occult circles prior to the paraphrastic translation of Jean de Pauly. Things were not much better in England, where S. Liddell MacGregor Mathers also translated from Rosenroth, for the benefit of students *circa* 1887—more especially for those who termed themselves “very occult”. He believed and stated that Luria’s *Book of the Revolutions of Souls* formed part of the Zohar; and when the *Theosophist* of those days pointed out that he bungled the Latin, his answer was that he had amended Rosenroth by reference to the Chaldaic text. So much for the Zohar in London, when a Kabbalistic Order of the G.D. met at Masonic headquarters under Mathers’ auspices and when his collaborator, Dr. Wynn Westcott, Supreme Magus of a Masonic Rosicrucian Society, certified to his personal satisfaction at throwing dust in the eyes of “the critics”. It was an egregious world, my Masters.

Rosenroth put into Latin the *Siphra Di-Tzeniutha*, otherwise Secret Book, Book of Modesty or Book of Concealed Mystery, and two further Zoharic tracts developed therefrom under the titles of *Idra Rabba* and *Idra Zouta*—respectively the Greater

and Lesser Holy Assembly. M. Vulliaud has produced recently in French two renderings of the first, regarded by him as *ouvrage essentiel de Sepher Ha-Zohar*.¹ The one is a literal version and the other a paraphrase, both accompanied by valuable notes. Rosenroth on his own part did something by expansion in brackets, to elucidate the obscure original of the Secret Book, in comparison with which the Idras might almost be called limpid. There is no opportunity here to compare the two recensions one with another, or with antecedent translations: it might baffle my readers, much as it concerns myself to contrast the excellent Latin codex, done rather in the dark of things, with that of modern scholarship. It is to be said that I have profited and that when M. Vulliaud's volume has been put into vellum it shall be placed on a shelf beside the vellums of Rosenroth.

Meanwhile there is the translator's preface, which occupies more than half the volume. It embodies a caustic criticism of the present position in respect of Kabbalistic studies, their neglect by historians of philosophy and the repetition from mouth to mouth of an old exploded thesis that the Secret Tradition of Israel was manufactured in the early part of the thirteenth century. Certain contributions to the subject presented by a French ecclesiastic, Père Bonsirven, who seems unknown in England, are examined on their claims to knowledge, which are reduced to lean proportions. It embodies also the story at length of Jean de Pauly, who translated the Zohar into French, together with an appreciation of the spirit which informs his version. It is by this that I am drawn personally, for there is an end put once and for ever to a scandalous calumny which represented de Pauly as masquerading under a false name and as no other in fact than a certain Paul Meyer, a supposed "converted" Jew, who figured as a lying witness in a case of Ritual Murder brought against Jews more than thirty years since, in Eastern or Southern Europe. The well-known name of Dr. Robert Eisler is connected with this invention, he having circulated it through the medium of *The Quest*, in the issue of that quarterly review under date of July, 1924. As he would most certainly not be the author, it is referable, so far as I am concerned, to some unknown source. We are indebted to M. Vulliaud for informing us that de Pauly published at Orleans, in 1897, a refutation of the ridiculous and wicked charge of Ritual Murder. We learn also that Dr. Marc Haven—the literary

SIPHRA DI-TZENIUTHA : *Le Livre Secret. Traduction Intégrale de Paul Vulliaud.* 4 to pp. 215. Paris: Emile Nourry.

pseudonym of Dr. Lalande—once so well-known in the occult circles of Paris, made a few investigations concerning the early history of Jean de Pauly and ascertained among other points that he was born about 1860 at Antivari in Albania, the son of Jean Pierre Théodore de Pauly and of Antonia Maria, Baroness of Vanutelli, and was baptized the following day, under Catholic auspices, at Scutari in the same district. Marc Haven's discovery is not less important than M. Vulliaud's point of fact in literature, for it is to be assumed that the French occultist had full evidence for his statement. There has to be set against it, however, the counterfact that M. Vulliaud possesses, or has inspected, a letter of de Pauly himself dated July 14th, 1900, which mentions that he was born in Montenegro. M. Vulliaud suggests in one place that his subject was either of Jewish extraction or had received a Jewish education, adding later that his name was incontestably Jewish and that no one except a Jew could have translated the Zohar. I am inclined therefore to place my chief reliance on the book written by de Pauly rather than on the evidence of his baptism in earliest infancy and his apparently Christian parentage.

As regards the translation of the Zohar, we know that it has been condemned bitterly and unconditionally in certain quarters of Jewish scholarship—by Dr. Eisler, Dr. Scholem and others. M. Vulliaud reminds us that when, after revision by a Rabbi, it was published ultimately under the auspices of its original sponsor and financier, M. Emile Lafuma, it was by him regarded as an essay, a first draft, so to speak. Considered as such, it is unquestionably remarkable, from M. Vulliaud's point of view. There are "debatable renderings, important lacunæ, inadmissible interpretations", but it constitutes a precious groundwork.

For the rest, de Pauly was a man of extraordinary learning, and, like the picaresque adventurer in some early Victorian novels, he spoke all languages with equal facility; but he lived for the most part in the dregs and lees of poverty. It came about therefore that his story, as now presented, is one of the trials and devices of a mendicant scholar, whose conscience and sense of honour had been somewhat blunted by the stress of physical necessities. He had also a weakness which has characterized occasionally other persons of real scholastic attainments, a tendency to regard himself as an expert on any subject which inclination or circumstance prompted him to take up. There is evidence, for example, that when M. Lafuma proposed to him that

he should translate the Zohar, on certain agreed terms, de Pauly was not unacquainted altogether but was certainly not familiar with the Secret Tradition of Israel. This is made evident fully by his notes and commentary on Zoharic critical points, over which he fell into errors and adopted preposterous views. These things notwithstanding, he is regarded rather tenderly by his biographer, as it seems to me, and was, I feel also, by M. Laguma, who suffered not a little at his hands. I have found it impossible, on my own part, to learn his story without considerable sympathy, and it is likely that other readers will concur herein.

