

# THE QUEST

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# THE QUEST



## LAMPS OF CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM.

ARTHUR EDWARD WAITE.

AMONG many definitions on the subject of mystical theology which have been bequeathed to us by St. Thomas Aquinas there is one which will abide in the memory of those who are open to its message because of its pregnant nature. The definition in question is contained in three words, and it tells us that "Contemplation is Love." In the East and the West of to-day and the ages behind us there is a very large literature that unfolds and methodises the modes by which the mind of man can practise the arts of concentration, meditation and contemplation; but here, as if at the centre of the great complex, like a pearl of great price, there has lain scarcely noticed this brief sentence of a mighty master of the schools. It is the key of the inward life, when the inward life is directed to the Divine end of union. However elaborate and on what authority soever they may rest, the processes apart from love have no relation to the mystic end. It is the spirit and the grace of all. My thesis is therefore that this definition is the great



Lamp of Christian Mysticism. From this Lamp have been lighted through the later centuries those other lamps which are my concern in the present paper: they are further delineations and developments of the central doctrine. I am addressing men and women in the world who know that the way of the saints was a way of particular vocation, considered very hard to travel and travelled only in virtue of a high election in what is termed the world of grace. The way of the mystic saints is accounted the hardest of all, and comparatively speaking those who travelled it were few. We never know in these days who are listening and reading, but I am not consciously addressing those who have been called in the higher paths of sanctity; when, however, certain typical developments of the Thomist doctrine have been indicated, it may prove that there is some message for ourselves which will or may find its application in our own paths of life; and this is the sum of my intention.

It will be seen that for my purpose the Lamps of Christian Mysticism are not so much personalities in the annals of sanctity as specific developments of a single basic principle. The names will serve, however, to present the notions. Now love in its mystical understanding is the desire of Divine Union, and hence St. Thomas in another definition affirms that love is unitive. It is, I think, Ruysbroeck who is the greatest of all the lamps of the Thomist doctrine that contemplation is love. There is no fire like his, when we see it burning at the brightest; but it is still fire. His long book *De Vera Contemplatione* is a methodised treatise on love and the art thereof. Ruysbroeck distinguishes four modes of love: being (1) the lowest,



which is fear of God mingled with love, operating in external virtues and good works; (2) a second mode, which draws life from God in spirit and in truth; (3) an elevated and transcendent mode, illuminated with Divine splendour—the state of being rapt away by the Spirit of God; but (4) the last is a mode of union with God in naked love and Divine light, above all activities, beyond all ‘amorous’ experience, consumed and (as if) annihilated. This is his lamp of contemplation and such the love thereof. His whole mystic doctrine of the union is a doctrine of love and its metaphysics. It is the state in which the soul puts off limitation and is so hidden in the infinite that it may be said to become the infinite. At a later day Molinos bore witness continually to this absorption of the soul in God: it is the state of love in love, as the work is love for love. Ruysbroeck is to be understood in this sense when he affirms that we are the eternal plenitude and that God is our *superessentia*. But Walter Hilton says that the gift of love is God; and this is the bond of union—that God is love and love is also the soul. St. John of the Cross speaks of that contemplation in which the love and knowledge of God possess the soul together.

I have forestalled already the next stage of my subject, which is the kind of end in love. Ruysbroeck testifies that in the attainment of this end we are engulfed in eternal beatitude. Surin speaks of a perfect transformation into God. Tauler says that the spirit is submerged and absorbed in the depths of the Divine ocean. Schram tells us that the soul is saturated with God. Many voices make use of this overwhelming image. St. Thomas Aquinas uses the pregnant formula—one with one. Ruysbroeck bears

the same witness in another manner of language when he affirms that there is no distinction found between loving and being loved. It means that in reaching this state of experience we have been removed from our self-centre, which is the whole barrier between us and Divine attainment. The passage from subject to object has passed in love. It is not—in the deep understanding of this mystery—that the soul strips off self by the old laborious and ever painful modes of the ascetic life: the self dissolves in God. It is part of the loving mystery. We do not cease from self-knowledge by an overt act: it has been said that we flow into God and flow back into ourselves, as by an interchange of the union. Molinos speaks of the state as that of being lost in God. It is of course only caught at now in our deepest states. The methodising doctors who knew such states mainly by reports concerning them—shall I say Chancellor Gerson?—were quick to bring virulent charges of heresy against those who knew them directly, like Ruysbroeck. A host of others, like Scaramelli, Schram and Poulain, have reduced the past experiences within an almost iron rule, to which the field of spiritual experience cannot be bound—because it is living experience and varies with each life. It is only with difficulty that an original genius, such as Ruysbroeck, can be brought within formal measures, for which reason he is cited comparatively seldom, and then upon the lesser issues. Eckehart is never cited, and it seems to me because he falls only within his own measures, though his condemned propositions may offer a more obvious reason. Eckehart dared to say that in the mystical experience God is all in all, and this was more than official theologians were born to tolerate.



I have gleaned very briefly only from a wide field of intimations on the state of union, but there are records at length elsewhere in my other writings. The next point belongs more especially to the path and not the attainment. As to this, the key given by the mystics is one aspect of a very old and very familiar theosophy, for they say that the Divine lover is within. I have followed all the records of the quest and have not found another. St. Augustine records that he wearied himself overmuch in looking for God without, when His habitation is within. St. Alphonsus Rodriguez calls the feeling of the presence of God in the soul a spiritual and experimental certitude, adding that it is received from on high, as if from that extreme summit of our own spirit of which St. Jane de Chantal speaks, calling it 'a very simple unity' and the place of that union which she describes in terms identical with the condemned and imprisoned Molinos, when she says that there do souls "unite themselves to God and lose themselves wholly in Him."

