

THE OCCULT REVIEW

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INVESTIGATION OF SUPERNORMAL
PHENOMENA AND THE STUDY OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS.

"Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri."

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EDITORIAL

LEST it should happen, in acknowledging the justice of much of
the criticism of the brothers Hare, as embodied in their recently
published work *Who Wrote the Mahatma Letters?* that a misleading
impression should have been conveyed in regard to the Masters, it
has been considered advisable to add a few further words in the
nature of comment, in order to make perfectly clear and precise
the Editorial view of this important matter.

The "Masters" Debunked

The title of the present editorial has purposely been put in
a colloquial and sensational form—*The "Masters" Debunked* ;
because the endeavour is to strip as far as possible the veils of
illusion which cover so many popular conceptions on an august
and sacred subject.

Those who in the quiet hour of meditation have from time
to time thrilled with the power, or melted under the tenderness,

of the Masters as They exist in the secret place whither the child-soul finds its way in response to the whispered call to turn back Home, cannot but view with dismay the sight of so many misguided mystery-seekers searching for Them where, They never may be found.

"The Masters! Common spooks of the séance-room, sinister adventurers, and tricksters, all alike have been acclaimed as "Masters" by the ignorant and gullible. Misguided mediums imagine that they are controlled by Them. Deluded psychics believe they see and speak with Them. Platitudinous slush is offered as of Their inspiration. "Portraits" of the Masters are to be purchased side by side with pictures of the Virgin Mary or Jesus the Christ. Mountebanks claim Them as brothers; and the whole spectacle presents such a grotesque manifestation of human folly that it would be amusing were it not so sad.

These are the "Masters" that it has been considered necessary to "debunk", and it is the ignorant and misguided who stand in need of being defended. The real Masters are beyond the reach of our puny powers, whether of censure or praise. No sincere aspirant need fear any attempt by the Hare brothers or anyone else at unmasking Them; for it can never be done. They it is Who silently and secretly cherish and guide the wayward footsteps of a wilful but immature humanity—"the great orphan" as it has been aptly termed. They cherish and guide, be it noted, for They are Masters only in the sense of *magister* or teacher.

Who Are the "Masters"?

Who, then, are the Masters? They are God-realized beings, whether embodied or disembodied, men of our own or some other humanity, who, collectively, may be regarded as constituting a spiritual Brotherhood, whose task it is to foster every budding germ of spirituality in man, individually or collectively, and by Their inspiration to forward the upward development of the human race. They are essentially *spiritual powers*, and as such, to be sensed through intuition by the Divine spark which lies buried deep within the human heart. They are not to be seen in the way that mediums and other psychics draw Them. They are beyond name and form. These things belong to the lower worlds. They belong to the Divine realm of Spirit. Actual contact with Them is a transcendental experience. A mere glimpse of Their

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light is as much as the average man can stand. How ineffable the actual contact, may be inferred from the beautiful lines of Frederick Myers, as he conceives them to have been spoken by the apostle Paul, in his poem of that title :

Lo, if some pen should write upon your rafter
Mene and Mene in the folds of flame,
Think ye could any memories thereafter
Wholly retrace the couplet as it came ?

Lo, if some strange intelligible thunder
Sang to the earth the secret of a star,
Scarce should ye catch, for terror and for wonder,
Shreds of the story that was pealed so far !

Scarcely I catch the words of His revealing,
Hardly I hear Him, dimly understand.
Only the power that is within me pealing
Lives on my lips, and beckons to my hand.

The Masters are Spiritual Powers

Since the Masters are purely spiritual *powers*, how should They, even when embodied, be recognized by the unawakened for what They really are ? One invaluable little guide to the way of spiritual life for the aspirant who would come to know Them, declares without equivocation that the ordinary man might meet a Master in the flesh, and even live in the same house with Him, "and yet be unable to recognize Him. For no nearness in space, no closeness of relations, no daily intimacy", avails to penetrate to the place of Peace where They have Their dwelling. Only Spirit speaks to Spirit. True, the records declare that a great Master once said : "Ask and ye shall receive," but that asking is no mere asking with the mind. To "ask" is to experience the yearning of spiritual aspiration.

Intellect and Spirituality

It should never be forgotten that spiritual unfoldment is a life process, and not a mere intellectual undertaking. Intellect belongs only to the life of the soul. Spiritual unfoldment goes beyond that—not that intellect is to be abrogated, so much as that intellectual riches should be recognized as possibly proving a greater barrier to spiritual life even than physical wealth. "A man must become as a little child before he can enter into the kingdom of heaven." The personal "I" is the great stumbling-

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block. It is, indeed, the arch enemy. As *Light on the Path* points out, even the desire to appear as a teacher or apostle before the world is sufficient to poison the soul of teacher and taught alike, for "he is secretly worshipping himself".

A Danger in Devotion

There are, unfortunately, many sincere and ardent aspirants of a devotional temperament who treasure "portraits" of the Masters, taking them entirely at their face value. Provided it is borne in mind that such "portraits" are of neither more nor less intrinsic value than any conventional portrait of the Virgin Mary or the Jesus the Christ, there is little actual harm in their use. Danger arises, however, when, through strenuous meditation along devotional lines, a figure of the beloved Lord appears in the particular guise favoured by the aspirant. The devotee should remember that he is still in the region of name and form, and therefore still in the realm of illusion. He should recall to mind the counsel: "*Nothing that is embodied, nothing that is conscious of separation, nothing that is out of the Eternal can aid you.*" He may thus be saved much bitterness of heart.

Life Beyond Form

In view of the above, one cannot help asking oneself of what use, apart from purely aesthetic considerations, are so-called portraits of the Masters? Better by far ponder over the advice, addressed, it is true, to the man on the threshold of becoming "perfect":

"Hold fast to that which has neither substance nor existence. Listen only to the voice which is soundless.

"Look only on that which is invisible alike to the inner and the outer sense."

We may not be in sight of the goal, but the sign-post is none the less valuable for all that.

THE EDITOR.

THE PROBLEM OF EXTRA-SENSORY INFLUENCES

By WILFRED GARTON, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.M.R. & E.
(Camb.)

Extra-sensory influences and how they operate cannot be explained by any one hypothesis. Every effort, however, to formulate a rationale of psychical phenomena, is a contribution towards the establishment of a valid Science of Psychical Research. Dr. Garton's article contains many illuminative suggestions, lucidly expressed and logically presented.

THAT knowledge is acquired in some way other than through the usual sensory channels is the outstanding feature of telepathy. The existence of this faculty is now almost universally admitted, and the question arises—how does this knowledge travel and what is the nature of the extra-sensory influence which impresses it upon consciousness?

In searching for the answer the first step should be the consideration of physical and physiological phenomena which in any way resemble telepathy and also points of similarity between it and other forms of abnormal mental phenomena such as clairvoyance, clairsaudience, psychometry, water-divining, and mental hypnotic suggestion. There is an obvious superficial resemblance between telepathy and wireless broadcasting. In each case there is a transmitter and a receiver and a message or a vision travels from one to the other by means of an intangible medium. These are the only similarities that we know of. The wireless message, transmitted by a mechanical device, can be picked up by any number of receivers, if suitably tuned. The telepathic message, transmitted by the human mind, is picked up by one, or only by a limited number, of human minds. Whether a bond of sympathy between the sender and receiver can give rise to some process analogous to the tuning-in of a wireless receiver, we do not know, nor do we know whether the message is transmitted by means of waves of the ether.

One often hears trivial talk of brain-waves in connection with telepathy, suggesting by the use of a term connoting a resemblance to wireless broadcasting that the phenomenon is completely explained; but should the use of this term be correct, it refers only to a part of the phenomenon. A little reflection will make it quite clear that a complete explanation on these lines is impossible.

How does the human brain transmit the message or picture? A famous scientist once said, "The brain secretes thought as the liver

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secretes bile," which is plausible; but to say, "The brain secretes a transmitter," sounds ridiculous. Anyone with a rudimentary knowledge of anatomy knows beyond a shadow of doubt that there is no structure in the brain that could possibly be used to transmit a message by means of waves of the ether, and therefore it is impossible to formulate any theory of wave transmission of telepathic communications without postulating the existence of a non-material transmitting organ associated with the brain or subconscious mind.

The same argument applies to the reception of the communication. The recipient must possess some form of receiver, and as there is no anatomical structure in the brain that can possibly serve this purpose, there must be a non-material receiving organ. Albert Eagle, in *The Philosophy of Religion versus the Philosophy of Science*, boldly and with cogent reasoning postulates the existence of a non-material duplicate of the body and it is only by similar hypotheses that any lucid theory for the explanation of extra-sensory influences can be arrived at.

Telepathy is within the field of investigation of two sciences—psychology and psychical research. So long as there remained any doubt of the existence of this faculty, psychologists had some justification for neglecting it, but now that telepathy is generally regarded as an established fact, it should no longer be dismissed with the excuse that so little is known about it that it is not worthy of investigation. Both these branches of science might with advantage follow the method of reasoning which has led to such wonderful results in the case of physics. Over two hundred years ago some physicists denied that light and heat and the influence of gravity could traverse empty space, and postulated the existence of a medium of transmission. This theory has, since its inception, been a great aid to the advance of knowledge, and today the existence of the ether is commonly regarded as established. In considering the faculty of becoming aware of these influences, one searches for points of resemblance between the various forms of super-normal mental phenomena, and one notices two characteristics common to them all—that they almost always occur with the subject in a state of trance, light or deep.

Dr. Rhine observed in his experiments with telepathy that the recipient was in a state of light trance. The metagnome (a preferable term to medium) during clairvoyance, clairaudience, or psychometry is very frequently in a state of trance, light or otherwise.

Sir William Barret noticed that water-diviners worked in a state of light trance. Incidentally this may account for the rarity of spontaneous telepathy, for it would be a very uncommon event for the person to whom an unexpected telepathic communication is sent to be in a condition that would enable him to receive it.

It is a legitimate inference from the fact that these phenomena

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nearly always take place with the subject in a condition of trance that extra-sensory influences act through the subconscious mind and also that a metagnome is one in whom transference of impressions from the subconscious mind to consciousness readily take place.

Now, if extra-sensory influences act upon the subconscious mind and are transferred thence to consciousness, there must be an organ associated with the subconscious mind that can receive them, and there cannot be an organ adapted to exercise any function without it has a structure. As we are not conscious of the presence of this organ it must be built up of something that is beyond sensory perception.

There was probably not one amongst the physicists of the early eighteenth century who dreamed that the then hypothetical ether would one day enter into the explanation of all natural phenomena, and if psychologists and others investigating abnormal mental phenomena adopt working hypotheses on similar lines it might be a step towards ascertaining the laws governing these phenomena. Physicists are concerned only with the physical properties of the ether, but when we consider the fact that the forms of matter we know have other properties and are nearly all chemical compounds, it would not be unreasonable to assume that modified forms of the ether might enter into combination to produce organic structures analogous to the structures of our bodies but intangible. One need not suppose that the universe is filled with such, but that there is a special development or organization of intangible modifications of the ether in association with the phenomenon of life and that this is the nature of the organs of the subconscious mind that transmit and receive extra-sensory influences.

The second feature that all these phenomena, clairvoyance, clair-audience, hypnotic suggestion, divining, and, telepathy, except psychometry have in common is that the effect of the stimulus does not appear to diminish with increased distance between the agent and percipient.

Dr. Rhine found, in his experiments with clairvoyance and telepathy, that the number of hits obtained at a distance was equal to, if not greater than, the number obtained when the experiment was carried out in one room.

A few months ago there was an experiment with water-divining described in *The Times* by which it was found that, when far above water in an aeroplane or far below in a coal-mine, the diviner was as sensitive to its presence as when crossing a bridge over a stream.

F. W. H. Myers described successful experiments with hypnotic suggestion, carried out at a distance by Professor Janet and Dr. Gilbert. In these experiments no diminished effect with distance was observed.

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At first sight these facts seem strongly against a wave-transmission theory, but this should not be lightly discarded, and I think the contradiction is only apparent. The subject is aware of what is transferred from the subconscious mind to consciousness, but there may be considerable variation of the stimulus to the subconscious mind of which he knows nothing.

As an example of a stimulus varying greatly in intensity yet producing no noticeable difference in its effect, I will cite a phenomenon with which we are all familiar. We have all experienced the effect of a tune which we know well in recalling vividly the incidents and surroundings associated with the first occasion on which we heard it. Now, if this tune be played by a band so distant that it can only just be heard, or by a band only a few yards away, the mental picture called up would be exactly the same, although the intensity of the stimulus in the first case to the intensity in the second would be as one to thousands. Here is an instance of an apparently unvarying effect following a cause of widely varying intensity.

A similar relation between cause and effect in the case of a stimulus passing through the subconscious mind to consciousness is quite possible and the inconsistency of these facts with a theory of wave transmission disappears.

Another argument against the theory of wave transmission of telepathic communications is as follows :

A, being in a position of danger, thinks of B. B sees mentally a picture of A, perhaps with details of his clothes and surroundings. If A's thoughts were conveyed by wave-transmission to B, then B would see mentally A's thought, which is B himself and nothing else, and certainly no details of A's clothes or surroundings, which A would not think of at such a moment.

There are two assumptions in this argument which are open to question—one, that A's communication originates from his conscious mind ; and the other, that A's conscious mind and subconscious mind, as distinct from the body which receives sensory impressions, dwell entirely within his cranium.

As regards the first, except in a very few cases, there is no evidence that the telepathic communication was due to conscious effort to transmit it. As regards the second, the seat of consciousness has been in dispute for generations. It has been placed in the heart, the solar plexus, and the pineal body, but we cannot confidently assert that it is within the body at all. If we prick a finger the consciousness of the sensation appears to be in the finger ; but we know that, if the group of nerves carrying the sensation were stimulated at the elbow, the sensation would still appear to be in the finger, so that the apparent seat of consciousness gives no clue to its real seat, and we know nothing

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whatever of its situation or extent. It may be more extensive than the body.

As to the subconscious mind—of which we know, if possible, still less, and which probably transmits and receives telepathic communications—it may be, theoretically, of any size suitable for what we believe to be the nature of its activities.

Now, I have pointed out that if the subconscious mind receives visual and aural impressions by telepathy it must possess non-material organs for these purposes which have a structure—and, after all, this is a more reasonable conception of the subconscious mind than a shapeless blob of something.

What I suggest happens in these cases of telepathy between two persons who are both living, is that A's subconscious mind sees his body and its surroundings from outside his body and transmits the picture seen to B.

This is not irreconcilable with wave transmission, and it appears to me simpler than any theory of exteriorization on the part of B.

Another objection to the radiation theory of telepathy is that the agent has no means of directing the message or vision to the person for whom it is intended. In other words, very many people must be within the field of the radiated message; and how can it be received by only one particular person?

I think there is a satisfactory answer to this objection. We know that our motor nerves can become accustomed to impulses so that they can be transmitted more easily. As an instance of this we have the skill acquired by a pianist in controlling the movements of the fingers by regular practice, which is due to the readiness with which the nerves transmit impulses causing the required movements. It is conceivable that our thoughts, feelings, and mental impressions are always being broadcast, but that only occasionally is the radiation of sufficient intensity to reach the consciousness of another mind. This is more likely as an explanation than that telepathic transmission is a faculty suddenly acquired for a single occasion. Two friends much in contact or in sympathy with each other might have subconscious minds habituated to the extra-sensory influences of each other, and thus provide a ready channel for influences powerful enough to reach consciousness should an occasion of great emotion for either of them arise. The broadcast message would reach only the consciousness of that person who, as it were, is in possession of an instrument that is tuned in, but it is not impossible that it might reach the consciousness of another mind whose unconscious channels of reception resemble the other by pure chance. Prof. Hans Driesch states in *Psychical Research*: "We actually know only that spontaneous telepathy

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generally, though not always, necessitates an emotional link between the agent and percipient."

There is a resemblance between the extra-sensory influence associated with water-divining and magnetic influence. This was revealed in an account which appeared some months ago in *The Times* of experiments by a water-diviner, to which I have previously referred. It was observed that when the water-diviner was crossing a bridge over a stream, the influence was strongest close to the banks of the stream and disappeared in the centre.