M. Vulliaud's title-page speaks of "new considerations" on the antiquity of the Zohar; but it is scarcely to be expected that things are carried much further than in the elaborate volumes which he has already devoted to the work. It may be noted (1) that his study of the Secret Book prior to its translation has convinced him yet more profoundly on the authority and age of the Kabbalah; (2) that its roots lie for him far down through the centuries, meaning that they are earlier than Christianity itself; and (3) that some of the documents in which it was ultimately embodied belong to the school of Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai.

AFTER LONG SILENCE

By JESSIE ANNIE ANDERSON

Long since, by my spirit's altar,
A birdlet awoke and sang;—
Ah, small!—yet my spirit's hall-ways
And high-groined roofing rang.

But—woe and alas for its magic!—
Life stoned it and broke its wing. . . .
I held its throat from its moaning
And . . . dead things do not sing.

Yet . . . times . . . from beyond the highways,
Through clashing voices and tread,
I sense . . . Is't a phantom singing?
Is the birdlet really dead?

THE TWO MAGICS IN MEXICO

By CHARLES WHITBY

OF all human tangles, there is perhaps none more involved and intricate than the beliefs of a superstitious people. Superstitious peoples are many, as many almost as peoples of any kind; but few, I suppose, have in this memorable respect excelled the ancient Mexicans and their neighbours of Central America and Yucatan, among whom the struggle for dominance between the elevating and degrading elements of what passed for their religion was still a more or less drawn battle when the arrival of the Spanish invaders under Cortes put an end to the contest. In this haunted twilight of Toltec and Aztec superstition, as in the dim regions of Atlantean and Druidic traditions, Mr. Lewis Spence moves with a confidence earned by long study and research, and illumines its darkest corners by his keen yet imaginative scrutiny. In his latest work,* dealing with the arcane secrets and occult lore of Mexico and Central America (the fourth book he has devoted to various aspects of this little known and bizarre field of investigation), besides entralling chapters on Mexican magic, he includes much valuable information as to the religious cults, myths and superstitions of the strange Maya people of Yucatan and the adjoining territories. The illustrations, from native sources, presenting their weird conceptions of various gods, demons, witches and sorcerers, horrible as some of them are, by no means lack indications of aesthetic talent. Certain of them remind me of the products of modernist vagaries among our own later-day artists, in which a studied vagueness is the supreme desideratum, or an equally deliberate distortion.

In all early religions magical conceptions are an important ingredient, but in that of Mexico they are fundamental; its gods, Mr. Spence tells us, are magical figures; their rites arose out of magical endeavour. The climate of Mexico is arid, and the abundance of the maize-crops was precariously dependent on the sufficiency of the rainfall. A dry season meant famine; hence, magical production of rain being a perennial popular demand, it became the chief preoccupation of the priesthood. The statement made by Mephistopheles to Faust when requesting him to sign the pact between them in a drop of blood—to wit, that "blood is

* *The Magic and Mysteries of Mexico, or The Arcane Secrets and Occult Lore of the Ancient Mexicans and Maya.* By Lewis Spence, author of *The Gods of Mexico*, etc. London: Rider & Co. pp. 288. Price 15/- net.

a juice of rarest quality", is one that was fully endorsed by the Aztec ecclesiastics, as it has been and still is by ecclesiastical opinion through all ages. Nor was their fatal deduction, that the flow of blood (human, for choice), being analogous to the fall of rain, the former occurrence would be a potent spell to induce the latter; that, in short, the more human victims butchered on their shrines the more copious would be the rainfall and the more abundant the harvest, by any means peculiar to the priests of ancient Mexico. What was peculiar to them, or at least exceptional, was the ruthlessly logical thoroughness with which this magical theory was translated into practice by the systematic slaughtering of vast multitudes of prisoners at their seasonal festivals. The idea was that the life of the gods in general and of the earth-mother, Coatlicue, who brought forth the grain, in particular, was dependent on blood, and that, unless thus periodically replenished, her fertility would be exhausted. "Give us rain, and we shall give you blood". That, says Mr. Spence, was the compact offered by Mexican man to his gods.

It is good to know, however, that this gruesome concept was not unchallenged. These darker and grossly-materialistic tendencies were mainly associated with the cult of Tezcatlipoca, the "god" or demon whose horrific effigy, in the guise of a wer-jaguar, forms the frontispiece of Mr. Spence's new volume. It was a cult based on terror and superstition, as we have seen, and of its great popular vogue and prestige there can be no dispute, but it had a rival in the older and purer cult of the "feathered serpent" Quetzalcoatl, a solar deity, mythically associated with the pre-Aztec (Toltec) civilization. He is said to have come from the East, leading the Toltecs into Mexico, and to have taught them the arts and agriculture. He was an astrologer and a magician, but is described as covering his ears at the mention of human sacrifice, for which, in his ritual, the practice of drawing blood from one's own tongue or elsewhere on one's own body seems to have been substituted. He was alternatively a creator-god or the son of creative deities, and was also identified with Venus, the morning star. All white magic, the lore of light, sprang from him; all that of the lower cultus from his opponent, Tezcatlipoca, the black magician. The rivalry of the two priesthoods was interpreted as a struggle between the beneficent god and the demon, ending in the triumph of the latter and the banishment of Quetzalcoatl. Faith in his innocuous rain-making ritual waned; the orgies of human sacrifice and all the degrading superstitions which accompany it increased by leaps

and bounds, denoting a real victory of the powers of darkness, deplored by the thinking classes of Mexico and Yucatan, who remained inwardly faithful to Quetzalcoatl, and probably strove to hasten his return by magical rites. Such was the state of affairs which was cut short by the arrival of Cortes and his invading Spaniards; and it is said that King Montezuma, mistaking the conquistador for the anxiously-awaited god, actually sent him the ritual costumes of Quetzalcoatl.