Out of this thesis that God is within—and His kingdom—arises the practice of contemplation, meaning the practice of love. It is called the practice of the Presence. Brother Lawrence has held up a lamp on this part of the work, and it shines brightly. At the beginning of the inward life St. Ignatius speaks of 'loving attention to God,' as present with and within us. St. Bonaventure speaks of our experimental knowledge, which is the act of knowing the presence of the object. There is also the 'prayer of the Presence,' which is an inward reflection of intent love, and when it passes into the deep states it realises that which it seeks, for the Presence unveils. The other side of this golden sphere is called habitation in God,

intimating the soul's relation to the Divine immanence in the universe: it is said to be primarily a work of the will, but this rules assuredly in all modes of the practice and is a great key of the beginning. It is the beginning of the life of mystical experience, as it is that of the life of faith. A door can open thence on an infinite sea, and it is possible *in hoc vastissimum Divinitatis pelagus navigare*. The encouragements and consolations of this beginning are the begetting house of love. I have said that in the terms of another symbolism it is a house of experience: it is not a house of doctrine. It brings to birth, however, a doctrine of experience, but this is of another order than the doctrines of instituted theology. It is a great house of quest—

“A wilderness of building, sinking far  
And self-withdrawn into a wondrous depth,  
Far sinking into splendour.”

It is most surely that house not made with hands which is eternal in the heavens. Those who enter the house and those who dwell therein know that it is not of their building.

If the kingdom of God is in the soul it is also without in the universe: within and without is God; and perhaps one line of criticism as regards mystical theology is that it has dwelt too much in the inward man and passed thence too seldom into that which lies about the soul in creation. The Divine in man is not in separation from the Divine in the cosmos. Again it is one with one. The side by which we realise God in the universe—following no doubt the line of least resistance—is the side of its grandeur and beauty. The way of this realisation is a way of loving correspondence:



the new gates open then and the heaven comes down. We have thus the inward place of the Presence, the outward place of the Presence, the bond between them, as if between the Father and the Son, and this is a bond of love, which is a Holy Spirit. Here is a kind of Trinity about which it becomes profitable to reflect. Coleridge says that "in our life alone does Nature live," and I question whether a greater truth of its kind has ever been put into words in any poetry. It does not of course mean that there is no such thing as Nature outside ourselves, but that the infinite universe lives and dwells within us in proportion as we can receive it. It is the correspondential reception of the Divine witness from without by the Divine witness from within, and the proportion is governed by the extent to which—by our own efforts and the Divine guidance—we have awakened the Divine sleeper. It is in this sense also that God lives in our life to the extent that we can receive Him. But another truth testifies that we are an immeasurable faculty of reception in the knowledge which comes from love. "O shew me an end of knowing," said one maker of verses: there is no end, thank God.

Have you realised what it is to be engulfed, perhaps suddenly, in some great manifestation of beauty? The word engulfed is not exaggeration, and it seems to me that such an experience is not altogether infrequent. So long as it lasts there is no thought of self. The saying is that we come back to ourselves subsequently, which is an exact statement. This is like the Divine union and may be even a flashing part of it at a moment. In the Divine union, as understood by the annals of sanctity, we have seen the same term employed by Ruysbroeck and its synonyms in sym-

bolism by other masters of experience. Here also we come back to ourselves in the end, by which I mean in this life. But we are looking for that state which doth not yet appear, when we shall return no more upon ourselves, when we shall become that which we desire. This is the Molinos state of being lost in God, though I think that we are found rather, as in an universal mode of being, and it is the Tauler state of being submerged in the Divine ocean.

But if the mystic transports are short and also the ecstasies, according to the faithful witnesses, there are certain lines of venture into the great unknown, where experience is not in the rapture, but in a certain loving stillness of withdrawn mind, which has cast out all the images—nearly or almost all. I have called it elsewhere a state of continuous preoccupation. It is like another way of the mystics and is scarcely found in the literature, unless in shadows and reflections belonging to the first steps: it is rather an inference from all the rolls and records. There is more perhaps in Saint-Martin than in most of the other seers. It is like a quiet night leading to a perfect end or a still light shining in a secret place. But perhaps the best symbol is the lamp of the sanctuary, ever trimmed and burning before the Presence. The world goes on meanwhile, and we also in the world; but a time comes when use and wont enable us to open at will the door of this sanctuary and know the light in the stillness. The door is open always at the back of the natural mind. Perhaps I should say that the door stands ajar and that the light comes through which enlightens us in our highest moments. The word-making part of the mind receives the great intimations; hence come the imperishable part of mystic literature



and the plenary inspiration of the poet. We have all waited on this light, when the rational mind has done its most and best and now for the time being can fare no further. It is then as if a spirit which is above the logical understanding came through the symbolical door to work with us and through us. We do not achieve the very great things of thought and literature on our own part utterly. This is the kind of work which seems of God in the mind and of mind in God, which brings the good things from a certain Land of the Living, and to which the painful faculty of research contributes nothing. As one who has served long apprenticeships in that unresting realm, it comes to me sometimes with a sudden dread of heart that one has stuffed the mind with so many records of research that there is hardly room left for the realities of God. It is true, of course, that they give us warrants and titles, things which stand at their value. It is my justification in speaking and writing on the subject-matter of the mystics. It reassures those who hear and those who read, that I and the others who testify know at least the witness of the past and the great precursors. It was these who told us in the past, in our first days of zeal, that there was a Mount of Carmel in the Lord and some part of that which had come to them in the course of its ascent. And without the great Vedic saints we should know nothing of what has been reached in the East or how the same thing is everywhere in the records of first-hand experience, and that the mind and soul of man enter into reality from many points of a vast circle of being.