Let us suppose that, instead of the stream, a large and very powerful magnet, sufficiently powerful to overcome terrestrial magnetism, is placed lengthways beneath the bridge and that the direction of the bridge and magnet is from east to west. If a compass were carried over this bridge, the compass-needle would be deflected from its normal position, the deflection being greatest close to the Poles and diminishing towards the centre, where, as the North and South Poles of the magnet neutralize each other, the compass-needle would return to its normal position. The influence arising from a stream of water, which causes the phenomenon of water-divining, is similar in the distribution of its strength to a magnetic field, but, so far as we know, it is unaffected by terrestrial magnetism, it does not affect a compass-needle, and there is no instrument by which its influence can be detected.

We only know of its existence by reason of its action through the subconscious mind of the water-diviner. But the existence of a force resembling magnetism, which for want of a better name I will call non-material magnetism, makes the co-existence of a non-material electricity a necessary corollary, for the relation of magnetism and electricity is so intimate that one cannot imagine that a more intangible replica of one can exist without a similar replica of the other.

I do not think any attempt has been made to ascertain the effect of distance or the presence of a polarity with other materials to the presence of which the water-diviner is sensitive.

There is a resemblance between a metagnome when giving clairvoyance or clairaudience and subjects under hypnotic trance in that any emotion experienced is of great intensity. I have assumed that hypnotic suggestion acts by means of an extra-sensory influence, because it can act from a distance, thus demonstrating that it is the thought rather than the spoken word which is essential for its action. Most metagnomes tell us that they are usually sensitive to influences from those with whom they come in contact. As an example of this, if travelling in a public vehicle in which there is a stranger under the influence of deep emotion, they will feel that emotion, although they may be in a position in which they do not see the stranger. To me

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the most probable explanation of this is that our feelings are constantly broadcast as an extra-sensory influence and a metagnome is so constituted that these influences, if of sufficient intensity, are transferred to consciousness when in a normal mental state. When the metagnome becomes more than normally sensitive to extra-sensory influences for the purpose of giving clairvoyance by inducing a state of trance by self-hypnosis, the emotions produced have a greatly increased intensity as in the case of an ordinary person when emotion is produced by suggestion when hypnotized. Where the suggestion arises from in the case of the metagnome is a debatable point which I will leave until later.

There is a physical phenomenon associated with seances held for clairvoyance or other supernormal happenings the existence of which may be regarded as established. During these seances it is a common event for those present to feel that the temperature has dropped. This might be due to imagination, but on several occasions its reality has been confirmed by such careful investigators as Sir William Crookes and Mr. Harry Price. The temperature was taken with a thermometer which was observed to fall during the seance and rise again afterwards to its previous position. The heat disappears and what becomes of it is not known. The same thing happens in a different way in fire-walking.

In the experiment carried out by Mr. Harry Price with Kuda Bux, the surface temperature of the soles of the feet was taken before and after the walk over the hot cinders and was found afterwards to have slightly fallen. There was no burning of the feet, and a piece of court-plaster placed on the foot was not affected by the heat. The heat rising from the glowing embers must have disappeared on coming into contact with the soles of the feet.

At first sight this appears to be a purely physical phenomena, but Kuda Bux was observed to be in a light trance, and fire-walkers are usually metagnomes. In each type of phenomenon the presence of a metagnome is associated with a disappearance of heat. These are, I think, the main points of resemblance between the various phenomena associated with extra-sensory influences. To recapitulate briefly, the following inferences have some justification :

- (1) The existence of a non-material transmitting organ associated with the human personality.
- (2) The existence of non-material visual and aural receiving organs.
- (3) That extra-sensory influences are received by the subconscious mind and may be transferred thence to consciousness.
- (4) That transference of impressions from the subconscious mind to consciousness can take place more readily with some persons than with others.

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- (5) That the dimensions of the subconscious mind may be very much greater than those of the body.
- (6) That there is a more tangible influence resembling magnetic influence, and therefore in all probability there is also a more intangible replica of electricity.

In following the lines of thought suggested by these inferences a classification of supernormal mental phenomena will be of great help. For this purpose I first divide them into two main groups, the first including all those forms in which the extra-sensory influence arises from other minds—telepathy, clairvoyance, clairaudience, and hypnotic suggestion. Now, all these may be fairly brought under one head—telepathy.

Clairvoyance and clairaudience are telepathic communications from the subconscious mind of those present or, possibly, from discarnate spirits. Hypnotic suggestion is telepathy from the operator to the patient.

The second main group contains those forms in which the extra-sensory influence arises from inanimate material and includes psychometry and water-divining.

The first group, now all included under telepathy, may be conveniently divided into two sub-groups: one, cases in which telepathy is spontaneous, and the other, including experimental telepathy and seances held for the purpose of making telepathic communication easy by providing the most favourable conditions.

Cases belonging to the first sub-group—spontaneous telepathy—can be most conveniently considered in order of the frequency of their occurrence:

- (1) Apparently purposeless communications or visions. These are the rarest. A good example of this is the case of Lt. Col. Reed, mentioned by F. W. H. Myers. In this case one person, without the will or desire to do so, unconsciously transmitted a vision of himself to another.
- (2) Communications which result from efforts of will or strong emotion. These are more frequent.
- (3) Death visions. These are the most frequent.

The most simple explanation which is consistent with the theory of wave transmission is that the subconscious mind is always broadcasting our thoughts and mental pictures of our surroundings, but the radiations, as a rule, are not of sufficient intensity to penetrate to the consciousness of other minds. Although the effect that the mind is conscious of is unaltered by great variations of the intensity of the stimulus, it may be too feeble to reach consciousness at all. A hair-

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trigger pistol will fire either with a very light pressure or a pressure of many pounds, and the effects of the explosion will be the same, but the pressure may be too light to fire it and there will be no explosion. So the intensity of the radiation which carries what the mind is ordinarily broadcasting may be insufficient to penetrate to the consciousness of other minds, but on rare occasions the channel of communication to the consciousness of some other mind may, for some reason we cannot at present understand, be unusually open, and then, without our wish or will, the thoughts or pictures in our subconscious mind are transferred to the consciousness.

Radiations of greater intensity associated with effort or strong emotion will reach the consciousness of others under less favourable conditions and are therefore more common, and the great emotion at the moment of death accounts for death visions being the most common of these phenomena.

But if one accepts the theory of survival—and it would be unreasonable not to consider it as a possibility—there is another very obvious explanation for the frequency of death visions, and that is that if the discarnate personality leaves the body, the distance between the agent and percipient can be diminished to negligible proportions and the intensity of the extra-sensory influence multiplied by thousands. This would also account for so-called delayed telepathy, cases in which the deceased appears to a relative some hours or days after death, which are very difficult to explain by any other hypothesis.

Experimental telepathy by scientific investigators has not been carried on for a great length of time, but as it has definitely proved its existence one hopes that it is a prelude to more fruitful investigations.

The clairvoyance and clairaudience of professional metagnomes at seances and public meetings are not as a rule convincing, but anyone who is willing to devote a little time to them will find wheat amongst the chaff. As metagnomes are usually in a condition of light trance, a self-induced hypnosis, it is probable that what they see and hear is originated by suggestion, as in other experiments in hypnotism. Since, on occasions, information is given by the metagnome which could not have been acquired through the normal sensory channels, the simplest explanation appears to be that the suggestion comes from the subconscious minds of those present. But this does not explain all cases, for sometimes the information given is beyond the knowledge of anyone present, and there are a few instances of prediction, subsequently fulfilled, vouched for by men of great intelligence and the highest integrity.

A prediction of any event must be based on a knowledge of the causes which are likely to be, or are of necessity, followed by that event. Sometimes this knowledge makes the fulfilment almost a

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certainly, as in astronomical predictions, sometimes only a probability, as in the case of forecasts by meteorologists. The predictions of metagnomes must depend for their accuracy on the knowledge and reasoning power of the mind which happens to be exerting the extra-sensory influence.

If one can assert with complete confidence that the fulfilment of a prediction could not have been due to chance, and that there was no one present at the time when the prediction was made whose mind possessed the necessary knowledge and qualifications for making it, then we are forced to the conclusion that the subconscious mind of someone who was present possesses greater knowledge and reasoning power than his conscious mind, or the metagnome was under the influence of a mind with the necessary qualifications for making the prediction but with no material evidence of its existence. Further, if the prediction has a definite purpose, we should be compelled to admit that it was a mind, without a human body, interested in human affairs. The only alternative to this would be the rather fantastic theory of relayed telepathy.

The ordinary hypnotic trance and the self-induced trance of metagnomes differ in that in the former the subject is open to the voluntary suggestions of the hypnotist, whilst in the latter the metagnome is open to suggestions which, if they arise from those present, must usually be involuntary and unconscious. The communications rarely purport to come from a living person, and if they do it is very commonly at a time when that person is asleep. Metagnomes nearly always believe that communications concerning the dead come from discarnate entities. Unless their belief is correct the subconscious mind must be a repository of much more information about the dead than the living, but so little is known about the subconscious mind that we cannot say that this is unlikely.

My second main group, in which the extra-sensory influence arises from inanimate matter, includes psychometry and water-divining.

If one allows that the subconscious mind, with its organs for communicating with other minds, may be altogether outside the body, then any object a person carries might be subject to continual broadcasting from that person's mind, and it might have the power of retaining and continually reflecting these influences.

That water and certain metals emanate an influence to which some persons are sensitive is evident. The only resemblance one can recognize between this and other forms of extra-sensory influences is that the sensitive enters into a state of self-induced hypnosis before becoming aware of them.

In all these manifestations of sensitivity to extra-sensory influences the theory of radiation of these influences is not impossible of applica-

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tion, and, because it is so widely applicable to nature that we know, it seems more likely to be the true one than any other explanation; but the possibility of the influence acting through contact of subconscious minds is, I think, worth considering.

If we allow that the subconscious mind may be of much greater extent than the body, that increases the possibility of contact between the mind at a distance, but we have no reason to expect that the subconscious mind would require a rigid protection, like the skull, and it might have the power, as the amoeba, of sending out a long narrow process for the purpose of contact with another subconscious mind. Such a theory, however, does not help to explain psychometry.

Another possibility is that extra-sensory influence may be carried by a more intangible form of electricity.

Electricity is of the greatest importance in physiology. The nerve impulses causing muscular movement and governing nutrition are electrical in nature, and probably all sensory impulses are. An American scientist has recently discovered that the molecules of protoplasm have magnetic poles and are, therefore, associated with the production of minute electric current. It does not seem impossible that some similar but non-material form of energy might be associated with extra-sensory activities, especially since the influence affecting water-diviners has a polarity.

But what I am most concerned with is the question of electrical discharge. In 1916, at a military hospital, I had the opportunity of watching experimental work in connection with Dr. Horne-Wilson's di-electric method of treatment. The object of these experiments was to ascertain the difference of electrical potential between various parts of the body, the testing being carried out with a very sensitive astatic galvanometer. It was evident that the skin has a very complicated pattern of different electrical potentials from which electricity is being slowly dissipated into the atmosphere, the rate of discharge varying with the potential of the area from which it arises.

Now, as electricity so completely pervades the material body, it is not unreasonable to assume that a non-material form of electricity pervades the subconscious mind; and, as it has been found necessary to postulate the existence of non-material structural organs, it is going very little further to infer the existence of a non-material surface with a complicated pattern non-material electricity, at different potentials, discharging into surrounding space and affecting other subconscious minds, possibly at a great distance away.

These three possible methods of extra-sensory communication are merely tentative suggestions. I have not arrogated to myself the expression of an opinion. Many will hold objections to them which I have not thought of. Some may have other arguments in their

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favour. They are suggestions made in all humility by an unknown man in the hope that there may be something in them that others with greater knowledge and mental vision may modify or enlarge upon so that indirectly they may be of some use. Patient and painstaking psychical research has accumulated a vast array of facts, but so far theory has been rather in the background. The collection of more facts is still a useful work, but with other sciences hypotheses soon followed the accumulation of facts, and I think information now available on the subject of extra-sensory communication is sufficient to make a working theory the next most necessary step towards ascertaining the laws governing these phenomena.

BOOK REVIEW

THE PROBLEM OF REBIRTH. By the Hon. Ralph Shirley. Cr. 8vo. Pp. 192. London: Rider & Co. Price 5s.

ANY work on Reincarnation from the pen of the Hon. Ralph Shirley merits serious attention, since this hypothesis has been the subject of the author's special study over a period of many years. The pros and cons are marshalled logically and without personal bias, with the object not so much to convince the reader as lead him "to face the subject under discussion independently of traditional beliefs and preoccupations".

Not only are striking cases of "memory" cited and analysed, but the philosophical implications of the theory are judicially weighed and tested. From contemporary psychic records the well-known case of Nyria figures prominently. The bearings of the theory on hypnotism, heredity, and so on, receive due attention; while incidentally Mr. Shirley points out "to how large an extent Theosophy has reproduced the teachings of Allan Kardec [on reincarnation]. . . . It is impossible to doubt that the influence of Allan Kardec on Theosophical thought has been very far-reaching."

A scientific and impartial survey of this field has long been wanted, and *The Problem of Rebirth* should become the standard work on this fascinating-if controversial hypothesis.

H. S.

THE HARE ATTACK REPULSED

By HELEN SAVAGE, M.A.

With much pleasure we include in this issue a contribution from Point Loma in response to the challenge of the Hare brothers ; although, in truth, we are convinced that the real Masters of the spiritual life stand in no need of defence.

THE Hare brothers appear to have fortified themselves in their composition of *Who Wrote the Mahatma Letters ?* by beginning and ending with the well-known words of Plato :

Whither the argument, like a wind, takes us, thither must we go.

Having read their book, one is urged to improve upon Plato by adding :

The port we enter depends upon the set of our sails.

In other words, to speak less metaphorically, arguments that are illogical and misleading, strained and beside the point, and, above all, based on false premises, will not bring one to impartial conclusions.

The facts gathered by the Hare brothers are indeed many and varied ; one has no quarrel with these. They are not now brought forward for the first time : students of Theosophical history have been acquainted with most or all of them for many years. Objection is raised, however, to the fact that the whole book suggests a flagrant example of *ex parte* pleading, and therefore the arguments are vitiated all along the way.* The book is filled with rhetorical questions which evidently are meant to convince the reader by their implications. The authors discredit the verity of H.P.B.'s words constantly ; yet when they find her saying something which they think is incriminating to herself, they quote her as presumably accurate and therefore to be relied upon.

We are told by the authors that they have done their best to make the Mahatmas appear as "thinkable entities" ; yet their accumulated "facts" about these Mahatmas are so interlarded with derisive phrases and interpretations, sarcasms and innuendoes, that the resulting effect on the mind of the reader is most unsatisfactory. They speak of the Master's "patronizing approval"

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of Mr. Sinnett (p. 40) ; his "embittered" humour (p. 142) ; an "angry turn" given to one of his letters (143). The Chohan seldom "condescends" to do so-and-so (p. 40). The Mahatmas have a "super-Samuel-Johnson dictionary" ; etc., etc. And where K.H. speaks of his reading in the Âkâśic Libraries "so to say—with eyes shut" (p. 49), which surely suggests inner vision, the authors paraphrase the phrase into "wandering blindfold", which suggests some poor benighted creature most woefully incapacitated.

In fact, there is a definite attempt at every turn to make the Masters look ridiculous and paltry, and therefore improbable ; the idea being, of course, as the book goes on to show, that they are merely imaginary figures set up by H.P.B. to invest her with occult powers in the eyes of the world,

One method they use to force an argument is to employ words or phrases from the *Letters* apart from their context. One illustration will suffice. On page 48 they say that the Mahatmas'

"most authoritative records are in the "Akasic Library" itself, on the primeval passive pages of the Ether. "Not *your* ether," the Mahatma hastens to remark [p. 166], and we note the fact, which we had already suspected.