The "white magic" of Quetzalcoatl was, in Mr. Spence's opinion, an Asiatic, or European importation. He believes him to have been an actual initiate of a mystery cult, resembling those of ancient Greece and Britain, in which he plays a rôle similar to that of Dionysus. This cult survived in the form of the vast secret society of the Nagualisto, which degenerated into sorcery, and, after the suppression of the Maya faiths, was used as an occult weapon against Christianity. Even to-day, it lives on, and its sinister power is illustrated by the story of an alleged actual occurrence, in which an Englishwoman, attacked by a jaguar, shot it, but found instead the corpse of her husband's deserted native mistress.

In addition to the central theme sketched above Mr. Spence's book is a rich mine of information on Mexican occultism; witchcraft, strangely identical, even to the traditional broomstick, with the old-world type; astrology and the other mantic arts; the few surviving Aztec magical books, including the mysterious *Popul-Vuh* and the *Tonalamatl* or Book of Fate; the baffling problem of Maya writing, with specimen hieroglyphs; and his own remarkable elucidation of the stages by which obsidian, the glass-like volcanic product used for the blades of sacrificial knives, came to be regarded as pre-eminently sacred, the very principle of existence.

What is exceptional in Mr. Lewis Spence's books is the combination of erudition and scientific method with a sympathetic insight enabling him to appreciate and in a measure share the old-world assurance of contact with invisible powers, beneficent or malign, and of the tragic reality of the conflict between them. In reading *The Golden Bough*, on the other hand, one's interest flags, because one feels that to the learned author it is just the history of one vast pathetic illusion. But this is a big and, after all, unwarranted assumption; ungrateful, too, since experimental Science is the direct descendant of Magic, and not exclusively of the "white" variety.

CORRESPONDENCE

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

BLACK MAGIC IN SCIENCE

To the Editor of THE OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—Memoirs of the prophetic utterances of Mdme. H. P. Blavatsky are stirred by a recent example of *Black Magic in Science*.

I refer to an account of *Starvation Experiments on Children* described in the *British Medical Journal* of November 1st, being quoted from a paper read by H. C. Cameron, M.D., a Physician at Guy's Hospital!

Words fail one, my reason for writing being to call the attention of your readers to such an abomination.

Yours faithfully,

CHAS. V. BALL.

B. Orient.Litt.

THE RUSSIAN PROBLEM

To the Editor of THE OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—Your correspondent, E. K. M., raises a point that is both interesting and important. It seems clear, however, that the Russian Government of to-day would be the last that any spiritual teacher could praise.

It is an attempt to put into practice the communist system of Karl Marx, which involves in its very essence an extreme form of mid-Victorian atheism which stigmatizes everything that savours of religion as "dope".

Occultism is a religion, and has a great deal in common with orthodox Russian Christianity. On the other hand, it has nothing in common with complete scepticism. Hence the spread of occultism in a religious Russia would have been far more easy than in a Russia where its teachers would be vigorously persecuted.

The present rulers of Russia are attempting to create a nation of materialists who will hate and despise the very name of religion—occultism included, and I really fail to see how any occultist can be expected to extend to such pernicious activities the passive, but none the less real, assistance of toleration.

Yours very truly,

THOMAS FOSTER.

PERIODICAL LITERATURE

A CERTAIN element of enchantment breathes through the pages of ANTHROPOSOPHY in its latest issue, quite apart from the fact that it is written by trained expositors of Steinerism for those who know something about it, or those who want to know. So far as our memory serves, no article appears which does not depend from his occult views and theses and does not quote him recurrently. That believers are encouraged and consoled by such iteration may be more than merely possible: that the world without may be wearied, if the outer world can be held to read ANTHROPOSOPHY, we have ventured to suggest previously. The fact that the quarterly review of "spiritual science" is reducing its price appears to indicate that it is reaching a wider circle, or expects so to do. The point is notable, tending to show that Dr. Steiner's personal methods of research in Akasic Records are beginning to enlist more general concern, while those of Mr. Leadbeater are passing out of repute. We have no canon of criticism by which to judge their respective merits, and our position is therefore that of detached observers, who listen and record at need. ANTHROPOSOPHY opens as usual with the report of a lecture by Dr. Steiner himself, given so far back as 1923 and grouping and contrasting three important personalities of the sixteenth century, Giordano Bruno, Francis Bacon and Jacob Böhme, all supposed to "represent the beginning of modern culture". It is a discriminating essay at its value; but the enchantment to which we have referred manifests at first when Dr. Ita Wegman talks briefly on Ancient Mysteries and the Way of Knowledge in modern times. She is of and belonging to Dr. Steiner in all her modes and thoughts; with his name she opens and with it also ends. Midwise in the paper we are told that the "complete liberation of Persephone", who symbolizes the soul, was first achieved by him "in the modern age". In any case he has told us that the Ancient Mysteries "enshrined a knowledge" realized, as well as a certain power over Nature, which power was "born of and issuing from the will". Moreover, they revealed to the pupil "great cosmological truths", and he was able not only to penetrate his own depths but to "behold the gods" and their Temple "in his own being". Now it seems to us a marvellous thing that this can be affirmed in the twentieth century on the sole warrant of hypothetical Akasic Records and can be accepted by intelligent people who have opportunity for checking them by the researches and findings of scholarship pursued with unremitting zeal through several generations. We wish devoutly that such archives could produce one tittle of evidence in these interesting directions.