I shall be judged as one who has been guilty of a clear digression and yet there is a subtlety within it. If there is a sense in which research and its book-

learning can contribute nothing to the great inward realisations, I have shewn in what manner they may tell us that the realisations are possible, if they are an erudition in research which belongs to the subject; and this helps me towards the next point of our consideration. Is there not perhaps some way in the lives and vocations of each of us by which the loving doctrine of mystical contemplation and the testimony of those who have followed its path, even to the end thereof, can come to us with a message, for the hallowing of these our lives, though we may never look for inclusion in the annals of sanctity? I have been charged with dwelling on the difficulties of the mystic life, as if they were difficulties of so-called occult sciences: but the kind of love which is implied in the Thomist definition is not brought to birth easily, and it is implied from the beginning of the life. May I put it in the most familiar of all language by saying that it is proposed from the beginning that we should fall in love with God? The expression is very common and I suppose that it would be called vulgar, but like many such formulæ there is a real truth within it. Most of us have known its experience in the human order. The fall is from the sufficiency of self in its own centre. The love of any object in humanity decentralises the true lover. It transfers preoccupation from the self within us to the self without of another. It is an absorption in contemplation of the visible beauty. But mystic love implies the secret of contemplative absorption in an absent beauty, and it is the realisation of this beauty in the heart of mind. Realisation depends on love, and the difficulty is to begin by loving that which is unrealised, or God before we have found Him. The absent Beauty is not indeed really absent if God is



always within, but we have not found that centre wherein is His sanctuary. How are we to reach that 'pure and deep centre' wherein—according to Molinos—abides the Image? It is said that the deepest love is called forth by a known, experimental possession of God; but how is that love called forth which leads to this state when we are far indeed from its attainment? The very language of such love is an unknown tongue to those who have never fallen from their self-centre.

Poulain expresses a great truth when he intimates, a little obscurely, that the will to love is the first secret of love. Now this lies within the capacity of us all, and this is the first step. It is the putting forth of such will in exercise, the continued maintenance of its activity, and unreserved abandonment to its direction. In the steadfast simplicity of the whole subject it may be termed otherwise the will to union. It is also the state of loving God always as the chief implicit of the mind. The great gifts of the spirit and the unspeakable gifts of understanding come to us in this way, by a continual occupation of the mind with the Divine object, in a practice followed by the whole mind. In the proper understanding this is a state of mystic prayer, and such prayer is a state of life. I have said elsewhere that the human lover needs no counsels of preoccupation with the beloved object and no processes to insure it. It belongs to the kind of devotion which cannot help itself. Devotion is love, says Ruysbroeck, or at least the flame of love. The work of the will can produce this state within us in respect of the Divine object. There is no question that at the beginning of the business the work on the will has to be done with our might, and if I must use the terms of convention

there may be solitudes to seek and hours to set apart for the construction of loving purpose. The daily work indeed is auto-suggestion of the mind towards God, and that which it brings to pass later or sooner is a telepathic communication between the mind and God. I can tell you that the time comes, and rather soon in many cases, when the work does itself within us, and while it suffers little interference from the ways of life without, it does not hinder these. When once the ground has been thoroughly broken up—to use rather a crass image—it is not essentially more difficult for a man of affairs who is a man of spiritual honour to be a true and living lover of God than it is to be a human lover in any houses of exchange. The condition is of course trueness, which seems to me another term for unconditional devotion. The secret is the leading of the spirit: and the 'kindly light' leads. It is even from step to step, from the wordless prayer of purpose, shaping will, to that ever deeper prayer which marks the stages of experience in union with Divine love. As the Curé D'Ars said, the best prayer of all is that of delight in the Presence, when the lamp of the sanctuary shines at the hour of exposition on the altar of the soul. But this is the prayer of attainment.

I do not think that—except in the most ordinary sense of the virtues—we have to labour at leaving anything. Our part is rather a reservation of free space through which all may pass off that cannot help in the quest. It is the Christ-spirit within Who will drive the money-changers out of His and our own Temple. If we are busy about the one subject and—in the common saying—can get a real move thereon, the things that do not belong to it will pack out of the



way. Our personal office herein is not one of macerations and scourgings. There are indeed the crosses of Divine love, but they are not conventional, instituted or arbitrary: they are the occultations of the Spouse of souls. The hart is then panting for the water-brooks, but for the time being it knows not where to find them. All this is of the yoke of our humanity and the law which imposes the burden also removes it. The vistas open again through pure and universal love: again it is a world of wells. There are other personal offices which prevailed in the counsels of the past but are not of the golden way. Bossuet's penal practice of detachment from self and from created things is beginning at the wrong end, not to speak of its clumsy process, laborious and painful. Attachment to God accomplishes more in a day of all that it stands for than this other can do of itself in a year. The reason is that God is enough—enough in attainment reached at the end of quest, enough in defence as a buckler.

I have been concerned throughout with the work of the mind in God, as it has been given me to understand the mystery of union, and I have spoken of the heart of mind, in which desire is spiritualised. It seems to me as the poles asunder from that internal recollection of Molinos which is said to be without affection and without emotion: mystic love is the very essence of these, but when they have attained stillness at a centre. Perhaps Ruysbroeck was referring to this state when he—who knew all its ardours and all its changeless simplicity of naked, constant fire—declared once that love is neither cold nor hot, neither light nor darkness, and that nothing can be compared therewith. He was stripping off the terms of sense, even as St. John of the Cross when he said:

“It is in the night of the senses that the sun shines in the spirit.”

On such considerations, and at least for my present purpose, I am setting aside therefore those modes of experience which are described so familiarly by many mystic saints and which seem psychical, abounding in physical reflections. I do not deny their reality, but it is impossible not to see where they may lead, pursued especially in the life of the world. I have been dealing with a different subject, with the repose of the mind in God by a loving realisation in the mind. This state is apart from physical reactions and apart especially from those which are on the threshold of sex-experience. It does not deal, moreover, in those pathological anguishes of love, descriptions of which are furnished by its great experts, St. Teresa, St. John of the Cross and Rodrigo Alvarez. The terms of delight and suffering are terms of sense and depend from Thomist psychology. It is for this reason that certain doctors of experience on the intellectual side, in dealing as experts with the so-called ‘wound of love,’ speak openly of the ‘physiognomy’ of this state. They are scientifically exact in doing so. St. Teresa knew that beyond the emotions and the ecstasies, beyond the sense-reactions and beyond the ardours to which St. Stanislaus de Kostka administered by means of wet cloths placed over the region of the heart, there is one in which the soul is asleep, according to her description—that is to say, in suspension so far as sensible things are concerned. The state in which there is no passage from subject to object is not one of the emotions. They have never known the experience and will know it never: our earthly unions have no dream, much less any experience, concerning it.