As a matter of fact, the reference to "not *your* ether" (p. 166 of *The Mahatma Letters*) has nothing whatever to do with Âkâśic Libraries, but is said in connection with a scientific discussion about light. Now, whereas the Hare brothers cannot be said to have misquoted, does not the above trench upon a deliberate misleading of the unsuspecting reader ? For it is obvious that their use and placing of the Mahatma's phrase, together with their own words "the Mahatma hastens to remark, and we note the fact, which we had already suspected" appears definitely to have been done with an eye to giving to the Mahatma a taunting and supercilious air.

Quotations from the *Letters* have also been conveniently abridged, as for instance on p. 203, where a few lines are quoted from p. 319 of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* in illustration of K.H.'s "grotesque vision" of the Christian God. Yet in quoting the Master's words, they omit, without any indication to that effect, the very words that give point to the satire ! (Lack of space prevents quoting ; but the passage is well worth looking up.)

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The authors crowd upon the attention of the reader a host of trivial details, as though to sway his mind by the very *number*, if not importance, of the flaws they can find. But it is carrying it a bit too far when they take pains to note (p. 123) that a certain poem of Christina Rossetti's is quoted (correctly, they must admit) without giving the author's name or the title of the poem. One asks: Is a private letter, never originally intended for publication, supposed to read like a carefully annotated text-book?

While crowding details forward when they so wish, the authors are just as likely to ignore or suppress points which would invalidate their entire argument. No mention is made of a letter sent by Tookaram Tatya from Bombay, June 5, 1886, to Colonel Olcott (rec. June 7) at Adyar, which letter was found to contain a message written diagonally across a free sheet signed "K.H." and in the familiar K.H. script. H. P. Blavatsky *was in Germany at the time*. (See *Did Madame Blavatsky Forge the Mahatma Letters?* C. Jinarajadasa, pp. 21-6.)

Another instance of suppressing points which would weaken their position: There are twenty-one pages in the Hares' book devoted to a superficial and partisan exposition of the famous Kiddle incident. Yet, in regard to the particular letter in question (No. vi, M.L.), said by the Master to have been taken down by a young boy-chela, but by the Hare brothers "proved" to have been concocted by Madame Blavatsky, they fail to point out that this letter is most singularly free from H.P.B.'s customary Gallicisms, Americanisms, and so on, and is punctuated in a closer and somewhat more accurate style than are H.P.B.'s own letters, or than are others of the Mahatma Letters which presumably H.P.B. transcribed and passed on as mediator-amanuensis.*

Further, no explanation is attempted of the amazing disparity between H.P.B.'s extravagant and lively way of talking about the Kiddle matter in her letters to Sinnett (*cf.* "Plagiarise from the *Banner of Light*!! that sweet spirits' slop-basin—the asses!" p. 66 *H.P.B. Letters to Sinnett*), and K.H.'s quite cool and reasoned explanation of the whole matter. It would take a deal of imagination to conceive the same personality behind those letters.

This same disparity, not so much in the superficialities of what the Hare brothers call "style", but in the personality of the

* The reader who is interested in the facts concerning the manner in which the Mahatmas carried on their correspondence with their European questioners through different amanuenses, is referred to the pages of the *Theosophical Forum*, October 1936.

writers, is well illustrated by contrasting K.H.'s words about Anna Kingsford and H.P.B.'s. (See pp. 209 and 210 of *Who Wrote The Mahatma Letters?*, where parallel columns of phrases have been gathered from K.H.'s letters and from H.P.B.'s on the subject of Anna Kingsford.) It is true that both the Master and H.P.B. are deploring Mrs. Kingsford's vanity and imperious ways; but see how differently they go about it! K.H. is kindly, slightly amused, detached. H.P.B. is anything but detached; obviously she has worked herself into quite a stew over the "Divine Anna".

The authors have avoided listing the many instances where the Mahatmas have praised Mrs. Kingsford with justice for her unusual intellectual gifts. Also, perhaps they are not aware that H.P.B.'s criticisms of Anna Kingsford were not due merely to the former's personal animus. Responsible writers, such as Edward Carpenter and others, had the same criticism to make of the gifted Anna, though in more moderate language.

Students of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* and *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, do not, of course, need to have pointed out to them the immense differences not only in literary style—which the sceptics could argue are easily assumed by one and the same individual—but likewise in "atmosphere", which exist between the letters signed "M" and those signed "K.H."; and again between any and all of the letters written by the Mahatmas and H.P.B.'s personal ones. This "atmosphere" is style in its deeper and truer sense, and to the sensitive reader, wherever it is found it breathes forth the essence of an individuality. That the Hare brothers fail to note this more subtle, but for that very reason more weighty, point, is probably explained by the fact, or supposition, that they themselves are not students of the *Letters*—or so one infers from several things observed: (a) their unsympathetic and not wholly accurate exposition of the philosophy of the Letters; (b) their statement that the two books above mentioned are not studied, so far as they have observed, in the Lodges (p. 315); (c) their statement that "from these turgid pages *not one memorable passage has emerged as a quotable text or maxim* after fifty years of faith". (Italics theirs, p. 168).

Quite a point is made in the Hares' book about the remarkable fact that K.H., supposedly a graduate from a German university, should have made so many errors of a grammatical and literary nature—which, as a matter of fact, he did not, for these are due to his different amanuenses. Is it not then also surprising to find

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slips in Latin and French, and in English literature, from the authors, who had "been trained for the English Civil Service in youth" ? (p. 244). To give but a few examples :

Raisonné for *raisonné* ; *pourquoi avez vous l'imprimé* ? for *pourquoi l'avez-vous imprimé* ? ; *flumene* for *flumine*.

Such mistakes may, of course, be merely typographical ; but they do smack suspiciously of the traditional grammar-school errors.

There are likewise some more excusable inaccuracies to be found in the Sanskrit and in the Devanāgarī script used by the Hare brothers—that is, these errors would be excusable if it were not that the authors have set about to point out and correct the errors of the K.H. signature. As the Devanāgarī is difficult to reproduce, and, together with the Sanskrit words, would be uninteresting to the general reader, mention is merely made of the fact that these mistakes by the Hare brothers occur.

While speaking of errors, the following two are to be noted :

(1) The phrase *in adversum flumen*, listed by the Hare brothers among the "Mahatmas' Dog-Latin" (p. 126), is sanctioned and used by Lucretius ; *in adversum flumen contendere*, IV, 423.

(2) The lines of poetry which the authors call very poor verse" (p. 123), and say they cannot find in Tennyson, *are*, in fact, by the former English Laureate, Tennyson, being the last six lines of a poem called *The Mystic*. K.H., in attributing them to Tennyson, can hardly, therefore, be said to be perpetrating a "libel on a laureate".

Furthermore, on p. 124 the authors say :

Not content with this common mistake, misquoting certain lines from Swift's satirical piece "On Poetry", the Mahatma adds another of his own, in attributing the lines to Butler, for he calls his verse "the Hudibrasian couplet".

Surely one can use the phrase "Hubibrasian couplet" without implying that Hudibras said the words, just as we use the phrases, "Shakespearian wit", "Rabelaisian laughter", "Pecksniffian benevolence". (See *The Century Dictionary and Cyclopaedia*, under "Hudibrastic".)

It is difficult to characterize the following other than as "Hare"-splitting : Referring to the ratio between the disputed portion of the Kiddle letter as incompletely transcribed by the

chela and as originally "impressed" by K.H., the authors say (pp. 155-6): .

Here the apologists are in disagreement with one another and with the facts. In the Mahatma's own excuse it is *one-half*, in the editor's it is *but one-third*; may we repeat that actually the proportion between the disputed passages is twenty-four lines to fifty-four.

Indeed; twenty-four fifty-fourths equals four-ninths—which is an almost perfect average between the rough estimate of K.H. and the rough estimate of K.P.B.! Yet the authors, who are so particular about exactitude in numbers, say on p. 314:

Twenty-five years after the foundation of the Theosophical Society, Madame Blavatsky died. . . .

The Theosophical Society was founded in 1875; H.P.B. died in 1891—a period of sixteen years.

To slur over the matter of the examination of the K.H. handwriting undertaken by Mr. Richard Hodgson of the S.P.R. shows a gross lack of critical acumen on the part of the authors. They say it is "needless at this stage of our inquiry to employ the services of a handwriting expert to examine the Mahatma and Blavatsky Letters"; yet the investigation and examination of the handwriting expert employed by the S.P.R. in 1885 was of insufficient scope, and its resulting reports too open to question to be considered satisfactory by fair-minded people. (See *Did Madame Blavatsky Forge the Mahatma Letters?* C. Jinarajadasa, pp. 1-4.)

But, after all, the Mahatmas do not need our defence. Indeed, all too often have their supporters, by misapplied enthusiasms and ignorance of the Master's true work, made these great men look ridiculous in the eyes of the world. Let those who would serve them rather endeavour to study and understand their truly sublime philosophy, and let their personalities sink into the oblivion of the Himalayan fastnesses. For they do not seek notoriety: a book such as the one under criticism but shows how successfully they have kept the secret of their existence from the sceptics. "We must halt in the pass at Darjeeling," say the Hare brothers, "where, across the mountains, we can almost hear the laughter of the omniscient Mahatmas reverberating at our expense."—Why not? They have cause enough!

THE VISION OF PLATO

By CHARLES KING

In this, the first portion of a two-part article dealing with the spiritual significance of the Vision of Plato, Charles King considers more especially the "Republic" and the "Timaeus". While our Contributor draws attention to the fact that the divine fire burns more dimly in the "Timaeus" than elsewhere, he suggests that the chief works of Plato may be based upon different experiences—"to have lived through one such vision is enough for a lifetime".

PART I

WHEN Caird says that Plotinus is the greatest of all mystics, do you not hear the angels weep? The greatest of all mystics is

"He who walked the waves",
and who said,

"I and my Father are one."

But the choregus of the mystics, chief among those who
"Sing and singing in their glory move",
as they hymn their vision to the ears of after-time is

"Plato the wise,

"The first of those who know."

Caird* indeed, deprecates the mystical interpretation of Plato. He rebukes the "Neoplatonists who identified the good with a unity which we cannot define or express, a unity which we can only experience in an ecstasy wherein all thought and even all consciousness is extinguished. They did not observe that Plato reaches his conception of it, not by abstraction but by synthesis." But to one who has read and entered into the myth of the *Phaedrus*, and has revelled in the charioteer who feeds the horses with ambrosia and nectar, to one who has read the *Phaedrus* only, it is plain that Professor Stewart is entirely right when he harps for ever on "Transcendental feeling" as the origin of what is essential in Plato. There is no need to fear scepticism on the question of mystical experience in Plato, but on the question of whether he was a thorough-going and consistent monotheist, or believer in one God, scholars wield their shillallahs, in Professor Murray's picturesque phrase, yet; and well they may, on the face of it. Yet Plotinus, whom Caird calls the greatest of all mystics, and

* *Evolution of Theology in Greek Philosophers.*

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the Alpha and Omega of whose doctrine is mystic monotheism, knew well enough that he was following in the steps of Plato. Why else is he called a Neoplatonist, unless Plato also held the same faith? It would be called a *petitio principii* to say that the evidence of the experience in Plato is so strong, the tendency of the experience in great thinkers is so strong, and Plato is so great a thinker that he was bound to hold that God is One; it may on the evidence be held that, while the experience led him towards the recognition of the unity of the cosmos and the Oneness of God, logic, common sense, and experience led him towards pluralism, and the two tendencies are not thoroughly harmonized. There is much truth in this; there is an element of necessity in nature which wars incessantly against all idealism, as against the work of the Creator in the *Timaëus*, and if Plato's fairmindedness forbade him to claim wholly to have cast out the dragon, nevertheless we are not reading our own construction unwarrantably into Plato when we say that the unifying tendency is far more fundamental than the pluralistic in his philosophy, and that he held that God is One,

"Believing where he could not prove".

Professor Burnet indeed, who is sceptical about the identification of the Form of the Good with the creator of the *Timaëus*, as he is sceptical in general, has no doubt that Plato is a monotheist. As to this much-canvassed identification, it is surely safe to say, in Heraclitean language, that "it is and is not"; Plato has come in contact by mystical intuition with one Power at the heart of the Universe: he expresses his vision thereof in divers ways at divers seasons. Mr. Archer Hind in his introduction to the *Timaëus* by combining ingeniously the doctrines of different dialogues reads into Plato a Spinozistic pantheism which most interpreters hold to be entirely modern; and the interpretation does in parts seem rather strained. But if one does not go so far as Mr. Archer Hind in constructing a comprehensive system it is not necessary to say that Plato is inconsistent. He was always driving at the same fundamental things, but did not always express himself in the same way. Further, of course, in trying to make a system out of Plato's dialogues, one must always remember that, as he says in his seventh letter, and we know from Aristotle, he held life always more than letters, the spoken words than the written, believing it not fit that his inmost doctrines should be revealed to the many in books.

The *loci classici* for the mystical experience of Plato are the

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familiar myths of the *Phaedrus* and *Symposium*. It is both notorious and notable that in both dialogues it is by *Eros*, not by logic, that we go to the divine. *Eros* is usually translated "love", but "passion" is here from one point of view a better rendering: for it has exactly the two distinct meanings which are blended by Plato into these dialogues, viz. physical, sexual excitement and strong feeling of an exalted kind. Professor Stewart laments the connection of the exhilarating *Phaedrus* myth with this physical passion, a passion of a kind certainly unnatural and repugnant to modern ideas, but the ordinary kind of "love" amongst the Athenians of that age: he will not listen to the suggestion that the connection represents a personal experience of Plato's, simply from his *a priori* view of Plato's character. It must in the interests of truth be admitted that the whole tenor of the dialogue does point to a personal experience of Plato's; and if we believe it we are only believing that Plato was like most of his world in these matters. Now, it is not necessary to hold with the Freudians that all religion, like practically everything else, originates from sex, but there is no doubt that sublimated sexual emotion is a frequent and powerful source of religious emotion. And it is entirely credible that, as both the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium* suggest, with Plato, once at least, if not more than once, sexual emotion was sublimated into transcendental. Professor Stewart suggests that Plato was dramatizing, but you cannot dramatize so vividly, except out of your own experience. Naturally a question of origin is not necessarily a question of validity, but if it were, the evidence for the validity of the vision would be enhanced, since certainly the sex passion is a fundamental expression of the Eternal Power of Life, and it is essentially in keeping that it should be a vehicle of a revelation of that Power. The relevant passages of the *Phaedrus*, to quote briefly from a myth which it would be a joy to quote entire, and the first reading of which itself is a voyage beyond the heavens, are the words:

"The souls which are called immortal when they are come to the top of heaven, journey out therefrom and stand upon the roof thereof without, and standing are carried round by the circuit and behold those things which are without the heaven. Now, the place which is above the heaven no poet here hath ever praised, nor shall praise worthily. The place is after this wise, for he especially whose discourse is concerning truth must make bold to say what is true concerning it. The substance which verily is, which hath no colour and no shape and hand cannot touch, is comprehended only by the governor of the soul, to wit, by reason round about this substance; in this place dwelleth true knowledge. The mind of God,

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yea that part wherewith every soul seeketh after the food convenient for herself, is fed with reason and true knowledge undefiled. Wherefore beholding again at last which that is, it is satisfied and the sight of that which is true feedeth it, and maketh it glad, until the circuit shall have brought the soul round again unto the same place."

"This is the life of the Gods, of the other souls, whichsoever followeth the God best and is made most like unto Him, keepeth the head of her charioteer lifted up into the place without the firmament, and is carried round with the circuit thereof, being troubled by the horses and hardly beholding the things which are."

Who can doubt that it is in ecstasy that Plato has seen the things which are, that the place beyond heaven is the heaven at the core of the soul, where the self may at exalted moments be visited by intuitions of the true nature of things? The philosopher is the man who has at rare intervals, in the happiest of all human experiences whatsoever, lived the life of the gods. He goes his way through the flat state and unprofitable routine of life "with winged soul", "for he always cleaveth in memory, so far as he is able unto those things by cleaving unto which God is verily God. The man therefore who useth these memorials aright, and is always a partaker in the perfect mysteries, he alone becometh verily perfect" and "he hath inspiration of God".