There is also Mr. E. C. Merry, with a talismanic discourse on King Arthur, of whom it is said at the beginning (1) that he certainly existed;

(2) that his individuality extends through the ages as "a definite current in human evolution"; (3) that his Mysteries are the oldest of all in Europe; (4) that to make a beginning concerning them our "gaze" must be turned to Atlantis; (5) that in their earliest form they preceded the Christian Era by several centuries; (6) that we are called upon to connect King Arthur's royal name with "the spiritual science of Nature", as well as with the birth of Chivalry; (7) that it is in fact "everywhere", and so is the name of Guinevere; (8) that his Mystery was a solar cult, "grown out of primeval Atlantean origin"; (9) that its central object was the Round Table, but a place of great importance was held by the sword Excalibur; (10) that prior to the Mystery of Golgotha—here quoting Dr. Steiner: "the Knights of King Arthur, seated at their Round Table, received into their hearts the Sun-Spirit, the pre-Christian Christ"; (11) that subsequently the Arthurian "stream" met with that of the Holy Grail, in which the Christ Mysteries "travelled from East to West"; and in fine (12) that King Arthur, who is asleep in Avalon or on Mount Etna, according to some of the legends, must so remain till the time of his awakening comes, which indeed is our own time, or somewhere in the present century. A few of us have searched Arthurian literature till almost we know it by heart; and others of us have searched the great cycle of texts of the Holy Grail and know all the critical studies, besides the multitude of dreams which have sought to explain the mythos. If we are asked to include Dr. Steiner's shewing of a vision in the exceedingly composite series, we are more than willing, since assuredly it "gives to airy nothings a local habitation and a name"; but if we are asked to accept it as of all truth, and high in holy import, we must turn down another street when such gospels are preached in the neighbourhood. Even now, we are not at the end of the wonders and sorceries which have fallen upon the Lodges of Anthroposophy and its Goetheanum head-centre, where things beyond belief and outside all evidence are held and preached for "the truest and holiest that are in this world", as Caxton said of the great Grail Romance in Malory's Galahad version. Another witness pictures the Perceval Grail Legend as originating in Southern France, on the dubious authority of Wolfram von Eschenbach concerning his predecessor, the alleged Kyot of Provence; and so we have the story of the Troubadours told from the Steiner standpoint, with "Initiates of the Mystery Schools" looming behind those sweet singers of the South. It is in no spirit of persiflage that we offer our thanks to ANTHROPOSOLOGY: its "true intent" may be all for our instruction rather than "all for our delight"; but we have found delight therein.

Mr. E. C. Merry remarks casually in the course of his disquisition that "the dawn of the Mysteries of the Rose-Cross belongs to the Middle Ages". We know, however, that historically speaking the alleged fraternity is first heard of in the second decade of the seventeenth century, when a mythical account of its foundation appeared

in a German pamphlet. Here are the unadorned facts, which have been coloured by unscrupulous invention for some three centuries. And now it is the turn of L'ERE SPIRITUELLE to tell us what it thinks about the origin of "the mysterious Rosicrucians", reflecting from Max Heindel, who claimed to have been initiated in the Starry Heavens or elsewhere, "far in the unapparent". It is held upon such authority as a thing certain that ever since the fourteenth century the Brotherhood has recruited Members, and further that it is composed of "Grand Hierophants" who have been guardians through the ages of "hyperphysical and spiritual knowledge, incomparable treasures" which can be contemplated only by the eye of the soul. Whether these are dispensed just now by Mrs. Heindel at Oceanside, Cal., in her RAYS FROM THE ROSE CROSS, under the form of vegetarian recipes, we do not as yet know. It seems probable enough, remembering that the Comte de Saint-Germain was one of them, according to L'ERE SPIRITUELLE, and that he ate nothing at the banquets, presumably for want of the cabbages which are grown now, figuratively and otherwise, at that particular *Mons Rationabilis* which is called Mount Ecclesia and is over against the American Western Main. . . . After these things it is not less than a relief to look once again at EUDIA, which is a *Revue Initiatique*, if ever there was one, and is dedicated to nothing but initiation. It is, however, *l'initiation Eudique* and does not go back through the ages or further than a metaphorical yesterday. It is a *fondation Durville*, its Mysteries being his only and his also its science. No one has ever written concerning it except himself, and for ever he writes and writes. Most things are over his signature in every issue of EUDIA, and if anyone wishes for evidence that his readers appreciate the fact and are far from a state of surfeit, it may be observed that they have contributed yet another 2,000 francs (and over) in a single month for the building of his proposed Temple.

Our excellent contemporary LIGHT has opened a new volume and thus inaugurated its fifty-first year of successive publication. There is a leader on the subject which speaks with modest reserve of the Journal's past history, of storms weathered, of work done, of that "philosophy of life and death" for which it has stood heroically. "Fifty years!" it ends. "So far, so good", and then adds reverently: "The best is yet to be". So do we hope ourselves, and so also we think. An editorial note of Mr. David Gow looks forward to a Diamond Jubilee, adding that "in any case we have scored fifty, not out". Very much "not out" is our own verdict, who have known it almost from the beginning, through lean years and fat; and we are in a good position to testify on the basis of a practically unbroken familiarity that LIGHT was never more alive than it is at the present moment and never did better work. Congratulations are coming in and are finding corners in columns, here and there. We are confident that many others will arrive and test editorial skill to find a place for print-

ing them. But LIGHT after all, for those who read with sympathy and a little knowledge, is its own advertisement, from week to week and as the years go forward. Our own congratulations and best wishes to a valiant pioneer, and salutation to the star which leads it. . . . We had seen nothing of the JOURNAL issued by the American Society for Psychical Research since the death of Professor Hyslop till a recent copy has come unexpectedly into our hands. It has changed both form and title, being called PSYCHIC RESEARCH and appearing in small quarto. We note otherwise with interest that it is edited by our friend Mr. Frederick Bligh Bond, that Mr. J. Malcolm Bird continues as Research Officer in the United States and Mr. Harry Price as Foreign Research Officer. Mr. Bond contributes a careful study on varieties of cross-correspondence, mainly based on materials collected by Mr. E. E. Dudley but with acknowledgments to Dr. Mark W. Richardson and Dr. Crandon, the husband of the famous "Margery". . . . The Rev. John Lamond has a graphic article on Domremy in IMMORTALITY AND SURVIVAL and tells how for thirteen years he has talked with Joan of Arc as a personal friend. He holds that the power—at once psychic and divine—which operated through her "will yet regenerate the nations", and that we are on the threshold of an era which will "as far transcend our modern conditions", as these conditions transcend those of the cave men.