But so restricted are our measures of language that after all renunciations and all protests we continue to use the sense-images as symbols, not because we are satisfied with their capacity for adequate communication but because we have no others. They are our cloud upon the sanctuary, when inward experience passes into outward expression for the work of testimony. It is no more possible to avoid them than to avoid the terms of pantheism. Yet most Christian mystics had, rationally speaking, a militant hostility towards the latter, for it ran counter to their whole intellectual and theological curriculum, while they certainly never intended to explain spiritual beatitudes by the analogies of carnal delights. There is another cloud upon the sanctuary, as to which the Dominican Bartholomew of the Martyrs warns us that the presence of mortal images introduces into the deep states something between God and us and makes therefore for separation. Blossius calls the desired condition a going forth into God 'without any images in the mind.' Yet it is always the mind which goes forth—I mean the mind of soul—and undertakes the journey into what he terms otherwise 'the vast solitude of the Godhead.' And the driving power of the mind is love, as heart of the mind, heart of the soul, and heart of our very being, stayed on God. Within and without the images of God are everywhere, and it is true indeed that on the quest of reality instead of its symbols we have had enough of images. As we go forward I am sure that our progress is marked by their successive dissolutions, until that remains only about which I have quoted Molinos, the image of the pure and deep centre. But it is a presence rather than an image. When the soul reaches this Real Presence within her

and the veils fall off there follows that which has never been put into intelligible terms by any book of the mystics. It is not possible any longer to speak of the Presence or of the conscious soul; there is no longer either subject or object but an ineffable *tertium quid*. The path has then been travelled and the union reached. Ruysbroeck has navigated the great sea of Divinity, Tennyson has done more than behold his Captain face to face and Plotinus has borne the Divine within him to the Divine in the universe.

I have delineated in frail and failing characters some part of what it means to be in love with God, some part of that which may follow it. I have tried in halting language to show how a beginning may be made, but not indeed how to reach the blessed end. What heart can teach another the secret ways of love?

Love is the bond of union, and union is realisation centred on God. It is love which honours the bills and meets the cheques and backs the drafts on Zion. It follows that love is enough. There is only one word more. We are delivered from all evil by attachment to the Presence. The practice of this attachment is a better and more healthful exercise for souls than all the mental systems, heaped up and overflowing. The mind grows in God; the thought brought back from God is clear and keen and righteous. The one great medicine of the mind is God.

A. E. WAITE.



# ON THE INTER-DEPENDENCE OF LIFE AND THE AFTER-LIFE.

Rev. RICHARD DE BARY.

ALONG with the fashionable empirical spiritualism, or rather one should say spiritism, of the day there has grown up what may be called a theoretic spiritism, an attempt, that is, to interpret spiritistic phenomena systematically and with scientific accuracy, in a line with the general modern scientific outlook on the universe. It is needless to say that, if the theoretic spiritists make good their case and succeed in establishing their claims with a full measure of verification, they will not only, so, align their spiritism with existing scientific knowledge, but they are likely, also, radically to transform many of our modern conceptions about religion and human destiny and the structure of the cosmos.

As is well known, one of the chief of our theoretic spiritists is Sir Oliver Lodge. The belief of that distinguished scientist that the data of spiritism point to the reality of the so-called 'discarnate spirits,' whose life and activities are said to be wholly freed from contingency upon the vital energies of living people, is in accord with the general outlook of most of those who have recently tried to reach out beyond the current popular realism about spirits and to attain to precise views as to the How and the Where of such existences.

In the cause of truth it is rather unfortunate that our theoretic spiritists, in vigorously defending

spiritism against those who claim its phenomena to be the invariable product of the sub-conscious activities of the living, seem to assume that in making good their defence their own particular and extremely individualistic theoretic interpretation is in consequence substantiated. For the theory that the spirit of a departed person has an autonomous power to clothe itself with an ethereal body which becomes the instrument of its continuous human consciousness, and this without having to evolve such a body in the slow ways known to natural science, is not only revolutionary—as perhaps any fully substantiated form of theoretic spiritism is likely to be—but it seems also to cut at the roots of all the scientific psychology and biology that has been laboriously built up in the course of the last hundred years.

It is well known that psychologists and biologists entertain rather icy sentiments towards this new theoretic spiritism. They claim that it all rests upon what may be called a physicist's rather than on a psychologist's or biologist's conception of the soul and of life. Yet that does not mean that spiritism can be ruled out from among the categories of scientific inquiry. It is clear enough now that there are investigators of the subject who have capacity and determination sufficient to help them to carry through their probings to the very end. And that is all the more reason why it would be well if some attention were paid to a possible alternative to that current theory of spirits, an alternative that might not require of everyone to make such drafts upon individualistic metaphysics as the current theory of the discarnate, autonomous, self-contained nature of the alleged spirits seems to make us do.



In offering the theory of spirits that is to follow, it will save time and help to clear the issue if it is asserted from the beginning, that the same data of spiritistic manifestations which the more critical-minded spiritists accept, are here also taken for granted as true. It is generally denied, for instance, that the best type of spiritistic manifestations observable at *séances* are a mere kind of acting of parts or characters, drafted telepathically by the medium under trance from memories of the deceased that chance to be reserved in the subconscious mind of one or other of the members of a particular *séance* circle.