That is the record of one of earth's great moments—the vision of Plato. The myth of the *Phaedrus* merely records the vision: the myth of the *Symposium* gives more definition to the object thereof, as Eternal Beauty. The lover

"having turned him to the great sea of Beauty will bring forth many arguments great and high until he discern that one science which comprehendeth that one Beauty". "When he cometh at last to the end of his initiation, on a sudden he shall behold a marvel, a thing of beauty, which always is, without generation or destruction or increase or decrease". "He shall see it as that which is in itself, with itself, of one form eternal and all the other beautiful things he shall see as partaking of it after such manner that while they come into being and perish it becometh not a whit greater or less, nor suffereth any change at all. 'Tis when a man ascendeth from these beautiful things by the right way of love and beginneth to have sight of that Eternal Beauty, 'tis then, methinks, that he toucheth the goal. Ascending from beautiful bodies to beautiful customs, from beautiful customs to beautiful doctrines, at last, being come into that which is the doctrine of the Eternal Beauty and of naught else beside, he apprehendeth what Beauty itself is. 'Tis then that life is worth living, and then only, when a man cometh to behold beauty itself. What thinkest thou, if a man could see Beauty itself, clean, pure, separate, not gross with human flesh, what thinkest thou if he could behold Beauty itself, divine, uniform? Understandest thou not that thus only shall he be able, seeing with that

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whereby Beauty is seen, to bring forth, not images of virtue . . . but things true, for he layeth hold of that which is true, and when he hath brought forth true virtue and nurtured her, understandeth thou not that then he hath become above all men beloved of God and himself immortal?"

Mark how the vision comes "on a sudden" and how the visionary himself becomes "immortal". These are the indefeasible marks of the true experience. It is clear from these passages in what way, and in what way only, Plato conceived it possible to apprehend ultimate reality: and as the forms are ultimate reality, it is in this way that they are apprehended. The forms, i.e. the forms of living things which are alone, but for one passage, mentioned in the final phase of the doctrine in the *Timaeus*, or the forms of natural things, if the reference to the essence of fire be pressed, are aspects of the one "Form of Good". The "Form of Good", *qua* good, is of course the "principle of purpose" in the universe" which "every soul followeth after and for whose sake it does everything, told by insight that it is something". But, of course, further, this supreme "Form"—which perhaps would be justifiably translated and not merely described as "Principles of Purpose"—is the "cause of being known to those things which are known and the source of all being to those things which are, itself beyond all being, transcendent in precedence and might". The first thing we notice about this famous doctrine is that the phrase "beyond being" however it is explained metaphysically is in actual fact a record of Plato's own experience. Who can doubt that Plato himself has been "beyond all being", has experienced feelings which seem to belong to an order where the existence of everyday is transcended? Marvellously enough, this patently true account of the phrase is missed by Dean Inge—"him even"!—who in a footnote to his Gifford Lectures on Plotinus says that this reference to the ultimate reality as beyond all being is "isolated"; so, it may be said, is the apprehension after this kind isolated from all other apprehension.

Further, it is clear from the end of the last passage we have quoted from the *Symposium*, where it is said that the soul of the "Great Lover" layeth hold of that which is true, that the "Beauty" itself which is there hymned is none other than the Form of Good or "Principle of Purpose" regarded from the aspect of its supreme Beauty. We are doing no violence to Plato's thought if we say that at least the True, the Beautiful, and the Good are one.

* "One good man is good for some purpose"—cf.

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In order to understand the full implication of the statement that the "Principle of Purpose" is the source both of knowledge and of being, we must be enlightened by the similitude of the sun, to which that Principle is likened not only in the Parable of the Cave which follows but actually in the passage of the *Republic* where itself is described, and to understand this similitude we must turn to Plato's theory of vision and of colours in the *Timaeus*. We see, it is there said, by virtue of a fire within us.

"Such sort of fire as had the property of yielding a gentle light but not of burning they (i.e. the Gods) contrived to form into a substance akin to the light of every day. The fire within us which is akin to the daylight they made to flow pure and smooth and dense through the eyes." "Colours on the other hand consist of a flame streaming off from every object, having its particles so adjusted to those of the visual current to excite sensation."

Now, the source both of the visual current and the flames is the sun, and, as it is said in the *Republic* itself, the eye's power of sight is an effluence from the sun. Therefore it follows that both being and knowledge are effluences of the Principle of Purpose, metaphorically and spiritually, if not physically; the analogy is clearer in the case of knowing, which has an object, than in the case of being, which has not (for we cannot attribute to Plato the Berkeleyan vision of being as knowledge by God). But in any case it is clear, if all things that are, phenomena that undergo generation, and growth (and it is of these that Plato here speaks, and not simply of the transcendent "Forms")—if all phenomena are effluences of the Principle of Purpose, as the visual current and the flames of colour are effluences of the sun, that matter itself is an effluence, a form of expression, an incarnation or tabernacling, a mode—an inferior mode doubtless, but still a mode—of the Ultimate Principle itself. That Plato's Principle of Purpose, like the mind of Anaxagoras, fulfils the function of God cannot be denied; nor can it be denied, on the showing of this analogy, which Plato himself works out at length, that from this point of view Plato's system is pantheism.

Before leaving the doctrine of the *Republic* we may remark in passing that the simile of the sun itself is very probably a mark of mystical experience—as Apuleius in the person of his Lucius saw "the sun at midnight"; and the same is more certainly true of the "straight light extended from above through the whole heaven and earth, as it were a pillar, for colour most like unto the rainbow, but brighter and purer"—the "light which blindeth the

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heavens together", in the vision of Er. This cosmic light Plato saw in ecstasy.

Now, in the *Philebus* "the true and divine mind" is identified with the Good, i.e. the Principle of Purpose, this "mind and marvellous intelligence, guide and pilot throughout this which is called the whole": in particular the power in the Universe which may justly be called wisdom and mind, orders and arranges years and seasons and months. Here we are definitely told—what is not definitely stated in the *Republic*—that the Ultimate Principle is not merely the source of intelligence to men, but is itself actively intelligent in ordering the universe, and it is moreover active in producing the universe.

This active account of the Ultimate Principle is in keeping with the argument in the *Sophistes*.*

Stranger. But for heaven's sake shall we let ourselves easily be persuaded that motion and life and soul and mind are really not present to absolute being, that it neither lives nor thinks, but devoid of mind is fixed and immovable.

Theaetetus. That would be a shocking admission to make, stranger.

Stranger. But shall we say that it has mind but not life?

Theaetetus. How can we?

Stranger. But do we say that both of these exist in it, and yet go on to say that it does not possess them in a soul?

Theaetetus. But how else can it possess them?

This carries us a step further. Absolute being, which we are told in the *Republic* is the Principle of Purpose, is here said to be a living soul, that thinks and moves.

We are now ready to consider the mystical *Timaeus*, the exact interpretation of whose doctrine will doubtless be a matter of scholarly dispute as long as time, the moving Image of eternity, shall move. Let us read a little of the *Timaeus* itself:

"Of whatsoever thing the Artificer, looking ever to the changeless and using that as his model, works out the design and function, all that is so accomplished must needs be fair", but if he look to that which has come to be, using the created as his model, the work is not fair. Now as to the whole heaven or order of the universe for whatsoever name is most acceptable to it, be it so named by us, we must first ask concerning it the question which lies at the outset of every enquiry, did it exist eternally, having no beginning of generation, or has it come into being, starting from some beginning? It has come into being, for it can be seen and felt and has body, we say that what has come to be must be brought into being by

* 249. (Phil. I. 27B.)

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some cause. Now the maker and father of this All it were a hard task to find, and having found him it were impossible to declare such to all men. However, we must again enquire concerning him, after which of the models did the framer of it fashion the universe, after the changeless and abiding, or after that which has come into being? If now this universe is fair and its artificer good, it is plain that he looked to the eternal, but if—nay, it may not even be uttered without impiety—then it was to that which has come into being. Now is it manifest to everyone that he looked to the eternal, for the universe is fairest of all things that have come to be, and he is the most excellent of causes, and having come on this wise into being it has been created in the Image of that which is comprehensible by reason and wisdom and changes never."

"Let us then declare for what cause Nature and this All was framed by him that framed it. God, desiring that all things should be good and that so far as this might be, there should be nought evil, having received all that is visible, not in a state of rest but moving without harmony or measure, brought it from its disorder into order, thinking that this was in all ways better than the other. Now it neither has been nor is permitted to the most perfect to do aught but what is most fair. Therefore he took thought and perceived that of all things which are by nature visible no work that is without reason will ever be fairer than that which has reason, setting whole against whole, and that without soul reason cannot dwell in anything. Because, then, he argued thus, in forming the universe he created reason in soul and soul in body, that he might be the maker of a work that was by nature most fair and perfect. In this way then we ought to affirm according to the probable account that this universe is a living creature possessing soul and reason by the providence of God."

"As it has come into being, this universe one and only begotten, so it is and shall be for ever". So the universal design of the ever-living God, that he planned for the God that was some time to be, made its surface smooth and even, everywhere equally distant from the centre, a body whole and perfect out of perfect bodies. And God set soul in the midst thereof and spread her throughout its body, and even wrapped the body about with her from without, and he made it a sphere in a circle revolving, a universe one and alone, but for its excellence it was able to be company to itself and needed no other, being sufficient for itself as acquaintance and friend. For all these things then he created it a happy God.

"But the soul was not made by God younger than the body, even as she comes later in this account we are essaying to give, for he would not when he had joined them together have suffered the elder to be governed by the younger, but we are far too prone to a casual and random habit of mind which shows itself in our speech.

"Now when all the gods had come to birth both those who revolve before our eyes and those who reveal themselves so far as they will, he who begat this universe spake to them these words: 'God of Gods, whose creation I am and father of works—immortal ye are not, nor indissoluble altogether, nevertheless, shall ye not be loosed nor meet with the bond of death. . . .'

"And now let us declare that our discourse concerning this All has reached its end. Having received all mortal and immortal creatures

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and being there withal replenished, this universe hath thus come into being, living and visible, containing all things that are visible, the Image of its maker, God perceptible, most mighty and good, most fair and perfect, even this one and only begotten world that is."

We have quoted at such length and from different parts of the *Timaeus* in order to set out fairly the difficulties of, and the data for, deciding whether the dialogue allows us to attribute a consistent belief in one God to Plato. In the other dialogues there is no real difficulty: but here there seem to be discrepancies. Gomperz and Seller roundly identify the Principle of Purpose with the Creator: Professor Taylor (with a different reading in the last sentence of the *Timaeus*) in his smaller book on Plato says that to make this identification is confusion of thought, but after all suggests it by saying that the activity of the Creator is an imaginative rendering of the great thought of Anaxagoras, that it is mind which has set all things in order, and this governing divine mind is in the *Philebus* identified with the "Good". Professor Burnet denies the identification, but says all the same that Plato is a monotheist. Adam makes the identification but also says that he takes the *Timaeus* myth literally. These discrepant views emphasize the difficulty of the problem.

We may note first that when in the introduction to the *Timaeus* written long after the *Republic*, Plato professes to report the conversation on the day following those on which the earlier dialogue took place, and gives a summary of that dialogue, he omits the doctrine of the Principle of Purpose; which in itself seems to suggest that the doctrine of the *Timaeus* may be meant to supersede it. Further, apart from the fact that the whole tone and style are obviously mythical, Plato definitely says that he is only giving a "very probable account": he makes it quite clear that he does not expect to be taken literally, and this general inference may also be legitimately made from the fact that he distinctly points out that the sequence in his account of the creation of soul is not meant to be so taken.

The *Timaeus* is always said to be mystical, and both in style and matter it suggests that it is the record of mystical experience, and yet the fact that Plato is the reverse of dogmatic both in the passage just referred to and where he comments on the difficulty of knowing the Maker and Father of all things, suggests that the experience was not recent. There is no hesitation or doubt (though of course the vision is not supposed to be easy) in the

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Phaedrus or the *Symposium* : the true philosopher, as Plato says, lives on the memory of his experience, and it is perfectly possible that the myth of the *Timaeus* is ultimately due to the experience much more vividly rendered in the *Phaedrus*. It may be that Plato only had one such vision ; to have lived one such vision is enough for a lifetime ; though on the while the different language of the *Symposium* suggests a different experience and a case may be made out for holding the *Republic* to represent a third. The fact that there is in the *Timaeus* none of St. Paul's

O world, though thou deniest,
Stand thou on that side, for on this am I,

a fact due of course to Plato's age, means either that the myth is a record of some old experience of which we may or may not elsewhere have record, or, if the experience was recent, it was feeble compared to those of the old time.

(To be continued.)

BOOK REVIEW

THE PHENOMENA OF THE SEANCE ROOM. By Dr. Edwin F. Bowers.
London : Rider & Co. Cr. 8 vo. pp. 287. Price 7s. 6d.

IN this book Dr. Bowers, after thirty-five years of investigation, sets forth in a readable manner what he considers some of the evidence for the survival of human personality. His own experiences are unquestionably valuable ; and the book as a whole presents to any candid enquirer a large number of facts on which the beliefs of spiritualism are founded. The descriptions of "materializations" will be read with interest, for here we are asked to believe that what is called a materialization of a deceased human being is nothing less than the actual form of that person in flesh and blood which breathes and has a beating heart. Biology knows nothing of this spontaneous creation of living protoplasm. From one materialization, that of Dr. Bowers' dead mother, he was able to cut a lock of hair. If these things are sober facts, the sooner they are recognized and analysed by orthodox science, the better.

We should have been glad of much more detail regarding telekinesis—the movement of objects without human contact—because that phenomenon if established beyond all cavil would necessitate the physicists and biologists admitting the existence of a hitherto entirely unrecognized form of force.

PROF. FRASER-HARRIS, B.Sc., M.D., D.Sc., F.R.S.E.

EGYPT—THE HOME OF THE KABBALA

By PAUL BRUNTON

This article, from the pen of the well-known author of "The Secret of Ancient Egypt", throws an interesting side-light on the personality of the Russian student of the Kabbala, who, writing under the pseudonym of "Enel", has, in his work "Les Origines de la Genese et L'Enseignement des Temples de L'Ancienne Egypte", made a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the early Egyptian temple teachings.

ONE sultry African evening last year, when an opalescent sky set a perfect background to the black silhouettes of Cairo's mosque, minarets, and houses, a friend took me to an office building in the business quarter of the city and led me into a square, plain room. There I found a dozen people gathered together. They were members of a study class which met weekly to hear a paper read out by a Russian ex-officer, and to ply him with questions thereafter.

The subject which engrossed their minds was a wide one—the origin, culture, religion, language, and literature of ancient Egypt—and it was viewed in a manner at once unorthodox and, possibly, unusual among students of Egyptology. These topics, curiously enough, find but scant interest among native Egyptians, and hence the speaker's little audience was almost wholly drawn from Cairo's European colony. After question-time was over, I had a conversation with the Russian and found that he was engaged in difficult but fascinating researches along lines that ran part of the way parallel to my own. I discovered, too, that he was the author of some well-known treatises on the Hebrew Kabbala which had been published in Paris, where he had studied Egyptology under the famous Maspero. In his researches he did not rely entirely upon purely materialistic facts and then setting his logic to work upon them, but also upon an inner sense which he called intuition. He would not walk into the occultists' camp, but hesitated half-way thereto. Nevertheless, he accepted the system of the Kabbala, on its literary

side, and his treatises in French, published under the pen-name of Enel, revealed the profundity of thought which he had given to the subject.

As I was on the point of leaving for Southern Egypt, he invited me to visit him on my return and to pursue further the several fascinating points about Egyptology in which we were both interested. Thus it was that later, following the winding course of old Nile, I made my way back to Cairo and thence to Heliopolis to fulfil my engagement. Enel lived in one of those pleasant modern villas which have sprung up all over the site of the ancient sacred city where Moses learnt his recondite lore and where Plato was shown the priestly treasures of papyri and inscriptions. But the Heliopolis of their days has vanished, being buried below the surface of the earth by the all-covering hands of time.