THE COSMIC DAWN continues to appear at Los Angeles and is self-described as "an infallible guide in problems of every nature". There is apparently a "Brotherhood" behind it which gives lectures in the Californian city and holds classes for Astrology. It will do well to see that its official organ produces something to excuse the magnificent claim put forward. Very moderate or indifferent editorial articles and a serial story are the sum of its infallible guidance in the last issue. Meanwhile an "international organ" devoted to the "enlightenment of man" has published its first number, entitled ILLUMINATION, at New York, and advises those who are or may be concerned to "subscribe now", lest they "miss a single copy". There are short articles on the Gita the nature of inspiration, and on psychosynthesis in medicine; but the contents generally are too much of the borrowed order—fragments from there and here—to carry any real weight. International journals are not anthologies and are not created by the liberal use of cuttings. . . . THE SEER has a notion that Alchemy is "coming into its own", because of M. Jollivet Castelot's supposed transmutations of metals. . . . L'ASTROSOPHIE has satisfied itself that the occultist is not one who is merely versed in the study of things mysterious or has even become a magician. He is called to be the interpreter of the cosmos and missionary of the universe. We are wondering what proportion of indolent and dilettante occult students could picture themselves as missionaries, and which among those who are serious could suffer this unexpected greatness to be thrust upon them.

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REVIEWS

PHANTASY AND OTHER POEMS. By Ethel Archer. Cr. 8vo., pp. 32.
London : P. J. and A. E. Dobell. 3s. 6d.

It was said in the seventeenth century, by a poet whose name escapes me, that Faërie, with all its hierarchies, belongs to the old religion, being that of the Catholic Church. Whether in such case it contributes to Peter's Pence, as a "fiducial sign", does not appear in the evidence. The dole might have proved in the scales those dry leaves of which we hear in the annals. Miss Archer seems to be of that old obedience and assuredly produces Peter's Pence, after their own kind ; but her coin is verse, and much of it is from a true mint, while some is gold, reacting rightly to all the tests. Her *Hymn of St. Francis* and her translation of *Victimæ Paschali* have won praise from THE TABLET, and who should know better what belongs to it than that sectarian organ ? I think, however, that they have other and higher warrants. So has the poem-in-chief of the little garner, that which gives the title ; and there is an early thing, called "The Felon Flower", written at sixteen, which at that immature period was a bow of promise. It might have stood first in the sequence of the second part, for in some respects Miss Archer has yet to come into her own. Meanwhile the haunting intimations of certain lines suggested by music remind me of others in Robert Buchanan's neglected *Book of Orm*. The author says in a preface that she has fared from pantheism to something termed panintheism, the latter denominated only and not expounded. Possibly the one and the other are modes or aspects of the state of being all for God. It appears to be Miss Archer's state, and as such I subscribe to her confession. This also is an old religion ; there is indeed no other.

A. E. WAITE.

INDIAN IDEALS : IN EDUCATION, RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY AND ART.
(Being the Kamala Lectures for 1925 at Calcutta University.)
By Annie Besant, D.L. (Second edition). Pp. 139. T.P.H.
Madras : Price 1r. 18a.

THESE three lengthy lectures, given in memory of Kamala, the daughter of Dr. Sir Asutosh Mukerji, were the first to be delivered under this foundation. The present reviewer has lively memories of a request from that charming man and great scholar, shortly before his sudden death in 1924, to give a short course of lectures on art, in the Calcutta University. It is the only Indian university, excepting perhaps the Hindu University of Benares (where these lectures on Indian Ideals were also delivered), to accept art as a normal part of education ; and Dr. Stella Kramrisch, a well-known Austrian theosophist, has for several years devoted herself to elucidating the meaning of ancient Indian art to modern students. Only those who have mixed with such students are aware of their amazing ignorance of their own country, its art and even its religions. Such lectures as the three printed in this book must have been powerful stimulants, to those who heard them, to take up the study of Indian heritage.

The introduction of the worst part of European education into India is properly criticised. It has yet to meet such drastic analysis in Europe,

though that is coming. In the second address on Philosophy, Mrs. Besant is most at home with her subject, and with her customary felicity of expression she traverses a happy task. On coming to consider art, she expressly withdraws "within my own limitations." Tolstoy, Croce and Bergson perhaps, in the West, have done most to clarify the meaning and purpose of art; while Bhagavan Das in the East, along with the ancient Chinese writers, some of whose works have been translated, have done much in the Orient. Yet the Hindu way is not to talk about art, but to practise it. It has been a great lack, in the history of the Theosophical Society, that relatively little knowledge of or care for art has been evident. Even in its "objects" art was not mentioned, though essential. Here again is an old error, the confusion of "art" with "beauty," though the true concept of beauty is nevertheless soon stated: that which pleases is Beauty to us. Art as *katharsis* does not seek to please as much as to move us. It builds art-works: it is the visible part of magic. The relation of art to occultism and mysticism still needs an exponent; without it the spread of hidden truth will remain much slower.

W. G. R.

EUGENICS, ETHICS AND METAPHYSICS. By Shri Bhagavan Das. (Adyar Pamphlets, No. 140.) Madras: Theosophical Publishing House. Price *Annas* 2.