The writer knows, however, of one case in which a medium, through a particular voice-manifestation, almost seemed to act like a clairaudient reporter into a quasi-gramophonic record of the memories of a foreign-born member of a circle at a *séance* at which he was present. The 'control' here brought in what purported to be the spirit of the deceased uncle of this foreign-born member, who, unlike himself, had never known a word of English. The medium spoke about six or eight words in a very pronounced foreign accent, and kept on repeating them exactly as though they were being produced again and again from a gramophone. It seemed to the writer that some such set of words, which were in no sense a 'message,' might have been once impressed on the memory of the foreign-born member of the circle, that these had lapsed into his subconscious memories, and that the sitter in clair-audience might simply have rehearsed what was in this subconscious memory automatically. In which case, of course, the presence of a 'spirit' would have to be ruled out of the case as a superfluity.

If our memories of deceased persons are like

gramophonic and other mechanistic records of all that can have come through to us as expressions of their individuality, mediums in the trance state might readily be supposed to come into access to these records in the souls of circle-members, as, say, a student might go into the library of a deceased person and synthesise a number of life-like but imaginary messages from the deceased person in question. But in any case in the best kind of voice-reproduction the decision and directness with which it is done point to a true instance of what may be called a 'reconstructed personality.' It is not that mere excerpts of past conversations are reproduced, nor general messages sent on, but the agency in question has enough of psychical indivisibility about it to join directly in conversations and take part in them as rapidly and expeditiously as a living person can. For this and other reasons it is admitted here that a re-integration of personalities after death really does take place. Accepting this then to start from, a general interpretation of the data in question, as well as of associated points at issue, is offered along the following lines.

As the current theoretic spiritism is 'cosmic' in scope we are bound, in making any alternative construction of the spiritistic facts before us, to start also with general considerations. It agrees, we may say, with all existing scientific knowledge to suppose that every 'system of energy,' including if you will the electron, and rising up through vegetable and animal life to planetary rings and solar systems, tends to perpetuate itself for ever, in so far as its own structure renders such perpetuity possible. The saying "so careful of the type, so careless of the single life" is well known to be one-sided. Types or races, as we



know, require their holocausts of single lives, for the reason that without such holocausts the very foundation of single lives, namely, the races in question, would deteriorate. But Nature fights in each single life for self-perpetuation, even if some other more pressing necessity temporarily frustrates her purpose.

But where personality steps upon the platform of animal individuality, the tendency to self-perpetuation naturally comes into the outgrowth from animal individuality; and Nature resumes the good old fight that is already going on elsewhere in every atom and in every star. It presses anew to conserve the single life according to the limits of structural capacity of personality in that which it now exceeds—that bodily animal individuality which is always doomed to die.

We have no need perhaps to introduce any such principle as Bergson's *élan vital* in order to account for this tendency of each 'system of energy' in the cosmos towards everlasting self-perpetuation. A more matter-of-fact view of the case can be offered somewhat as follows: Physicists, we know, allow to that singular fluid the ether of space a weight or pressure which is some thousand times heavier than that exerted by mercury or molten lead. In resistance to such pressure are the electronic constituents of atoms which, by the almost inconceivable rapidity of their revolutions, must, cyclone-wise, create some equivalent to what may be called etheric vacuum-centres. In a kind of analogous sense we may even therefore say that, as atomic weight, comparable as it is (through the summed force of these electronic storm-centres) to a cyclone's 'drift,' exists in exact proportion to the number of the electronic vacua which each atom contains, the material weight of heavy substances

like lead is in reality a kind of 'buoyancy' so far as ether is concerned,—gravitation itself thus being a kind of 'floating' of atoms towards those comparative 'surfaces' in the etheric ocean that astronomic bodies would then comprise. Here of course we are talking by analogy only; what is not analogy is that in any case the structure of matter has a kind of elasticity or yielding capacity to the pressure of the ether. Now it would follow that all 'energy-systems' whose ultimate particles have this yielding capacity, are driven in towards the sum-total of integration they are capable of by the very fact of this tremendous etheric pressure on their constituent particles. For as such individual 'systems of energy' become more and more systematised we can see how this compression of the ether on their structure must be relieved. In this sense the universe itself may be said to press constantly for the everlasting complete individualisation of every single 'system of energy' which it contains. This pressure on structure drives continually towards individual self-synthesis in a higher and higher degree.

But be this as it may, anyhow that new-found 'system of energy,' namely human personality, is undoubtedly driven by the universe itself to discovering a way towards its own everlasting self-perpetuation. It is also equally certain that—define personality as you will—if it is structurally possible for such personality to persist in spite of the unavoidable incidence of bodily death, it must in the end with infallible certainty succeed in doing so.

So far the subject of religion does not arise. We have dealt with a simple movement in the nature of things. We may, however, suppose that religion enters



purely as a reflexion from this intrinsic tendency in the structure of the human self into man's psychological sphere. Just as the racial impulse—which after all is really a subordinate to the impetus of each closed-in system of energy to self-perpetuation—expresses itself in a myriad fashions, such as the plumage and song of birds, and in a vast array of human social customs whose connection with this impulse is by no means directly recognisable, so man's cosmic impetus to an unending self-perpetuation, coming as it does into his soul as 'religion,' expresses itself there in a myriad of fashions,—in sentiments, beliefs, scruples, cravings, impulses, visions, with their concurrent rites and other practices, all of which bear upon the gaining of the single cosmic objective behind all religion, namely private personal perpetuity.

This view differs from that entertained by our theoretic spiritists in introducing religion as the exclusive mediator or instrumentality of true human perpetuity. Any one of these theoretic spiritists might quite agree that the human self survives death in exemplification of the tendency of all things that are to persist. Only he seems also to infer that the human self gains its immortal subsistence independently of the burden under which the rest of life labours in evolving its functions and powers in the length of ages. To him personality is not intrinsically contingent on psychological and biological processes at all, since it is said to hold in possession some etheric alternative to these, which, at the death of the body, it simply begins to use altogether apart from biological resource.