Enel's further talk revealed a mind that for thirty years had been treading a lone path in the fields of Egyptology, for he welded the learning and methods of the academic student to the intuitive faculty, which did not hesitate to leap boldly into that dark period of pre-history at whose frontiers science stops for lack of data. He seemed to me to be a man who was suffering from undeserved but inevitable neglect, rejected by the orthodox and unwilling to become a naturalized citizen of the land of the occultists. I felt it incumbent upon me to encourage him to continue his researches, even though my own experiences far outran his probable acceptance. Enel was attempting to do by intellectual and intuitive research what others, including myself, are attempting to do by psychic and spiritual investigation. The two lines of study need not be inimical. To a balanced onlooker, they are complementary and may even help each other.

Because the Egyptians are so lacking in interest in their own native antiquities, because the French have shown and continue to show some appreciation of Enel's efforts, I felt that he ought to be introduced to the world of English readers attracted by Egypt. In a short time his first publication in English, entitled *The Message from the Sphinx* will be issued by the House of Rider, and will probably be followed by the larger and more important work, *The Origins of Genesis and the Temple-Teachings of Ancient Egypt*, which represents Enel's *opum magnus*.

The first volume of the latter work has just made its appearance

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in French.* It is well illustrated with numerous hieroglyphs and sketches of symbolic tomb-wall scenes. It is fully documented with a large number of references to the works of Budge, Petrie, Brugsch, von Bissing, Naville, Lepsius, and other well-known names in the annals of Egyptology. Enel's ability to interpret hieroglyphs directly stands him in good stead in his opposition to several academic opinions.

The ground covered by this volume is too spacious to permit more than a mention of a representative selection of the most important points. Enel, in his introduction, supports the thesis that alone can solve for ever the difficulties which bristle like porcupine needles around the problem of the derivation of Egypt's impressive culture and civilization. Where and how did they first blossom into being?—for it is generally acknowledged that they were imported fully grown. For answer he points to the ill-fated continent of Atlantis, which, he says, sent the initial stream of emigrants into the land of Khem. He combats the theories of Egyptologists who seek sources elsewhere, such as Arabia, Mesopotamia, Suméria, etc., and will admit that these places were only supplementary and helped in supplying Egypt with its people and culture. He mentions that scientific evidences are yet to be found, vestiges of a widespread lost civilization which existed around the Bay of Biscay in France and Spain and which scientists term Cro-Magnon; these were once coeval with Atlantis, he declares. Needless to say, I agree with his derivation and regret that in *A Search in Secret Egypt* I was compelled to withhold much material on Atlantean connections with Egypt; this, however, will be made available eventually, when I return to the subject.

Enel also supports the opinion that the early stream of conquerors entered the country from the north and slowly progressed up the Nile towards Upper Egypt. There was, however, another stream of population which entered from the south, and thus we have the spectacle of "The Two Kingdoms", as they were called, whose union under Menes, the first historical Pharaoh, produced the Egyptian civilization whose remnants savants now study. This latter stream came at a different time and not from Atlantis but from that part of Lemuria where I am penning these lines today—South India. Africa and India were

* *Les Origines de la Genèse et L'Enseignement des Temples de L'Ancienne Egypte*. Volume Premier. Par Enel. Le Caire: Imprimerie de L'Institut Français d'Archeologie Orientale. Price 50 francs.

then united by a land-bridge, and so we need not be surprised at the possibility of such an emigration. There are definite Tamil traditions of this connection with Egypt, while anyone familiar with the ancient temples of Egypt who steps into one of the massive Dravidian temples of South India must necessarily be astonished at the striking architectural and ritual resemblances.

I doubt whether Enel would accept this addition to his theory, but I hope one day to produce the facts when I can spare the time to garner and arrange them. Much curious lore is hidden away in untranslated Tamil records, awaiting interested eyes and patient hands.

That ideas upon which both the Hebrew and Christian religions, as well as the Kabbala, were based, were drawn primarily from Egypt is an important contention made by the author, and one which he well documents. Much space is given to the doctrine of "the divine Word"—of which St. John wrote at the head of his Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word." Enel compares the phrase with one in the Papyrus of Ani: "In the beginning Ra raises himself." He explains how Ra signified simultaneously both the creative word and the sun considered as a visible manifestation of the Logos. Or, as Michelet expressed it: "Speech and light are two identical words in the sacred language [of hieroglyphs]." The links between the Christian and Egyptian religions formed by this doctrine are lengthily and pertinently expounded, with numerous hieroglyph illustrations.

He quotes a number of parallelisms between the Hebrew Book of Genesis and the Egyptian texts, sufficient to indicate that Moses must have borrowed certain things from the Egyptians without even troubling to change or modify their forms. He theorizes that the somewhat primitive and simple story of Creation given in the Old Testament owes its shape to the fact that the more scientific teachings as well as hosts of details were withheld from the profane masses and reserved for the elect few—hence the origin of the complicated and esoteric system of the Kabbala.

Among the interesting details pointed out by Enel are that the form and measurements of the Tabernacle of the Children of Israel correspond proportionately to those of the Shrine in Egyptian temples; that the rite of circumcision is pictured as an Egyptian one on the tomb-walls of Memphis; that the fumigations and sacrifices of the temples were introduced within

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the walls of the synagogues ; that the magic rod was a standard appurtenance of Egyptian priestly magic, where it was given a serpentine design, and was the same that Moses used for performing his miracles ; and that practically an entire chapter and a half of the Book of Proverbs in the Old Testament have been copied word for word from the text of the Egyptian sage Amenemope.

Much of the author's effort is devoted to philological considerations and to an attempt to unveil the profounder sacred meanings of hieroglyphs, that truly remarkable picture-alphabet which forms the key to ancient Egypt's wisdom and culture. Paragraphs in the old texts which are meaningless when read by the candle of orthodox Egyptological interpretations, become vivid and meaningful when read by the light of Enel's lamp. He takes many of the leading words, names, and phrases which occur and recur in the texts and upon the inscribed walls, and analyses them into their original components in such a philosophical manner as to impart to them the meaning which they bore to the learned priests in relation to the highest doctrines of their religion. For hieroglyphs admittedly carried three meanings, and the final interpretation was purely esoteric, unrevealed to the laity and generally understood only by the initiated.

Egyptian views on such topics as the soul, death, resurrection, astronomy, the gods, universal laws, etc., are explained and discussed respectively in separate chapters. The correspondences these bear to the Kabbala are likewise given. A good deal of miscellaneous lore is included which will fascinate the student of ancient Egypt.

Enel's comparisons between the Egyptian, Kabbalistic, Christian, and Hindu conceptions of Nature and man are worth quoting : "According to the Kabbala, man presents a ternary reunited in a unity, just as is the case for his prototype, the One God, Whose aspects are the Trinity." And then he gives the hieroglyph representing the human being, a picture of *three* uprights tied together at the top ! Finally, he mentions the triple Brahminic division of man as being composed of material, subtle, and causal bodies.

He accepts the view that the Egyptians believed not only in a life beyond the tomb for the soul, but also in a resurrection of the complete human being, including the embalmed body. "Thus in the ritual of 'The Opening of the Mouth', which sym-

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bolizes the restitution of the functions of the body of the mummy, the first act consisted in placing the latter on some sand. This act showed symbolically that the deceased had emerged from the passive state 'above the sands', as the dawning sun emerged above the surface of the earth for his new appearance."

The large increase of public interest in things Egyptian is noteworthy enough today to render Enel's contribution, based on original and painstaking studies, likely to take a permanent place in its literature. It is a book, nevertheless, which demands and should receive close attentive reading. He treats his subject with all the dignity and restraint it requires. I am glad to commend it to those who read French.

SCIENTIFIC LEVITATION

We regret that unforeseen circumstances have occasioned delay in publishing the article by Mr. W. G. Verschoye, which we had hoped to include in the present number, and shall look forward to being able to include this in our forthcoming issue.—Ed.

BOOK REVIEW

A MESSAGE FROM ARUNACHALA. By Paul Brunton. Cr. 8vo. Pp. 223. London: Rider & Co. Price 5s.

From "the Hill of the holy Beacon" and the inspiration of "the last of the Maharishies of India", with whom readers of *A Search in Secret India* will already be acquainted, Paul Brunton has compiled a volume of essays on the inner life which should find a ready welcome by his numerous admirers. The subjects covered range from meditations on the nature of spiritual consciousness and "contact with the Overself or divine being that dwells within each one of us" to a criticism of the hollowness and shams of Western civilization.

Naturally in a scrap-book of this kind may be found chapters of varying merit or appeal, but the burden of the author's message is the necessity for recognizing that spiritual factor which without any permanent reconstruction of civilization is impossible. Through the pages of the book breathes the refreshing air of the Heights where Peace remains unbroken—Arunachala, the hill of Peace, the mount of Vision, to be found by every man if only he will turn his gaze within.

H. S.

THE "FIFTH GOSPEL" AND THE TALMUD

By JEAN DELAIRE

What the ancient Jewish records have to say with regard to the historical Jesus, and what the latest archaeological discoveries have to contribute to our knowledge of Christian origins, is here discussed by our contributor, who is driven to the conclusion that the ultimate truth about Jesus the Christ "must remain a mystery until we also . . . shall have grown into the full stature of our Divine humanity".

SOMEWHERE in Egypt a bundle of thin, ragged-edged papyri comes to light ; an expert eye glances hastily over it ; archaic Greek letters are deciphered ; the bundle, with some other papyri retrieved from the waste dumps of ancient cities, is sent to the British Museum. There it lies, for a time, forgotten, until one day the Keeper of the Manuscripts examines it.

The first thing that arrests his attention are the letters I.H., the abbreviated name of Jesus occasionally used in Early Christian scripts. Could this be a copy of the Gospel, a copy earlier in date than any we possess, earlier even than the Oxyrhynchus fragments hitherto believed to be the oldest Christian manuscript in existence ?

A closer examination confirms this surmise ; and within twenty-four hours all Christendom is thrilled with the announcement of the discovery of "a fifth Gospel", "a new page from the Bible", "an independent narrative of the life of Jesus Christ".

The fragments are translated and published—and what do they reveal ? Nothing new, nothing definite, nothing significant, either ethically or historically—only a paragraph which alludes to "a strange question" asked by Jesus of His hearers ; but the question is missing, and the Master's concluding words are—with a slight variant—already known to us : "Why call ye me Master with your mouth, when ye hear not what I say ?"

So greatly to stress the importance of this discovery—even, as a learned divine has done, to claim these recovered fragments as "a reinforcement of Catholic tradition"—is to make a serious mistake, and in nowise to help the cause of organized religion—for one may well ask whether Christianity is so impoverished

spiritually that it must needs renew its faith in the scattered fragments of an unknown Gospel—seek for confirmation of the truths it has proclaimed for the past 2000 years in the dust-heaps of ancient Egypt?

To begin with, if these few torn pages are to be dignified by the name of Gospel, it would not be the fifth but the fifteenth, since fourteen non-canonical Gospels and fragments of Gospels are already known to scholarship, to say nothing of the many Epistles, Acts, and Apocalypses which form part of the New Testament Apocrypha, and were all, at one time or other, held in high honour by various Early Christian sects. To ignore these is also to ignore such profoundly significant and beautiful passages as the Hymns to the Cross in the *Acts of Andrew* and in the *Acts of Peter*, the Vision of the Cross in the *Acts of John*, the Hymn of the Soul in the *Acts of Thomas*, and other pure gems of the Divine Wisdom in the setting of Early Christian scriptures.

It is also to ignore the whole of the Christian-Gnostic tradition with its mystical interpretation of the life and death of the Master, Jesus, its insistence on the paradox of His dependence on yet perfect at-one-ment with, the eternal Christ, the divine Son, who descended upon Him at the Baptism, and of His power to kindle the same heavenly fire in every son of man.

It is to ignore, also, part of the sacred history of Israel, embodied chiefly in that most remarkable scripture, the Talmud, a scripture based on an oral tradition which goes back to the times of the Early Church Fathers, if not to the Apostles themselves.

Freed from its obviously mythical elements—the many foolish stories inspired by hatred of the new Prophet who had arisen in Israel, the fantastic accusations brought against Him of having stolen “the Name”, or sacred Tetragrammaton, out of the Temple, and by its power to have performed all His miracles—the bare outlines of the Talmudic life of Jesus actually confirm in a most remarkable way the traditions both of the apocryphal Gospels and of the schools of Christian Gnosticism, a fact which “official” Christianity has hitherto ignored to its own very great loss.

For those to whom the historicity of the Gospel events are of paramount importance, the Talmud offers the actual “birth-certificate” of Jesus. Rabbi Simeon ben Azzai, reputed one of the most learned doctors in Israel, who lived in the end of the

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first century A.D., and beginning of the second century, declared he had seen the record of the birth of Jesus in "a book of genealogies" kept in the Temple at Jerusalem. As these records, which were those of all the families in Israel, must have been destroyed at the time of the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, they obviously went back to a date prior to the year A.D. 70, very near, therefore, to the usually accepted date of the death of Jesus. That this record implied an illegitimate birth may be the reason why Christian Apologetics have so consistently ignored it; yet may not this accusation have been added as an afterthought by the rabbis themselves who, as we know,* at a quite early date were already trying to explain away the current stories of Jesus's miraculous birth—that eternally true fact of the Christ's birth in the virgin soul, so pitifully misunderstood and materialized by the disciples of later days?

According to the Talmud, Jesus lived in the days of King Jannai, whose reign extended from the years 104 to 78 B.C., therefore about a century before the date usually assigned to Him. This raises certain difficulties, but at the same time solves others, and perhaps greater ones. It removes Him, for instance, from the possibility of personal contact with the Baptist, whose date is ascertainable; but it restores to the story of the Baptism what may well have been its original character of pure and profound allegory; and it throws considerable light on the enigma of Paul's Christology—a deeply involved system which normally would require a half-century at least for its development, yet which appears in all its definiteness and complexity in his Epistles, nominally written within the first decades of the Christian era.

To remove Jesus from the historical framework in which our canonical Gospels have placed Him will seem impossible only to those who still look upon these Gospels as divinely inspired, ignoring the proven facts of their composite origin and secondary character as copies, or rather versions, of a lost original. Until the nature of that primitive Gospel, or Gospels, is definitely known—not merely surmised, as it is by modern scholarship—all conjectures will be permissible, among them the belief that this "Gospel behind the Gospels" was the inner teaching of Jesus, that given when the multitude had withdrawn and He was alone with His disciples; the teaching later on transmitted in the "Mysteries of Jesus"—the teaching whose oft-distorted fragments

*Origen : *Contra Celsus*.

we find in the Sermon on the Mount, in the Last Discourse, in certain of the Parables, in the most ancient of the New Testament Apocrypha, in the whole of the Christian-Gnostic tradition—the teaching of the God-in-man epitomized in His own words: The Kingdom of God is within you.

An independent Talmudic tradition incorporated in a later work, the *Toldoth Jeschu*, states that when Jesus was a child “his mother gave him to a teacher, so that he might become wise in the Halacha, and learned in the Torah and the Talmud”, a statement which is paralleled in the apocryphal *Gospel of Thomas*, where a quaint story is told of the questions asked by the child Jesus of His teacher Zacchaeus.

“A certain teacher” asked Joseph to allow him to teach his little son Jesus, promising to impart to him “all knowledge” by means of the letters of the alphabet. In view of the deep importance attached by the Jews to the meaning of every letter in their alphabet, the incident narrated in this ancient Gospel acquires a special significance.

“And he [the teacher] told him all the letters from Alpha even to Omega* clearly, with much questioning. But Jesus looked upon Zacchaeus the teacher, and said unto him: ‘Thou that knowest not the Alpha according to its nature, how canst thou teach others the Beta?’”

The Alpha (Aleph, the Bull) represented the One divine creative Life embodied in all living forms, the Beta (Beth, the House) stood for the form-side of Nature, the generative principle, the great Mother. And in all the schools of the Ancient Wisdom it was taught that only by knowing God could Nature be understood—in the words of Spinoza: “Inasmuch as all knowledge is derived from the knowledge of God, man may know God better than he knows himself.”

The rebuke of the Child Jesus to His teacher would thus read: “If thou knowest not the One Existence—God—how canst thou teach others about the works which He makes manifest?”