As the author of this pamphlet points out, the human race has, in respect of sex-relations and marriage, tried scores of forms, all ranging between monogamy and promiscuity. Yet these are but the outward vestures of morality, the general principle underlying which is always the same; virtue in its essence being unchanging and unchangeable. Unhappily, excess in one direction leads to a swing of the pendulum, with equal force, in the opposite. Thus we see to-day a tendency to revolt against the cramping restrictions, the narrowing and clannish emotions, of the family life. "The family," however, "and not the individual, is the unit of the community" (*Manu* ix, 45). Free-love, with contraception, will not free the spirit; not so can the emotions find a lasting level of peace: there is a wiser control, checking the birth of passion—one *spiritual*.

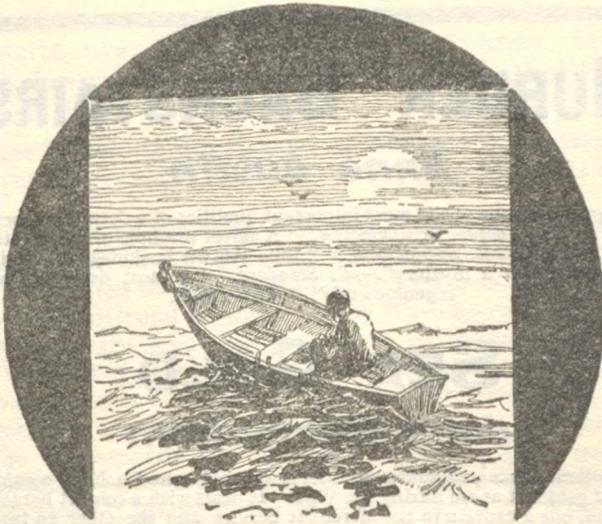
Taken substantially from two notes in the new edition of *Krshna, a Study in the Theory of Avataras*, by Bhagavan Das, this pamphlet is a *bonne bouche* that leaves us greedy for more.

FRANK LIND.

TALKS ON THE PATH OF OCCULTISM. Vols. I and II. Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater. India: Theosophical Publishing House. 5s. each.

WE have here the first two volumes of a new Edition of this well-known book, now divided into three parts, and issued in three separate volumes. The first volume contains the commentaries of Mrs. Besant and Bishop Leadbeater on *At the Feet of the Master*; the second, similar commentaries on *The Voice of the Silence*; while the third volume, apparently not yet available, is to deal with *Light on the Path*, and to contain a full Index. Students of these matters will be very glad of such a well and clearly printed edition in volumes of a manageable size.

E. M. M.



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DE LA VÉRITÉ DANS L'ART. By Lionel de Fonseka. Publications Chetra, Librairie des Lettres et Des Arts, 150, Boulevard Saint-Germain, Paris. Price 15 francs.

THIS dialogue between an Oriental and an Occidental is an extraordinarily astute summing-up of the demerits of Western and the merits of Eastern art.

Taking as his stand the axiom that Beauty is One, and that Truth is Beauty ; that Beauty should be the end of Art and that Art and Life should be one, Mr. de Fonseka shows us how again and again we have been weighed in the balances and found wanting. Many Westerners have made a cult of ugliness under the fond delusion that it is realism—a manifest lie. In art and literature they exalt the personal and expressional at the expense of the universal and the decorative. The end of art should be embellishment, which should go hand in hand with usefulness, and this with life itself. The Westerner in the vain-glory of the pettily personal misses it all : *he imagines art to be an escape from life*, hence his work is artificial in the worse sense of the word and he prides himself on being incomprehensible to the crowd. The Easterner, *knowing art to be one with life*, fashions it after this model. In the measure that it is useful, it is necessary, and in the measure that it is conventional all are able to understand it. Symbolism recognizable as such is a just convention ; a lie unveiled is never a lie.

Until we try to realize art and beauty as a living thing instead of merely writing about it we shall never arrive anywhere.

The author has a keenly analytical mind and writes with remorseless logic. His well-aimed thrusts are given with a purposeful satire that is as salutary as it is at times amusing. It is somewhat exaggerated in parts, but this is a very natural touch incidental to such conversations. The book is so well written that we hope its circulation will be a large one. "Would that some power the Gods would gie us", wrote Burns. It has—through the clear-sighted gaze of Mr. de Fonseka.

ETHEL ARCHER.

FRAGMENTS FROM THE PAST, OR GLIMPSES OF THE LONG AGO. By Eugene E. Thomas. Published by "Our Brotherhood". Crown 8vo. pp. 379.

Is there any foundation for a belief in the transmigration of souls ; or is it, as Mr. James Douglas has decided, with the true journalistic assurance that so lightly disposes of worlds, merely "a strange superstition" ? The few who, to their own satisfaction, remember incidents in one or more of their past lives, will treat this verdict with contempt ; of the remainder, those open-minded and sufficiently interested will seek some corroboration of the theory prior to conviction. *Fragments from the Past*, accepted purely as a story, or a linked series of stories, is on the whole entertaining ; regarded as evidence for reincarnation it is not likely to convince the incredulous. Mr. Thomas waives all responsibility for the source from which he has obtained this record of Leo Godfrey's progression through numerous incarnations : "As the experiences here described are those of real people, the principal characters being known to the author in the present life, the real names are suppressed for obvious reasons", he apprises us in his

too brief Introduction. The reader who has not the pleasure of knowing the author in the present life may, while never questioning his good faith, feel a pardonable dissatisfaction that no guarantee is offered as to the reliability of the person, or persons, from whom Mr. Thomas has received his information.

Fragments from the Past would benefit by a rigorous application of the blue pencil; it is marred by much careless writing, and split infinitives abound. "The only embellishments given the story are those which are necessary to make certain parts more interesting", says Mr. Thomas. It could be shorn of certain embellishments to advantage, principally the lengthy and sentimental love-duologues; had we been guilty of such fatuous utterances, in this life or any other, we should not be anxious to recall them.