In this theory, which practically makes the private self its own saviour, and almost, one might say, its

own universe, all religions must necessarily be but superfluities. Whatever such theoretic spiritism may claim to explain, it seems it cannot help us to explain the fact of religion in human history.

What, however, is in favour of the contrary view—that religion springs up as the indispensable shepherd and mediator and integrator of true and unreduced human survival—is the fact that from its origins religion has in fact driven man exactly to where, one may assume, the source of any possible private human immortality actually does lie,—namely it has driven man to socialise his private life and aims. Religion has brought man to find, not to lose, his true individuality in the measure in which he forgets mere ‘self’ and lives for, and labours for, and leads and fights and judges for, and dies for, his community.

In all this religion is strategically correct. It works towards the realisation of private life by first reinsuring the natural longevity of the community, in touch with which alone, it is contended here, the true after-life of the private self is to be acquired. But in founding thus in man the true community-soul, religion is also developing man’s private soul, by showing him how to enrich his life in self-forgetting love. In working towards its goal religion in the course of time founds what claims to be an absolutely death-proof community, such for instance as Catholic Christians claim their Church to be, since to them the Church is the indispensable Survival Club, the nurse of the private self through death to survival, and that unto sheer eternity.

On this point it need only be said that the theory of spiritism here defended requires the community-idea for its completion; but in the long run the



ultimate or perfect community of organised religion will have to be one that conserves, and that does not supplant, the existing individualities in the world of life. How one can reach the idea of such a comprehensive saviour-community will be hinted at later on. But we are now at least in a position to offer a critical explanation of the type of spiritistic phenomena which is under discussion. It is claimed that none of such manifestations can come from 'discarnate' spirits; that, so far as we are concerned, a discarnate human spirit does not exist; the very phrase as applied to man implies almost a contradiction in terms. Yet apart from religion, everyone before he dies, in the very fact of his close emotional association with friends or relatives, comes to own a kind of offshoot of their life and being in the whole group of these his psychical associates. The image or thought of a friend within the breast of each of his fellows is, psychically speaking, owned by this friend, and the 'emotional output,' centring on the image of anyone we love, becomes in a sense disassociated from our own personality, and nourishes the image in question into a kind of individual completeness of its own.

It is suggested here that at the moment of death the personality of one who has been a friend to any particular group of persons, retreats so to say from the severed limb of his individual body, and becomes the guest-self where there has already been an 'offshoot' of his life and being, in the breasts of all who, by their kind thoughts and memories, are sustainers of that image of their departed friend, which image now enshrines his very person in the after-life.

There would be little difficulty in showing how this theory can explain every single case of spiritistic

phenomena on record, provided only one were quite clear as to the point that the image-self of a departed friend in us was an actual personality and not a mere brain-figment. To cite cases of death-apparitions as proving that a departing person rebounds at death into the presence of his friends would not perhaps carry us far. To show that this dwelling of one self as guest-self of another person is intrinsically possible, it is better to cite instances of multiple personality, where some form of subtle physical disassociation of personalities in the one individuality is known to take place. Since the self-within-a-self is thus in some measure an ascertainable actuality, we can formulate a quite intelligible theory of a social perpetuity of the departed within each and all of their after-death remembrancers. Only here the secondary personality which a departed person becomes within this remembering group, has come to this its new host-body in a healthful and life-sharing manner, and not, as in the cases of multiple personality known to alienists, in a deleterious one.

But we are not to suppose, as many ancient peoples supposed, that the departed are left in a state of existence contingent upon such chance-memories as the living may preserve in their honour. In the first place, no theory is advanced here about the mere *existence* of the departed apart from their simple *re-awakening* into full human consciousness again. It is simply asserted here that a departed person's recovery of a full human consciousness again is as rigidly contingent on psychological and biological process as is that of living human beings. And it is here that religion comes in, not as a simple help, but as an absolute and inexorable pre-condition to any conceivable full and prosperous



recovery of an enduring human awakening of the departed in the after-life.

For, ordinarily speaking, the emotional remembrance of departed friends tends irresistibly to disappear. The groups of their remembrancers may differ about their worth, or else the harmony between them may break up. In any case each member of this circle of friends comes in time to follow suit with the one who has predeceased them and himself dies. The 're-awakening' has proved to be but transitory and disintegrative. It can be stated with a fair amount of assurance that all the departed ones who have revealed themselves in the type of spiritistic manifestation, which is now such a common experience, are so undergoing this inevitable disintegration. As has already happened in some noted cases some 'spirits' once accessible are said to be unreachable. All will inevitably follow suit; yet this does not, as some have contended, mean that these spirits are advancing to a higher sphere of existence, but rather that, on account of the cessation of the flow of life-bearing emotion from living society, their own human consciousness is definitely fading away.

Now religion, it is contended here, exists in order to checkmate this otherwise inevitable disintegration of the private self after bodily death. Religion has no specific forces of its own; it is simply the organisation of the intrinsic forces in the universe in the power of human self-conserval. Religion does so, first of all, by re-insuring and re-organising society itself to exercise its inherent function of acting as the true remembrancing and awakening guild for all the departed. It does so, secondly, by seeking to adjust the life of each self in a trans-selfish identification with a society

which itself has, first of all, been 'redeemed from disintegration' and made death-proof.

So, in this theory of the after-life, while no human consciousness can be retained for the personality of man after bodily death, except through aid of what the living dissociate from themselves in the process of remembrancing their departed, yet man can be saved into a possession of a full conscious existence in the after-life by aid of what religion can effect in organising this interdependence of the living and the departed in its full measure of blessed fruitfulness.