Jesus, we are told in the Talmud, became later on a pupil of one of the most famous of the rabbis, Joshua ben Perachiah, and fled with him to Egypt to escape the ruthless persecutions of King Jannai. This petty tyrant had caused a number of learned men and their pupils—the latter known as novices or

* The book is written in Greek.

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little children—to be executed before the eyes of all his Court, a fact which may well be the origin of the otherwise incredible story of the Massacre of the Innocents recorded by Matthew and ignored by all other Evangelists. There He learned "the wisdom of the Egyptians"; for at that time Egypt, although greatly degenerated, was still the fountain-head of the ancient Mysteries, the authentic transmitter of that Wisdom of the ages whose central theme was the doctrine of the inner light: "The Light is within you: Let that Light shine!"

In both versions of the Talmud, the Palestinian and the Babylonian, the confused tradition of this "Flight to Egypt" formed the nucleus of many strange stories—among them, that Jesus sought to seduce the true Israelites by bringing magic spells from the temples of Egypt, and by means of these spells performed many miracles. In the *Toldoth Jeschu* it was even stated that He had stolen the Tetragrammaton or Ineffable Name out of the Temple at Jerusalem, an accusation which, fantastic though it be, confirms perhaps the tradition that He was an Essene, for in the Essene communities the divine Name was freely uttered, whereas among orthodox Jews it was never to be spoken aloud except by priests and within the precincts of the Temple.

Accused of heresy by His teacher, Jesus refused to retract, and so was formally excommunicated. The passages dealing with this event are obscure, but they seem to indicate some awe-inspiring ceremony, when in the darkened synagogue the transgressor was pronounced accursed and cast off from the company of the faithful in Israel. His heresy, we are told, was "idolatry and inciting to idolatry"—in other words, *deviation from the letter of the Scriptures*, the endeavour to infuse a new and vital meaning in the dry bones of religious formalism, the ceaseless efforts—as depicted in our own Gospels—to superimpose the Law of Mercy and Compassion upon the rigid code of Mosaic discipline.

"Three hundred and ten" of the youth of Israel followed Him in His travels through Palestine, but only five disciples are mentioned by name; and it is an interesting fact that of these five names—Mathai, Nakkai, Netzer, Bonai, and Todah—Mathai (Mattheus, Matthew) is the only one mentioned in the Gospels—a name which also occurs (with slight variations) in a number of New Testament Apocrypha, as well as in the Gnostic tradition:

For not only do Origen, Ambrose, Jerome, and other Early Church Fathers mention a *Gospel according to Matthias*—while Clément of Alexandria repeatedly alludes to the *Traditions of Matthias*—but Hippolytus tells us that the great doctor of the Gnosis, Basilides, claimed to have received certain secret "words from "Matthias the Apostle", given to Matthias [Matthew] by Jesus Himself, "being taught by Him apart".

May not these "secret words" have formed the nucleus of that Gospel of the *inner* teaching of Jesus written by Basilides, and destroyed with all his other books at the time of the persecution of Gnosticism? Yet did it not survive in the teaching transmitted by Basilides to his pupil Valentinus, the reputed author of the *Pistis-Sophia*, which would thus contain many of the "words" (logia) spoken by Jesus to the disciples of the inner Group?

We have thus in the name of Matthias (Mattheus, or Zacchaeus) a precious indication of the esoteric tradition in Early Christianity, a tradition which the best of the Gnostic schools strove to preserve for all time as an integral part of the new religion, as that "universal Gospel" dreamt of by Basilides, the Gospel of the God-in-men which Jesus had come to proclaim anew to the waiting world.

In connection with the five disciples mentioned by name in the Talmud, it is interesting to note that all five were said to have been brought "before the Judgment-seat" and condemned to death—a fact which would hardly have been included in the Talmudic records had it not been based on some trustworthy tradition, since it brought upon the orthodox rabbis the odium of having persecuted the new sect from its very beginning.

In the description of the trial and death of Jesus the Talmud differs radically from the Christian tradition, as does also the later work already alluded to, the *Toldoth Jeschu*. In the Palestinian version of the Talmud we are told that Jesus was stoned to death, and in the Babylonian version, that He died by hanging—perhaps two aspects of the same tragedy, for while stoning was the legal punishment in Israel for "idolatry" or "leading astray to idolatry", it was usual to hang the victim afterwards on a post, or "tree", or *Tau*-shaped cross.

That according to one line of Christian tradition Jesus actually suffered this form of martyrdom is revealed in that well-known

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passage from Peter's Discourse at Cesarea—"Jesus of Nazareth . . . whom they slew and hanged on a tree".*

This recalls the persistent tradition found in Esoteric Christianity—whence it arose no one knows—that the martyrdom of Stephen, commemorated by the Church *the day after Christmas*, was that of Jesus Himself. The parallels are striking: Of Stephen it was said that he was "full of faith and power [and] did great wonders and miracles among the people". Of him it was said that he was "full of the Holy Ghost . . . and saw the glory of God"; and as he was being stoned "he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."†

Both versions of the Talmud also give vivid descriptions of the procedure used in trials for heresy or idolatry.

In Jewish law not less than two witnesses were required to bring a transgressor before the Court of Justice. "If", says the Mishna, "the enticer [to idolatry] has made his enticing speech to two, these are witnesses against him; and lead him to the Court of Justice and he is stoned." But if the enticer has spoken the forbidden words to one only, then by cunning he must be made to betray himself before the necessary two witnesses. To this end they seek him out at eventime while he sits in the house "wherein a lamp is lighted over him, in order that the witnesses may see him and distinguish his voice. Thus, for instance, they managed with Ben Sot'da‡ at Ludd [Lydda]. Against him two disciples of learned men were placed in concealment and he was stoned."§

The Babylonian version states that after Jesus had been condemned "the herald went forth before him for the space of forty days, while he cried: 'Jeschu goeth forth to be executed because he has practised sorcery and seduced Israel and estranged them from God. Let any one who can bring forward any justifying plea for him come and give information concerning it.'"

Rabbi Ulla queried the reason for this leniency: "Dost thou think that he belongs to those for whom a justifying plea is sought? He was a very seducer, and the All-merciful has said: 'Thou shalt not spare him, nor conceal him.' " And the answer

* Acts x, 38-40.

‡ Acts vi, 8; VII, 55, 60.

† A variant of Ben Stada, another name given to Jesus in the Talmud.

§ Pal. Sanhedrin.

was : "In Jeschu's case it was somewhat different, for his place was near those in power."*

Here, then, is another noteworthy divergence from the Christian tradition : So far from the trial and death of Jesus having been marked by the indecent haste and illegal practices—illegal both in Roman and in Mosaic law—described in our Gospels, every care was taken, according to the Talmud, to avoid a miscarriage of justice, "for his place was near those in power".

This statement, like the one relating to the summary execution of the five disciples, appears to be authentic, and for the same reason : the rabbis who were at such pains to refute the tradition of a miraculous birth, and opposed to it the accusation of illegitimacy, would hardly have invented for Him either noble parentage or royal descent. If the statement is true, it would not so much contradict the Gospels as restore to many of their passages the allegorical or symbolic character intended by the *first* Evangelists, the writers of the primitive and now lost Gospels. The statement that Jesus was a carpenter or the son of a carpenter may thus originally have had the same meaning as the statement in the *Acts of Thomas* that His Apostle was "a builder"—"For to this end did I come, to build a palace for the King"†—since the word *builder* is as old a mystery-name as *the mount*, and ever alludes to the perfected man, the initiate, the true son of the Great Architect of the Universe, he who has transformed the "house" of his body into the "temple" of the living God.

Of the resurrection nothing definite is said in the Talmud, although the *Toldoth Jeschu* has many quaint stories anent the theft of His body by the disciples—stories which, if they prove nothing else, at least reveal the importance attached, at the time they were written, to the records of the resurrection of the Lord.

Of these two traditions, therefore, the Jewish and the Christian, which is nearer to the truth ? An open-minded scholarship will, in certain instances, notably the narrative of the Passion, incline towards the Talmudic records, for they are in accordance with Jewish law as in force in the time of Jesus, whereas the Gospels tally with neither the Roman nor the Mosaic code of law. Apart from this, the startling parallels between the martyrdom of Jesus and the leading events in the Eleusinian and other mystery-cults plainly indicate the symbolic character of the Gospel narrative.

* Bab. Sanhedrin.

† *The Apocryphal New Testament* : Translation by Dr. Montague Rhodes James.

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The Passion of Jesus of Nazareth is an undoubted historical event, a tragedy enacted in Palestine—perhaps at Jerusalem, perhaps at Ludd [Lydda], as the Talmud tells us—but the details added in the Gospels, the crowning of the Victim, the purple robe, the reviling of the bystanders, the drinking of vinegar and gall, all belong to the ageless, the universal practice of slaying a consecrated victim either to appease the wrath of the deity or, by means of the eucharistic meal following upon the sacrifice, mystically to unite the devotee of his God.

In this, as in other passages of the New Testament, do we not find a marvellous and supremely significant blending of fact and—not fiction, but a meaning deeper than fact, more vital than history, interwoven in the life-story of Jesus of Nazareth?

In our four (canonical) Gospels the supernatural character of the Master is stressed in a multitude of ways, from the divine Healer and Teacher depicted by Mark to the only-begotten Son of God described by John. In the Talmud, contrariwise, He is only a man—a scholar, for He is the pupil of a great rabbi, an initiate, for He has learned the wisdom of the Egyptians, presumably in the temples of Isis—but a man who has led the people "astray to idolatry", i.e. given His own interpretation to the Law and the Prophets: "It was said by them of old . . . but I say unto you . . ."—and in the face of the most exclusive of Jewish sects He dared affirm the potential divinity of every man: "The Kingdom of God is within you."

In those of the New Testament Apocrypha which, like the *Acts of John*, reveal a Gnostic tendency, He is both man and God—man overshadowed by God, one moment seen as a man among men, another, "not in any wise as a man [but] the earth was lighted up by His feet and His Head touched the heavens. . . ." For to the true Gnostic every man was a potential Christ, since in every man dwelt the germ of divinity, the "In-dweller of Light"; but in the man Jesus that light manifested in such fullness that He became the Vehicle of the Lord of Light, the mouthpiece of the Eternal Christ, the Son of God, so that He who was Jesus became the Christ.

Does this conception in any way reconcile the ancient Jewish records of the Talmud with those of Early Christianity? Does it bring us any nearer to that ultimate truth which nevertheless must remain a mystery, until we also shall have grown into the full stature of our divine humanity?

T

MEDIUMSHIP AND MORALITY

By W. H. EVANS (Author of *How to be a Medium*, *The Philosophy of Andrew Jackson Davis*, etc).

"Like attracts like", and the presence of hostile and dishonest sitters at a séance, it is claimed, creates an atmosphere which favours the manifestation of entities of a similar nature. "Sitters receive what they give." Hence the desirability of lofty moral character on the part both of sitters and medium.

FOR some time past the air has been full of cries of the exposure of certain mediums, with the result that for many the question of the validity of psychic phenomena has been rendered doubtful. Some, whose experience is limited, are apt to doubt even well-attested cases, and to wonder how much reliance can be placed upon the testimony of those who record the results of their investigations. Nevertheless, despite cries of fraud, the tendency to accept the reality of the phenomena is more certain today than ever it was. It is seen that, because one medium cheats, it does not invalidate the phenomena observed to happen in the presence of another medium. Even in the presence of the cheat, genuine phenomena sometimes happen, and this mixture of honesty and charlatanism is a problem which demands study as much as the phenomena themselves. . . . It is not so certain that the medium should bear all the blame, for some mediums are the victims of dishonest and tricky sitters.

Although psychic phenomena are now acknowledged by all who have paid any attention to them, it is not accepted that the ultimate cause is beyond the subconsciousness of the medium. The scientists are abroad and, of course, they rule spirits out of court. They look to the medium for the causes of the phenomena. Adopting that attitude they make certain assumptions. In the case of materializations they assume that the ectoplasm which exudes from this type of medium conforms to some innate biological law and moulds itself into hands, feet, faces, and sometimes complete human forms. It is an astounding claim, but it has an element of truth, for if the spiritistic theory is true, we are all spirits, and a spirit in the flesh has faculties and powers similar to one out of it. But why anyone's subconsciousness should materialize a form resembling the relative of a sitter and claim to be him manifesting it is difficult to understand. Presum-

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ably, if spirits are ruled out in this case, the formative factor in the ectoplasm is not the medium, but the subconsciousness of the sitter.

If the materialized form talks and gives information which is known only to the sitter, or even information which the sitter does not know at the time but later verifies as true, we are informed that it is due to "cryptaesthesia". It is *assumed* that while the sitter did not remember it, he did know it subconsciously. That is, he had probably heard it or read it, and had forgotten it; or, more wonderful still, had by some subtle means—not known at present—extracted it from the subconscious mind of the said relative before he died, and now, in séance assembled, dishes it up as new knowledge, and makes the elaborate pretence of being the sitter's relative! This is as wonderful as the omniscience with which the medium is credited, by means of which some would have us believe he can select from the "memory of nature" just the events and items necessary to simulate the spirits of the dead!

Now, I do not wish to deny that such things might be possible, but I like simple explanations if I can get them. If my mother is described to me by a clairvoyant, I see no reason why I should assume he is fishing in my subconscious memories, especially if my mother gives me a message which bears on events which the medium and I know nothing about, but which requires some lapse of time for verification. It is more simple for me to accept as a fact that the clairvoyant does see a form which resembles my mother, does get into touch with her, and is able to convey to me some information which is eventually proven to be correct. If I assume that it is all due to the collaboration of the medium's subconsciousness with my own, it does not prove that I am just a machine which will perish at death: it goes to prove—if such can be called proof—that I am more wonderful than I thought, and that some part of me can act independently of the usual channels of sense. That being so, why should not this part of me survive the shock of the dispersal of my physical body? It looks very much as if the rigidly scientific researcher is only proving human survival of bodily death in a more roundabout way.

If, as spiritualists affirm, man does survive death, if the next stage of life is not far removed from this, then we are presented with some explanation for the fall of so many mediums. The very nature of mediumship demands for its operation a

condition of passivity. I know this is condemned by some, but its opposite in occultism sometimes leads to results equally disastrous. The case of "Brother 12" some years ago should have its lessons for all. Passivity, however, demands for its protection a high moral and spiritual temper, combined with some knowledge of psychic law, without which the very best mediums are open to attack from undesirable entities. Remember that as we rub shoulders in this life with the undesirable, who may be well dressed and cultured, so are we surrounded by an "unseen host of witnesses", among whom may be undesirable people.

As to the procession of mediums who have been suspected of, if not actually caught in, fraud, in many cases I believe they have been the victims of the psychological environment created by hostile and dishonest sitters who have reinforced the powers of darkness on the other side, and thus opened the door for their ingress, and so had results which were of a very unsatisfactory nature. These sitters received what they gave. Who shall say they did not deserve it?

But it is not alone the physical medium who is betrayed by the lower elements on the other side. One sees many mediums avid of leadership of some kind, who ape a spirituality they do not possess—who are, as Christ said, "whited sepulchres". Such are apt to become the victims of vicious and debasing spirits who will fool them and ultimately lead them to destruction. Unfortunately, like "Brother 12", in their fall they bring down many others with them. "Be ye wise as serpents but harmless as doves" should be remembered by everyone who shows a disposition to put his life in the keeping of another. Imperator, in *Spirit Teachings*, has some weighty words on the "Adversaries" and how they seek to belittle the value of a true spiritualism by bringing it into disrepute. For this reason it is necessary that those who seek to develop mediumship should also seek to unfold spiritually. Occultists may also note this, for they stand in the same danger. Both classes are sometimes betrayed by pride. At present, mediums are working under difficult conditions. Churches and societies seek their labours; some have succeeded in commercializing mediumship. A power which is designed to be used in the service of humanity is degraded to a commodity to be huckstered for in the market-place. Mediums must live, but the competitive method is neither the best nor the right one. I know this is a thorny question for it is bound up with a social

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system that in many respects is diabolic. In the circumstances the most the medium can do is to keep his defences sure by high thinking and a constant aspiration towards the best and noblest in life. By so doing he will throw around himself an auric shield which will be impenetrable by the lower elements, and fit him to be a channel for the transmission of truth and righteousness. At present he is apt to fall a victim to vanity, to greed, and to the thousand and one lures of this earthly life. That so much good comes through is fine testimony to the efforts some mediums and the higher powers are making to keep up the level of mediumistic activities. Are those who, for the moment, are looked up to as the leaders of Spiritualism on this side, sufficiently awake to the need to raise the standard of mediumship all round? That is a question which should be kept before them at all times. And above all, the leaders themselves must lead good and upright lives.