FRANK LIND.

THE YOGA SUTRAS OF PATANJALI. Sanskrit text and English translation, together with an Introduction and an Appendix, and Notes on each Sutra. By M. N. Dvivedi (Professor of Sanskrit). New Edition. Madras: Theosophical Publishing House. pp. xxi + 131.

BETWEEN the West, in its blind rush of energy, and the East, isolated by philosophical detachment, there yawns a wide gulf of misunderstanding; only through orientation of the restless mind to a right appreciation of the value of repose can this gap be bridged. All the *darsanas*, comprising India's six schools of philosophic thought, have in view, by a fourfold development, the ultimate attainment of a state of eternal peace. The *Yoga Sutras* consist of a collection of aphorisms, instructing how one may by certain practices—such as *Hathavidya* (the science of regulating the breath), the eighty-four *asanas* or postures, the repetition of *mantras*—reach finally supreme bliss. This goal of *Kaivalya* is that wherein the unclouded mirror of *sattva* reflects the image of the ever-present *Purusha*, who is the one immutably conscious. But such a complete mastery over the interplay of the *gunas*, when all the *vrittis* or transformations of the thinking principle are suppressed, necessitates innumerable incarnations.

The reprint of this translation, with its ample and lucid notes, will be welcome to many; especially as the book is of so handy a size, slips easily into one's side-pocket.

FRANK LIND.

RELIGION AND THE MYSTERIOUS. By Rev. F. H. Brabant. (The Anglican Library of Faith and Thought.) Longmans, Green and Co., London, New York, Toronto. pp. viii + 97. Price 4s. net; paper covers 2s. 6d.

HUMAN nature is "not a 'bit of God' but God's workmanship" is one of many glib assertions in this book that the Rev. F. H. Brabant evidently expects us to accept unchallenged. On what authority he labels God's Children just "manufactured articles" we do not know; nor by what right he states "to want to understand everything is to desire to be God and not Man". Understanding was not the undoing of Lucifer; rather a lack of it, an abuse of Knowledge, in his revolt against the "Numinous". "All that happens is due to God's creative power" we are quite ready

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HUTCHINSON



to agree ; but not that "the more mysterious and inexplicable, the more it is divine" (page 41). However can the mental attitude of anyone towards that which is divine add to, or subtract from, its divinity ? Mystery is the very essence of Religion : such is the substance of all the Rev. Brabant's argument ; standing between Materialism and Mysticism, on what he reckons safe ground, he is no more prepared to believe everything than nothing. "A little knowledge is *not* a dangerous thing" to him ; he seems timid to sup with too long a spoon, for fear he may find the Devil at the other end of it.

We are fully in accord with the author of *Religion and the Mysterious*, that one must approach the Unknown with reverence and wonder ; at the same time, we are among those who urge that "the mystery is on our side because of the cloud that rests on our eyes". We hold it to be the duty of the Church to lead us through the cloud, not to kneel with us before it in adoration. "*Un Dieu défini, c'est un Dieu fini*", is owlish wisdom, issuing from Darkness. If God exists at all, then it is sheer nonsense.

FRANK LIND.

ASTROLOGY AND THE CARDS. By E. H. Bailey, D.A., F.A.S.
London : W. Foulsham & Co. Pp. 63. Price 2s. 6d.

IN this very interesting little book Mr. Bailey outlines a system of reading a Card Horoscope which is sure to lead many readers to make experiments. He emphasises the fact that the method is only suitable for those with some knowledge of the laws of Astrology, the cards being laid out in the semblance of an ordinary horoscope with its twelve divisions or "houses". The idea seems to be an original and helpful one, and no doubt will be taken up by many students of Astrology, who will welcome a new means of divination to corroborate and complement the information gained from study of a birth-map in the usual way. Mr. Bailey's directions are most clearly given, and with a little practice it should be possible soon to become proficient in the reading of Card Horoscopes along these lines.

E. M. M.

THE TRIUMPH OF VENUS. By Fairfax Hall. Oxford : Basil Blackwell. Pp. 28. Price 5s. net.

WHEN a poet finds it necessary to append explanatory notes to his poems, the reader at once suspects some obscurity of thought or expression in the poems themselves. The suspicion is to some extent justified in the present instance, for Mr. Fairfax Hall's work gives the impression that he is groping after a solution of the problem of existence that still eludes him. He defines Venus as not only physical perfection, but as representing "truth to an idea of beauty in opposition to more or less mechanical principles of duty"—and seems to hold that to every man is offered the choice between Juno, Minerva and Venus, yet not a free choice, for :

The baton guides
to a premeditated end, and calls
from every player his determined part.

In one poem he refutes with considerable eloquence certain criticisms commonly levelled at mankind, and asks if there is any truth "wherein

all things are true without constraint", and in another he enumerates in a striking passage "the worthier hypocrisies"

That take their place within the frame of life
As heralds or interpreters of the form
Ever unknown, that still behind them looms
Mysterious as a shadow, while our soul
Bruises herself to mould our sullen clay.

In lines such as these, and in the final poem in the book, the poet in Mr. Fairfax Hall, outshines the philosopher, and gives me glimpses of that truth that can indeed succeed in cleaving

The cloak—our cursed heritage of fright—
That hangs between our darkness and the light.