But if we are asked: what practical lesson should this interpretation of the after-life convey to spiritists? —the answer is that it should encourage them to support any such organisation for the conservancy of life which seems to them to have the best appreciation of the true values of life. They will find that this will lead them to something very much wider even than the forming of a guild for the methodic cultivation of the thought and remembrance of the departed. Nor would it even suffice to expand the idea of remembrance in the grand scale in which Comte formed his Calendar of Worthies. The problem much rather is to discover how each one can come to impress his own personality on the remembrancing soul of God's enduring mankind before he comes to die.

And this point brings us again to the heart of the modern desire for the diviner life. As individuals we want no future life other than that of an identification of our private destinies with the destinies of humanity in its realisation of the Divine Kingdom. But then, humanity itself cannot reach those divine destinies and become the remembrancing agent of the individual unless the individuals themselves, who are seekers



after life, first of all come to make their sacrificial self-dedication to the immortal glory of the true Beloved Community.

If spiritists come to realise how there can be no true after-life for themselves, and no 'undiminished' blessed state of continuous life for those who have passed into the after-world which is not of that inter-dependent type as is here suggested, then their assurance that this is so ought to bring them into profitable association with that great mass of our English-speaking Christians who themselves are breaking with their former over-emphasised individualism and are realising that Christian claims are intrinsically bound up with Christianity's own capacity to realise on earth the Kingdom of God.

For as we all come to realise that the Body Mystical of the inter-owned life and after-life is a simple actuality, then we must work for God's Earthly Kingdom as the intrinsic preliminary to any possible future Heavenly Kingdom for ourselves. The artists and architects of the earthly or social paradise are in this sense intrinsically artists and architects of the Eternal Paradise as well. And the high calling of all spiritists, in this common enterprise of founding the earthly-heavenly State, is not to play the unworthy private part of astrologer or necromancer or magician of private recoveries of presences of the departed from the grave. It is rather the bringing of their realistic assurance about the affairs of the after-world from out the groove of private or family interest into a sphere of dedication for the Community. They, as witnesses who have touched the life after death, may in their turn help to make the world as perfectly well assured of the reality

of the Life that is through the Community as *séance* parties are of the return of the spirits of the departed from the dead.

For, as St. Paul seems to have suggested, the ultimate religion will consist in a final checkmating or supplanting of death by the advancement of what to him was the inter-shared collective or social Christ-Body. There is no intention of pleading here the claims of Christianity to have discovered the secret of the medicining of the disintegration of the private self in the after-world. But, in any case, one thing is clear. Any religion whose worship claims to be able to construe the presence of a mediator of the realistic conservancy of the world-soul, now has a real chance of making good its claims by showing its ability to impart the Holy Spirit to all the would-be social christs who, in virtue of this imparting, would become true artists and architects of social and individual resurrection of the dead.

R. DE BARY.



## THE LATER MYSTICISM OF MRS. ATWOOD.

### II.<sup>1</sup>

WALTER LESLIE WILMSHURST.

To turn now to the other class of the theurgic cults of the past, we are brought to considering the true *Collegium Sanctum* which formed the core of the Israelitish people,—the true and inmost Holy Assembly on earth, to constitute which Israel had been set apart as a peculiar people called to achieve a peculiar work in the interests of the human race. That peculiar work was the establishment, in conjunction with the Supernal Church, of the physical and psychical conditions under which God could indeed tabernacle with man and ‘become man.’ It is on this that Mrs. Atwood is specially instructive, and that one most deeply deplores her failure to record in detail the results of her years of deep reflection and learning. Here I can do no more than reconstruct from her many brief notes an outline of her thought upon the Christian Incarnation, the preparations for it, and the mode of its accomplishment so far as humanity contributed to it. No theological subject has been more debated, disputed, doubted than this. Even for Christians themselves none has so slender a foundation in history or objective evidence, or is so little susceptible to such tests as

<sup>1</sup> For No. I. see the last number.

the rational understanding demands before accepting propositions upon the proof, or absence of proof, of which may depend the set of our moral and spiritual life. For twenty centuries Christianity has subsisted as a faith and a moral force with a minimum of objective evidence to support it. Some few in its early years knew the secret of its genesis; some few in subsequent times have divined it, and kept their peace. The rest have been ignorant. Surmise, conjecture, hypothesis, probability, have built up endless apologies and christologies, and have attempted explanations of the Messianic Advent which bring us no nearer to a satisfying apprehension of what, if a fact, is the supreme fact in this planet's history. Is it possible that so much theological reflection has all along gone wide of the track, and that another path of explanation exists which has been overlooked, but which must be pursued if we are to come to a rational understanding? Such an alternative path Mrs. Atwood points out in no uncertain manner; and that path lies along the lines of psychical science in the high sanctified sense in which alone she cared to think of it as distinct from the uninstructed gropings passing by that name in these days. But she always speaks of it with profound reverence and humility, always as it were with her finger upon her lips, as if afraid of profaning the sanctities by indiscreet utterance. The publicity I am now giving to her ideas she would have shrunk from, and, especially since they can only be offered here in bald summary which can do little justice to the theme, I myself should feel guilty of abusing an implied trust as I do of unworthily representing a subject calling for delicate, reverent and detailed exposition, did I not believe that those ideas supply material of first



importance for directing thought upon Christian origins into advantageous channels.

To follow the Mosaic account of the breakdown and arrest of the divinely ordained scheme of development of our race, we must recall that provision for restoration was instantly made and that the pledge was given that eventually "the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head," notwithstanding that the latter should oppress the former's heel. These are the keywords to all subsequent biblical narrative and all subsequent human development. But the words are a glyph with a meaning far different from that suggested by their literal sense, whilst in that meaning lies the clue to both the nature and the consequences of the Incarnation. The 'seed of the woman'—popularly associated with Mary the Jewish maiden—has a far deeper and more complex significance. The 'woman' alluded to is no personality of the female sex; it is a technical scriptural term for the human *psyche* or soul in the abstract. It is the soul (the psychic part of us mediate between divine spirit and the carnal body) which is 'woman'; a principle to which femininity is ascribed because in its nature it is passive, a plastic matrix responsive to every impression whether of the spirit above it or the sense organism below it; whence its original name 'Eve,' described as implying 'the mother of all living,' creatrix of all our mental and moral progeny whether good or evil.