BOOK REVIEW

THE WISDOM OF THE AGES. By Mark Gilbert. St. Catherine Press. Price 5s.

THE problems of life occupy so much of our time that is not already taken up fully by its small details, that most of us have little leisure for study and research in art and philosophy. We think we are lucky if we manage to get through the daily drudge, and all those finer things that great minds are concerned with pass us by. There is no real reason why this should be so; we could all of us, even the busiest, make time and find energy if we wished; the fault is really entirely on our side, especially in these days of free libraries. The fact remains, however, that we don't. No doubt if wisdom could be brought to us in small doses, and ladled out for our delectation, we should lap it up, but we have no will to wade through endless pages and tomes to find just those portions that would give us pleasure. Now Mark Gilbert has done this for us most admirably, and *The Wisdom of the Ages* is, in fact, not merely a *hors d'œuvre* but a colossal banquet of great thoughts, arranged under subject headings, and so classified as to be easily accessible to our mood. In all, there are 412 pages (demy), beautifully bound, with stained edges; astounding value for the price. Mr. Gilbert has achieved something that will help the world on its way with a lighter heart.

C. W. P.

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.]

MORE WILD WORDS ABOUT A GREAT MAN

To the Editor of THE OCCULT REVIEW

SIR,—I have often committed to print a protest against utterances by Eastern and Western pens dogmatizing about what Gotama, the founder of Buddhism, actually taught—utterances based on what can only be a too-scanty knowledge of documents, reckoned as early because they are evidently written versions of what has had a long previous existence as oral sayings. The article in your issue of April last (which I have only just come to see), “Did Buddah Anticipate Einstein?” by J. Vijaya-tunga, is among the wilder of such utterances. It imputes, without evidence, much to the founder which he is not even reputed to have said. It starts with a loose and vague attack on the “Hindu” teaching of his day in which it is impossible to identify that teaching.

He states that “the Buddha”, having reached “bodhi”, i.e. “merging himself in Brahman” (?), spent his long mission in “essaying the problems of the Infinite”; that having affirmed “it” (?) “that *Prāna*, or life-force is one and indivisible and all-pervading”, he “emphasized the truth of *māyā*” (illusion), and “introduced his theory of *karma*”; finally that he “put into scientific stages of comprehension the *moksha* [now translated “liberation”, now “joy”] of the older Aryans”; all this being inclusively called “these terrible metaphysics of the Buddha”, which men, in a “sane stupidity having overlooked”, have come to give him nominal allegiance.

The monk-church which laboured much and quite conscientiously to compile a Canon, in which the varying recensions of the oral tradition could be reconciled with their own much-changed values, has ascribed to its great teacher and his men much in which these would not have recognized their teaching. But in the cited statements the monks would not have recognized even their own later values. The founder’s alleged silence in the face of metaphysical questions is, if perhaps not true, consistently insisted upon. He never is made to use the word *māyā* save in quoting the craft of the juggler to illustrate deceit. The “theory of *karma*” (whatever that may be) he found taught before his day by Brahmins. And *moksha* was not of an earlier day, but was just beginning to emerge in his time, only to be left severely out of his central mantras.

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Why then drag in Einstein? No parallel, even if we were to assent to these wild sayings, is made out. Why, too, talk airily about the nature of "the climax of man's perfection", when no living man is able even to conceive that state, much less define it? Gotama, with the accepted Immanence of his day at his heart, set out to show man how that Immanence was not a Being, now, in each man, but a Becoming—an actualizing of the potential, so to speak, and that the only Way to achieve this was the setting out on the long wayfaring of the worlds, i.e. the living life after life in such a More as the process of Becoming rendered possible.

Believe me, Sir, yours faithfully,
C. A. F. RHYS DAVIDS.

WHY NEGLECT STEINER?

To the Editor of THE OCCULT REVIEW

SIR,—I cannot help feeling that it is an offence to all Occultism to compress categorical statements about the greatest mystery of the world into such a short article such as the "Rationale of Avatars", printed in your July number.

More especially is this the case when the writer summarily dismisses views not in agreement with his own as "wrong" (Rudolf Steiner's) unless he is able to bring forward ample and incontestable proofs that they are so.

Dr. Steiner gave, as well as private instruction to his pupils, many thousands of lectures (only about half of them as yet translated into English), and in hundreds of them the great themes which Mr. Henderson throws at one's head in a few words, were exhaustively dealt with from many different aspects; and these results of Dr. Steiner's seership he supported with historical evidence. Mr. Henderson has no right to ride rough-shod over something which he appears to have studied (and in how many *other* courses of lectures besides the one mentioned?) from a prejudiced theosophical standpoint only.

Again, it is incorrect to say that Dr. Steiner "tried to affirm that H.P.B. was nothing more or less than a medium for various Masters". On the contrary, he made it very clear that he fully recognized the nature and scope of her mission, both during her life and after her death. If Theosophists, or members of any other School for that matter, were as assiduous students of the entirety of Dr. Steiner's teaching as they are critics of a few fragments of it, they would understand (and love) occult history, H.P.B., and the "Masters", better; and lose nothing by it.

The failure of Theosophy, which Mr. Henderson bewails, is largely due to a misunderstanding of its position as a *preliminary* revelation,

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A further book by Paul Brunton, dealing with the system under which Dayalbagh Colony, in South India, is run, will appear in the course of about two months. (A chapter of "A Search in Secret India" was devoted to Dayalbagh Colony.) The price of the book will be 5s.

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breaking down the crust of nineteenth-century materialism, and preparing the way for the truth of re-incarnation; and it should have progressed so that such dogmatic assertions with regard to Avatars, overshadowings, and the Solar Logos, could never have arisen.

True Theosophy—in the light of which H.P.B. began her work—could have advanced to higher grades of perception in which it would have been possible to overcome many hindrances, including the illusion of *names*, and to fathom in some degree the tremendous meaning of the opening verses of the Gospel of St. John. But this did not happen; and the light for the twentieth century, that came from a different quarter, was rejected by Mrs. Besant in Germany.

The real H.P.B. could best be served if this light were recognized.

Yours etc.,

ELEANOR C. MERRY.

BOOK REVIEW

SELF MASTERY THROUGH PSYCHO-ANALYSIS. By Basil Hogarth.
London: Rider & Co. Price 3s. 6d.

THIS book, as might be expected from its title, deals with the nature and contents of the unconscious: the cause of phobias, obsessions, and repressions; the meaning and various manifestations of the "inferiority complex"; dreams and how they may be analysed; how to overcome the inferiority complex, the importance of the first five years of childhood and so on.

The writer obviously pins his faith to the Freudian theory of Philosophy, concerning which—seeing that little, if any, importance is attached to free will and its concomitant of personally evolved character—we assuredly are not in agreement.

Indeed, it seems all too evident that Freud bases his conclusions upon prolonged study of abnormal types which do not truthfully represent the mind of the average human being.

Especially nauseating to healthy minds is what for decency's sake we may refer to as the O.A. and G. theory.

Why the unconscious should be filled with memories of sewerage more than of pleasant meadowlands and blue, cloud-swept skies is a question that may well be asked by the none-too-patient reader. Our answer is that it is not so filled.

When it comes to a lengthy discussion of the inferiority complex and the various disguises under which it works, the author is at his best, and for this best we wish the book well.

ETHEL ARCHER.

THE OCCULT REVIEW

The Complete Works of
H. P. BLAVATSKY

Edited by A. TREVOR BARKER

Ever since Mme Blavatsky founded The Theosophical Society in New York, over sixty years ago, fierce controversy has raged around her name. Honoured and beloved by thousands, yet ridiculed and vilified by the outside world she remains; the battle goes on, and will go on, till sheer force of evidence makes it clear that the only possible explanation of her literary output, and her amazing career, is that given by herself.

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UNDER THE READING LAMP: A CAUSERIE

SOME are born great, others have greatness thrust upon them ; the surest mark of a noble soul is humility, whereas the little one struts in foolish pride grotesquely trailing the cloak of arrogance.

"Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition ;
By that sin fell the angels . . ."

adjured Wolsey, wise too late. It is a sad truth that the most sainted of mortals may weakly succumb to the subtle and insidious assaults of flattery. Lucifer, in fact, might have shone as the brightest angel of God—save for a kink. The fault of the fanatic, it is to be feared, is rarely watered by refreshing dews from Heaven, but is of a weedy growth flourishing in the hard soil of egotism. Even the mystic, waiting in meditation for spiritual guidance, can be led astray by the subconscious promptings of his mundane self. Such a one was James Nayler, "the Quakers' Jesus" ; that most innocent of blasphemers who, causing Puritanical ears to tingle with righteous horror, was tried and condemned by Parliament under the Commonwealth.

Ronald Matthews, in *English Messiahs* (Methuen ; 10s. 6d.), which comprises "Studies of Six English Religious Pretenders : 1656-1927", extends to this instance of mild megalomania a shrewd and generous sympathy. Quaker saint and Messiah in spite of himself, a "brilliant, eloquent, profoundly spiritual, deeply lovable figure", Nayler, he declares, "must take his place almost as the equal of George Fox among the founders and early heroes of the Society of Friends. The courage with which he preached a gospel that led time and again to the prison gates he shared with many of his fellows."

Fate plays strange and scurvy tricks, and is quite ruthless in its choice of victims ; it can, however, seldom have stooped to one more cruel than its attack upon this well-intentioned but impressionable preacher, by lifting him up suddenly into unsought eminence where he was worshipped by the few and derisively mocked by the multitude. As its chief instrument it singled out Martha Simmonds, a hysterical female ; one of a number of brawling women who, ostensibly "moved of the Lord", began in 1656, by constant interruptions of Quaker preachers other than Nayler, to noise his name unenviably abroad. Opposition goaded these women, with a sprinkling of men, to wilder extremes. At his indecision and lack of whole-hearted support, their leader, Martha, knew better than to take "no" for an answer. She, "his evil genius", burst forth into prolonged and shrill lamentations as to his disloyalty. He made feeble and futile efforts to escape out of his oppressor's frenzied clutches, as one who feels himself being drawn down helplessly into a quagmire. So heavily did her influence weigh upon his overburdened spirit, that it was rumoured she had bewitched him. Thrust into Exeter gaol, the hapless object of her unwelcome attentions had paeons of adoration poured in on him from his

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admirers in London, Ronald Matthews records. "Thomas Simmonds, for instance, Martha's husband, hails him as 'Thou King of Israel and son of the Most High' . . . Another man, Edward Fairman, addresses Nayler as 'dear and precious Son of Zion, whose mother is a virgin and whose birth is immortal'." "The climax was reached when he was called in to pray over the body of a Quaker prisoner at Exeter, a girl who had lain for two days in a trance. Dorcas Erbury, though seemingly lifeless, when he put his hands on her and commanded her to arise, opened her eyes and stood up unsupported. Here was, for Martha and her adherents, proof positive that Nayler was Christ come again to raise the dead !

One rainy day in late October, a weirdly fantastic cavalcade passed slowly along the Somerset roads, as picturesquely described by Mr. Matthews: "Its centre was a man seated on a horse, his hat streaming with water, pulled down over his eyes. Two women, walking knee-deep in the mud, led his horse by the bridle on either side. Before them walked another man, hatless in the downpour, but young and glad. After followed two other horses, ridden by two men, one with a third woman behind him in the saddle. The man on the led horse was silent, but his companions, undaunted by the weather, kept up a continuous ecstatic chant of 'Holy, holy, holy !' At Wells and Glastonbury, at little village greens along their way, they halted to cast their cloaks into the mire before him." Joseph Nayler submitted to this worship with a gloomy grace, he had been all too tardy for his followers in accepting the divinity attributed to him ; but whenever perplexed by doubts he seems to have resorted to fasting, with the consequent breakdown of his already feeble powers of resistance. And, as a consistent advocate of the doctrine of the Inner Light, he was finally ever bound to obey the dictates of the voice within, no matter how adverse to his better judgment. Which shows one how dangerous it is to allow oneself to be swept along haphazard by currents of emotion, instead of directing one's course by the rudder of reason. This deluded saint endured the torture of the branding-iron heroically as it bored through his tongue, pressed upon his forehead—"which gave a little flash of smoke". Notwithstanding later, paradoxically, he expressed repentance ; and "his last words, delivered about two hours before his death, are probably", says Mr. Matthews, "among the greatest pieces of religious prose in the English language".

The five other protagonists of these fine essays were, in varying degrees, megalomaniacs of a far meaner order. Ronald Matthews, applying the Freudian rule, traces all their abnormalities to inhibitions and repressions in the early years of their life. Joanna Southcott's abnormality resulted, it is assumed, from the transfer in her childhood of the load of her dammed-up affection to her father. Since he was unattainable to her except as an ideal, so must each lover be ideally beyond her reach. "Eventually she found the father-ideal of her youth in an incarnation so secure that it could not be desecrated—in the Father beyond the sky." With Richard Brothers, "God Almighty's Nephew", it is suggested the Œdipus complex was so strong that he could not bear to admit having a father at all. John Nichols Tom, "The Peasants' Saviour", was obviously the product of that inferiority complex which thirsts for perpetual admiration. "He is half-way between the paranoiac attitude of infantile tyranny and the regres-

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sion to complete babyish dependence of *dementia praecox*." Again, in H. J. Prince and Smyth-Pigott one finds reversion to a stage of infancy, of a different yet equally unrestrained type which acknowledges no inhibiting code of sex in its search for reunion with the mother. *English Messiahs* is a clever and absorbing book; but its author is unintentionally humorous when he states that "Mystics, of course—men and women who assert direct experience of God—are never wholly normal psychologically." This is to affirm that psychology can plumb the soul of the mystic; while, actually, it is only just commencing to touch the fringe of ordinary human consciousness.

"Unrequited desire, unrecognized or not properly sublimated, is one of the main causes of irreligious behaviour", maintains Beatrice Rosling, author of *Some Aspects of Psychology*. (Rider; 10s. 6d.). "Sometimes the 'Inner Voice' can be recognized as tending towards the universal good, but the seemingly destructive processes which have also at times manifested themselves have, in all probability, not always been due to the Voice, but to the interpreter of it." For a balanced attitude towards psychological unity it is necessary, she sees, to take a more extended view as to what may be truly termed religious or otherwise. Her definition of religion is so broad that it is doubtful if it will be accepted by the orthodox as in any sense a fitting one. Some may be shocked at the argument that "the life force is not itself divided into spiritual urges, religious urges, sexual urges, power urges, and urges to artistic creation; but all such urges, derived from the same source, are so fused that religion can in this way be described as being equally as sexual or sensual as it is artistic. It must be so because of the interrelation between the spiritual and the physiological, and because otherwise it would not have been possible for the genius Freud to eliminate from his discoveries spirituality in Mankind." Psychology for Beatrice Rosling, in short, cannot stand firm but on the rock of religion—a psychology rightly based upon the emotion of love with the aim of the psychologist to aid those who seek his assistance to obtain spiritual heights, is best considered as the most universal religion; one, without orthodoxy, that unlocks the door to all others.

Undeniably psychology has reached a pretty *impasse*; there are so many sharp divergencies of opinion in its numerous schools of thought that the mystified layman, losing patience, is disposed to leave the theorists to fight it out by themselves. Still, it is becoming increasingly evident, as with the religionists of contesting creeds, that psychologists are anxious to arrive at some sane agreement. Mrs. Rosling's book is a healthy sign. She holds that their differences are only superficial, that fundamentally all are of one mind. But the old trouble protrudes its head; granted a sincere desire for unity, none of the disputants is prepared to yield precedence to rival theorists. Were there more psychologists of this lady's kind the problem would be nearer to solution. If she errs, she does so well—on the side of charity.