E. M. M.

WANDERINGS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA. By Gerald Druce, M.Sc. (Lond.) R. Nat. Dr. (Prague), F.I.C. 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ ins. by 5 ins., pp. 103 + 32 plates map. London: Messrs. William & Norgate Ltd. Price 7s. 6d. net.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA is a country of peculiar interest to students of Occultism; at any rate, those whose concern is Alchemy, because of the close association between its capital, Prague, and the ancient Hermetic art. It was to Prague that John Dee and Edward Kelley came towards the close of the sixteenth century, at the invitation of Rudolph II, that they might demonstrate the transmutation of metals. And it was in Křivoklát Castle, not far from Prague, that Rudolph incarcerated Kelley (whom it is possible that he had previously knighted) in an attempt to wrest his supposed alchemical secrets from him. In Prague to-day, it is interesting to note, there still remains a narrow street called Golden Lane, since it was here where "the mediaeval alchemists laboured in vain search for the philosopher's stone".

Dr. Druce, who is already known to readers of THE OCCULT REVIEW as the author of some interesting communications on alchemical topics, has made a very special study of Czechoslovakia. He was, I believe, the first Englishman to graduate at the University of Prague after the establishment of the new republic. In this book, he discourses very pleasantly of the country, its people and their customs and industries, not forgetting the once prevailing interest in alchemical pursuits. It should certainly be read by all desirous of knowing more of Czechoslovakia, and especially by those contemplating visiting the republic, whether for pleasure or with the object of studying the alchemical traditions of the country.

H. S. REDGROVE.

LE SPIRITISME INCOMPRIS. By Léon Chevreuil, Président du Comité de l'Union Spirite Française. Paris: Les Éditions Jean Meyer (B.P.S.), pp. 180. Price 9 francs.

AMONG the many problems to which neither science nor philosophy has been able to find a satisfactory solution, not the least puzzling is: how can mere exertion of the will set a limb in motion; what is the link associating mind and matter, the bridge between the perceiver and the perceived?

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Author of *Symbiosis*.

MR. REINHEIMER, whose work in the realms of biology is destined to be recognized as important as that of Einstein in physics, here develops farther his synthetic biological philosophy. The crisis of modern civilization, he contends, is due largely to the indolent acceptance of fallacies such as "Natural Selection" and "Struggle for Existence".

Mr. Reinheimer puts forward the bold generalization that Evolution in the main consists in the development of the Moral Principle, the universe demanding inexorably from mankind integrity and service; for that which within man is sentiment, manifests externally as Law.

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Descartes shelved the difficulty on the pineal-gland; Occasionalism disposed of it, along with man's freedom of action, by transferring all responsibility to the Deity. To account for the automatism of nerve-centres, the great physiologist Claude Bernard has been driven to assume, "une intelligence inconsciente latente dans l'organisme"; which, we agree with M. Chevreuil, is quite meaningless. His explanation is simpler, and far more logical.

The key to the whole difficulty, if one accepts M. Chevreuil's elucidation, is the etheric Double; an ideo-plastic intermediary between the physical body and "*le dynamisme intelligent*" (the soul-force). "L'oeuvre de la création est soutenue par cette force mystérieuse qui pénètre tout, et qui fait sortir la matière de son inertie." Not only has everything that lives a soul, but each cell constitutes a living being; those of the plants as much as those of our bodies. Thus man is a soul served by souls: "nous avons une multitude d'âmes, qui sentent puisqu'elles obéissent, qui sont une force puisqu'elles agissent".

As the aim of this book is to justify Spiritualism against those who accuse it of mysticism and resorting to the supernatural, one must make allowance for M. Chevreuil being a little hard on the mystics.

FRANK LIND.

THE WAY OF ATTAINMENT. By Sydney T. Klein. London: Rider & Co. Pp. 222. Price 5s.

MANY readers will be glad of this new and revised edition of Mr. Klein's well-known book, a companion volume to his *Science and the Infinite*. He writes so clearly and with such apt and interesting illustrations that his thought is always easy to follow, and he has much to say that will meet with a ready response from those who believe, as he does, that "we are living on the brink of a world-wide awakening to spiritual truths". Mr. Klein makes a striking and necessary distinction between "looking within" and "looking inside", and lays great stress on the uselessness of the *intellect* for dealing with spiritual matters. The basis of his teaching is that "there is an inmost centre in ourselves where truth abides in fulness", and his aim is to help others to find the way to that centre; where they may dwell in peace, unmoved and undistracted by the world of outward shows.

E. M. M.

CHRISTIAN NAMES AND THEIR VALUES. By Mabel L. Ahmad. London: Rider & Co., Paternoster House, E.C.4. Price 7s. 6d. net.

To all who have an interest in the occult meaning of Numbers, especially in connection with Names, this book must come as a treasure indeed. Its author is responsible for two other volumes on the same inter-related subjects, and it is quite evidently with her a labour of love. She explains that: "The Key Number by which a Name is identified is termed its Digit (Number) which is deduced by adding together the units of the Full Number." For myself, I fear I am in the same position as an individual referred to by Professor Seeley, as being one on whom certain words make no impression on the mind and therefore arouse no antagonism. . . . Patience of the greatest and an intense interest in the theme could alone have produced this exhaustive treatise.

The writer, who is "the widow of the late S. H. Ahmad, with whom she worked and studied for a long period," is amply equipped with these essentials. Her book, she tells us, is based solely on her husband's "findings in connection with the Law which he re-discovered after its having been lost for thousands of years." The book contains no fewer than twelve hundred Christian names, with a full explanation of their value in connection with their relative numbers. If all this be true what a deadly responsibility rests with our parents and godparents in their choice of our names, and what a dire series of consequences may unconsciously set in motion by those who, and through distaste or caprice, discard the name or names bestowed on them in baptism, and substitute others more to their liking.

EDITH K. HARPER.

THE COPE. By Gertrude Bone. Decorated by Stephen Bone. London: The Medici Society. Price 3s. 6d. net.

APPRECIATION of beautiful embroidery is one thing, enjoyment another. Delineation by stitches cannot work on the feelings with the assurance of masterly painting. Yet if one accepts a work of pictorial tapestry as food for the imagination the result may be both admirable and elaborate.

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