Professor McDougall, more pessimistic, confesses that the present condition of psychology is deplorable. His *Psycho-Analysis and Social Psychology* (Methuen & Co.; 7s. 6d.) is a plea for the fusion of two systems, that of Freud with his own. Regretting that the young psychologist is now precipitated into the midst of a chaos of conflicting theories each

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claiming his adhesion as the sole road to direct understanding and progress, he at the same time decries those who encourage a process of drifting, or just going on piling up facts—a tacit implication, on their part, that all theories are worthless, because man is a mere machine. “Better—and I say it emphatically—better the crudest of theories than no theory at all”, he fervently protests. “The greatest need of present-day psychology is”, in his firm conviction, “the incorporation with the hormic psychology, which has remained from Aristotle onwards the soundest and most fruitful type of psychology, of all the valuable insight into human nature which the psycho-analytic movement and the genius of Freud have brought us.” Thus Professor McDougall pays ample tribute where it is due; aware, none the less, that those who embark on psycho-analytic seas run a grave risk of being led astray by the Freudian siren strains and seem doomed to intellectual wreckage. Less generous than Beatrice Rosling, he will not allow all birds to sing at the opening of the McDougall-crusted pie. “As my dear friend Morton Prince used to say,” he remarks with grim assurance, “the man who pretends to accept and combine the doctrines of both Freud and Watson is a fool, and a poor fool at that.” Watson is still in his eyes, perhaps, the blackest bird of the lot. “Yet it is not only the mechanism of Watson that is morally abhorrent to him,” so Dr. Grace Adams has pointed out, “it is the materialism and determinism of anyone who identifies the mind with the brain and denies that the will is free.”

Well, the dispute over free-will *versus* determinism is an ancient one which may quite probably not cease till the scroll of the heavens is wound up. Hereward Carrington in his latest volume, *Loaves and Fishes* (Scribners; 7s 6d.), makes cautious reference to free-will in its relation to prediction. Provided that the future can occasionally be foretold—and we have ample authority in the Bible for believing so—then, he argues, it may surely be said in that case the future is predetermined; while if the events prophesied to occur can be by any means deterred or prevented, freedom of will seems to be involved; but then the future could not be accurately foreseen! “Here is a most fascinating and baffling enigma,” he assents, “and one which I shall not in any way attempt to solve.” Beatrice Rosling’s explanation that Christ’s foreknowledge of Peter’s denial can be understood if we remember that Jesus knew Peter’s character—“the whole man”, in fact—fails to satisfy us that Peter was a free agent, proving rather that he was powerless in the grasp of inborn tendencies. *Loaves and Fishes* deals reverently with the miracles and teachings of Christ from the standpoint of modern psychic science. No longer, insists the author of this helpful and stimulating treatise, need one reject the miraculous events recorded in the Bible as irrational, as “impossible”, and “contrary to the laws of nature”. We may accept them as actual occurrences, examples of genuine supernormal manifestations of a psychic kind.

The Principles, Theory, and Practice of Scientific Prediction: Volume I (Science and Humanity, Ltd.; 10s.), makes one feel that, however we would delude ourselves that we have the ruling of our own lives, truly from start to finish it is “all in the bag”. Although W. J. Tucker, editor of *Science and Astrology*, endeavoured to persuade us that the stars in their courses only mark the temporary position upon the board, and the probable next moves, his horoscopic delineations hardly support the contention. His reading of

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the horoscopes of Edith Thompson and Frederick Bywaters, with positively alarming graphs, causes one to murmur uneasily: "There, but for the grace of God, go I!" All who have not a rudimentary acquaintance with astrology may find themselves carried somewhat out of their depth by this expert. What Mr. Tucker does not know of the subject isn't worth mentioning.

Whether regarded seriously, or merely as supplying the substance of a new drawing-room game, *Meet Yourself: As you Really Are* (Faber & Faber; 6s.), is bound to afford amusement to most. Prince Leopold Loewenstein and William Gerhardi, the joint authors, have provided an exhaustive *questionnaire*, by answering which correctly you may discover the worst, and the best, about yourself. "In the pages of reading matter to which you are taken, as you travel across the network of questions and data by your private tracks, your story unfolds and your character is explained. You are advised on your problems and given a glimpse into your probable future." Having applied this clever and ingenious scheme to our own case we can say that, to the best of our judgment, it works out quite satisfactorily.

Do you possess an appetite for "thrillers"? If so, you must not miss that gory dish *The Undying Monster*, by Jessie Douglas Kerruish (Philip Allan; new and revised edition, 3s. 6d.). This racy vampire story romps home a good second to *Dracula*. The Undying Monster is the curse of the Hammonds, said to be their first ancestor, who perpetuates his unholy existence by swallowing the blood of at least one living human being, and to whom periodically a Hammond must fall a victim. Oliver, whose turn it is, is saved from suicide, or a fate more dire, by Luna Bartendale. Being, besides a Super-sensitive, something of a psycho-analyst, she hypnotizes Oliver and forces his memory to travel back into his ancestral past. The Monster proves to be naught else than a foul obsession of inherited instincts. Luna, acting the part of a female Saint George, disposes of it; and the hero, presumably out of gratitude, marries her. Almost we should have preferred to be grabbed by the Monster!

FRANK LIND.

LETTERS TO A DISCIPLE. By Eugene Milne Cosgrove. Chicago: Ashram Press, 511 S. Samgaman St.

THIS book is packed with information on an extremely difficult subject—man and his way to God. An understanding of its contents will depend upon the development of the reader, while a study of its pages will widen his horizon and bring him to the point where first-hand experience will confirm the truth of the lessons conveyed.

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RECOVERING THE ANCIENT MAGIC. By Max Freedom Long. London : Rider & Co. Price 12s. 6d.

FEW of the many books on magic which have come my way have been so packed with interest for the student and general reader alike as the present work by Max Freedom Long. Even those who are not attracted by the subject of magic will read the book with interest. It breathes sincerity and truth. The style of the author is unassuming yet clear and convincing. The chapters on fire-walking and fire-magic are intensely interesting, and proven to the hilt to be free from trickery. Another well-established fact is the power of the Hawaiian *kahunas* to pray a victim to death. This is offset by equally well-authenticated accounts of miraculous healing at the word of command. The book is illustrated with arresting photographs, and its reading opens up a world of new revelations. It should certainly prove a standard work on an unusual subject, even if it does not become a best-seller, which it well deserves to be.

L. B.

DESTINY. (A Theosophical Treatise.) By Geoffrey Hodson. London : Theosophical Publishing House. Price 2s. 6d.

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We are reminded that the great Quest calls perpetually and that the Grail still moves and shines before the eyes of men.

ETHEL ARCHER.

MY PERILOUS LIFE IN PALESTINE. By Rosamond Dale Owen. From the author, Mrs. R. Templeton, "The Laurels", 239 Brighton Road, Worthing, Sussex. Price 5s. 6d. post free.

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UNDER THE READING LAMP 305

ABRAHAM. Recent Discoveries and Hebrew Origins. By Sir Leonard Wooley. D.Litt. London: Faber & Faber, Ltd. 7s. 6d. net.

AFTER reading the history of Abraham which Sir Leonard Wooley has been able to reconstruct in astonishing detail in the light of recent excavations and discoveries, it is curious to reflect that had it not been for the biblical record of Abraham no man living today would have any knowledge of the city of Ur.

"I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees." This short sentence from the Book of Genesis invested Ur "of the Chaldees" with the interest which has led to the recovery of a page of ancient history as remarkable and full of significance as that which treats of Babylon or Baal Bek. Great as is our interest in the Jewish patriarch Abraham and in his life and times, it is overshadowed by the wonderful picture of the ancient city of Ur known to Abraham long after its former splendour had fallen into decay. The chapter in which the author describes the city as it existed in the twentieth century before Christ epitomizes the joys and rewards attending the adventures of the excavation. To him unfolds a pageant of wonder surpassing that beheld by the most imaginative dreamer. Where there now stretches a great waste of barren desert, he sees palm-groves, gardens, and tilled fields of grain stretching as far as the eye can reach; where Mr. J. E. Taylor, the British Consul, found a tangled mass of low sandy mounds dominated by one great pile of red kiln-fired bricks, he raises an immense and prosperous city, Ur, the city of Nannar the Moon-god, crowned by the majestic pyramidal Temple, the massive Ziggurat. On the uppermost stage of this mountain of brick-work, "the Hill of Heaven", stood the shrine of Nannar, the exalted Lord, the Crown of Heaven and Earth, the beautiful Lord who shines in heaven". "Day after day", we read, "through the high north-east gate came a motley crowd carrying baskets and bundles, driving laden donkeys, sheep and cattle, all those who would give gifts to Nannar or pay their debts to him." Of the daily life and conditions in the City of Ur at the time of Abraham and the influences these exerted upon his thoughts and actions, the author gives a full and detailed summary.

Abraham's "conversion", and the displacement of older religious beliefs is shown by the author to mark an event of the greatest importance in the development of religious thought. To many readers the outline of the events leading to the change from the older conceptions of deity or deities to the belief in the one God who declared "I am That I am" may prove the chief focus of interest in this work; yet, as an example of a brilliant historical picture of an ancient land and a flourishing people, executed in minutest detail it must appeal as a masterpiece of archaeological literature. It is hardly possible to restrain a twinge of envy in respect of these explorers and excavators, who, with the Bible in one hand and a pick in the other, wander from land to land, and to whom every isolated ruin or unopened mound is a sacred playing-field. Who can hope to gather such wealth as they gather? The treasures of Ur are worth more than the booty of a thousand Cocos Islands.

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THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM IN SILENCE.

THE ARMS OF LOVE AND WINGS OF FAITH. By Evelyn Whitell.

Both published by L. N. Fowler & Co., London. Price 1s. 6d. and 2s. 6d. each respectively.

THE first of these little books is, as the title suggests, a series of meditations. There is, perhaps, no other Psalm which so thoroughly yet concisely outlines the mystical path, for we get within the compass of six verses the three important stages as experienced by the seeker. First, the Illumination; second, the Dark Night of the soul, and third, Union.

Miss Whitell divides the Psalm into twelve meditations—one for each month of the year, which should be helpful in suggesting positive lines of thought to those who have not yet realized the deep significance which is conveyed in these verses.

In her second book, the author has sought to exemplify Truth through the medium of fiction. To the adult seeker, the result is not always convincing, but in spite of this, these pictures taken from "real life" might conceivably strike an answering chord in those for whom the more usual presentation of the Eternal Verities has no attraction. As a children's book, however, we can unreservedly recommend *The Arms of Love*

JOHN EARLE.

MOHAMMED, THE MAN AND HIS FAITH. By Professor Tor Andrae.

(Translated by Theophil Menzel.) London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd. Price 8s. 6d.

AS with Moses, Buddha, Jesus, and other prophets, miraculous events were said to have occurred at and before the birth of Mohammed.

Though the faith Mohammed taught seems to have possessed much elasticity, he believed in eternal punishment and grieved at the thought that his father and mother would endure this fate. A legend states that Allah resurrected them for a short time so that their son might convert them.

Mohammed seems to have had ten wives instead of the traditional four supposed to be allowed to Mohammedans, the first, Khadijah, a woman fifteen years older than himself, being the most beloved. In his later years the prophet lived a life of great sensuality.

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UNDER THE READING LAMP 309

OLD MEMORIES AND LETTERS OF ANNIE BESANT. By Esther Bright.
London : The Theosophical Publishing House. Price 3s. 6d.

ESTHER BRIGHT presents us here with a rich selection from hundreds of A.B.'s letters, together with extracts from her own diary. She and her mother were the closest friends of Annie Besant, who called the writer her "Knight of Friendship".

In the perusal of this book three facts definitely emerge—that Annie Besant, an indefatigable worker, had the spirit of a war-horse, always ready for a fight; that though she could "jump on a person with vigour, if necessary", she hated reproving anyone; and that, like H.P.B., she stood by people however much or often they had betrayed her. Miss Bright affords us glimpses of many noted personages—Madame Blavatsky, dressed in a shabby old brown dressing-gown, Krishnamurti and Nityanandam, Queen Nathalie, Joachim, and Coué—the latter smoking "very strong tobacco all day long".

Shedding as it does some light upon the inner struggles of a noble soul, this collection of intimate letters and touching memories will stir many besides Theosophists.

FRANK LIND.

THE POWER OF KARMA: In Relation to Destiny. By Dr. Alexander Cannon, K.C.A., M.D., Ph.D., D.P.M., M.A., Ch. B., F.R.G.S., etc.
Rider & Co., Paternoster House, E.C.4. Price 5s.

POWER of Karma is a misleading title, as barely a third of the book is directly concerned with it; but Dr. Cannon has the gift of writing in a way that compels interest, no matter what the subject.

Valuable hints on character-forming occur throughout the book, as for instance: "*Spasmodic and intermittent use of will-power only produces momentary results. These spurts are almost valueless in the fulfilment of any purpose. A strong will is a thing of slow growth and only to be acquired by a sustained and determined effort.*"

In the extremely restricted space at our disposal it is impossible to do justice to this book. The chapter on *Vibrations and Rays* is of startling interest and is alone worth the price of the book—which should be read, marked, and learned by every hidebound doctor and scientist.

R. E. BRUCE.

THE MASONIC WAY. By F. V. Matanally. London : John M. Watkins,
21 Cecil Court, W.C.2. Price 3s. 6d.

THIS book is intended to assist brethren in their Masonic career, to help them to participate more fully in their Lodge work and to aid their understanding of the ceremonies at which they assist.

It may be read by non-masons, but does not offer much information to anyone who is not a member of the craft. The many abbreviations prevent an understanding of the text by an outsider. However, the book is a storehouse of beauty for those for whom it is written, and as such it may be warmly recommended.

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UNDER THE READING LAMP 311

THINGS WE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT MIND. By Roy Sherwood.
Foreword by Canon H. R. L. Sheppard. Rider & Co., Paternoster
House, E.C.4. Price 5s.

As Canon Sheppard remarks in his able preface, "to Roy Sherwood, psychology is essentially the one means towards a better understanding of life, and the remedy for most of the world's ills. His book is an effort to translate that understanding into practical terms of simple guidance for the normal reader."

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Though we disagree with some of its conclusions, the book is intensely interesting as an analysis of the average person's mind, but is theoretical rather than practical in character.

R. E. BRUCE.

HUSBANDRY IN HEAVEN. By M. P. Willcocks. London: Hutchinson
& Co., Ltd. Price 7s. 6d.

IN spite of strenuous efforts we have not succeeded in understanding this book. A great many facts are sketchily marshalled before the reader, but they do not seem to fit, and resemble rather a dozen jig-saw puzzles mixed together.

On page 101 the heroine snaps to her husband, with slight irrelevance: "*... I'd like to kill you—kill you! And then I want you to hold me tight.*" No wonder even her husband felt that "*this was getting very wearing*".

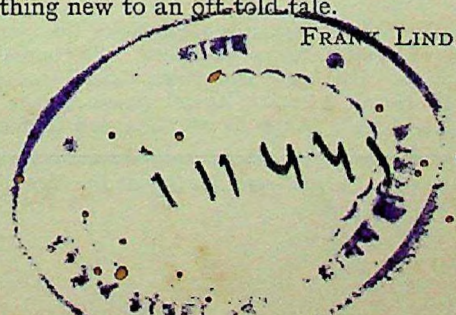
We have never heard human beings talk as the people in this book are supposed to do, and find it hard to believe that they ever do so.

R. E. BRUCE.

THE MIRACLE OF BIRTH. By Geoffrey Hodson. London: Theosophical Publishing House. Price 2s. 6d.

ONE hesitates to offer a very definite opinion upon a record of clairvoyant investigations of the building of the physical and subtle bodies during pre-natal life, when lacking the means and opportunity of testing directly the accuracy of the evidence supplied. Only we venture to remark that anyone versed in theosophical literature might with a little medical knowledge, plus some imagination, arrive at similar deductions to those of Mr. Hodson, without the necessity of resorting to clairvoyance. We wish this seer could have added something new to an oft-told tale.

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