This psychic principle it was which, under the name 'Eve,' became debased, degraded, disorganised, by the Fall and coated with a veneer of physical matter,—not any particular person's but everyone's, the collective soul of the Adamic race, the universal psychic 'woman'; and the antidote to the lapse was

already inherent latently in the soul itself as a potentiality, a 'seed.' "Thus (says Mrs. Atwood) in the first gleam of hope after the Fall, it is foretold that God will become man," and the Old Testament Scriptures are a record of that becoming. "The fulfilling of the Word (she adds) was effected in the celestial element, as was the creation of the first Adam, before the Fall"; but what has been fulfilled in the eternal present has yet to outwork upon the plane of time. The Bible—rightly interpreted—she describes as a "summary of the travail of the Logos throughout the natural organism in the latter's process of regeneration towards a super-evolution of the Divine Life, which now is, as the foundation, slain in all." That travail was accomplished in particular at a specific focus, within a selected people or 'Church-nation,' as previously mentioned, some members of which formed an assembly duly and scientifically constituted 'in measure, number and weight' for the achievement of the Divine design. "Israel (she says) is emphatically a Church-nation whose history contains picture-lessons of God's work and dealings with His people in all ages. Creation takes place in and through a Church; redemption also. The whole story is objective realisation. There is one Church of God from the beginning of the world to the end. In Paradise, after the Fall, under the patriarchs, under the Levitical law, after the Incarnation of the Son of God, and even to His second Advent, the Church has been, is, and ever will be one."

Now (she explains) the work of this Church (*i.e.* of so much of it as has been reflected upon the physical plane by Israel) is one of 'building tabernacles.' "Not, oh not (she cries) vulgar churches and chapels,



but efforts to prepare the *living Church*, the souls of men, to make *them* vehicles for the habitation of God." "The Bible is really the history of the true Assembly and rival pretenders." The rival pretenders were those whose theurgy resulted in what I have already explained as 'false gods' and in the worship of the astral form evolved from an unpurified Assembly. The true Assembly was that which, after many approximations and disappointments, succeeded in producing the requisite conditions for a Divine tabernacling. The Schools of the Prophets held the keys of this divine science. The genealogies recorded in the Old and New Testaments are the records of the progressive stages of the work sought to be achieved, and careful study of these discloses how the work became advanced or retarded and why the Gospel genealogies are restricted to the male side. The Christian Nativity (Mrs. Atwood says) is capable of clear discernment by "rational thinkers who need steps to climb up to the understanding proper of divine things, the objects in fact of religious faith, *res objectivæ cognitæ*—objective things apprehensible by the divine eye" (in man).

Mrs. Atwood specially recommends St. Thomas Aquinas as having accurately reviewed in imagination the conditions in which the Incarnation took place and the drama out of which the Gospels sprang; and she then proceeds as follows:

Careful examination of revelation warrants the belief that the Creator designed a personal union between Himself and His creation from the first. The merciful purpose held on its course independent of all intermediate lapses, and greater love and mercy was super-added for the restoration and redemption. This is the Scotist doctrine and St. Paul (in *Ephesians*) indicates that the results of the union with the Creator in the Incarnation extend far beyond the world of man and affect the whole

creation by a recapitulation of it. Only through union with Him could the creation be made permanent and perfection realised. God is love and only by means of full self-communication could the creation be perfected. Having dwelt upon the slow general life upon our globe, until in the course of time it culminated in the intervention of the Creator with a new gift which makes man the head of the organic kingdom, the condition of the Protoplast becomes apparent in which the union can take place. The tabernacle prepared, or preparing,—noting the repeated and varied reminders of the great primeval promise and prophecy enwrapped in the Proto-Evangelium of redemption,—we are drawn to special attention to the Theophanies, those mysterious appearances at certain epochs in the record of the Israelitish Church which form, with prophecy and type, the witness which God gave to man before the Incarnation was complete. The true nature and actuality of these apparitions, forecasts of divine realisation (as, for instance, the appearance of the Captain of the Host to Joshua), have been insufficiently dwelt on by modern theologians so-called. But these *Preludia Incarnationis* ought to have full place in the great argument of Christianity. They are a striking evidence of the pre-Incarnation tabernacling and operation of Him through Whom, yet unseen save to the æthereal sense, a mighty preparation was apparent to those within the veil. . . . Revelation comes at crises. A crisis comes about naturally when the fulness of time is accomplished. Such was the birth of Christ. When man presented the proper conditions Deity condescended. When time was at a vortex these wonders were effected. It was a work both of God and man, a floriation of pre-growth.

What then, precisely, was the nature of the Incarnation? How came to birth He Whom dogma describes as “God, of the substance of the Father, begotten before the world, and Man of the substance of his mother, born in the world; perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting”? Mrs. Atwood’s notes enable us to pass in imagination within the precincts of the *Collegium Sanctum* of Israel. Here was a true ‘college,’ or



collection of men and women whose souls formed the very flower of Israel and of humanity, souls purified and chastened by descent through generations of God-dedicated ancestors, segregated and prepared by centuries of intensive culture for yielding the requisite psychic material to serve as a 'psychic Bethlehem,' a pure astral *nidus* or tabernacle which the Divine Principle might enter and objectively inform. Hitherto there had occurred but anticipative contacts with the Divine world, theophanies, 'preludes of the Incarnation'; their Church had 'walked by sight,' by psychic vision, and by that sight they knew already that indeed their Redeemer lived and that at a later day He would stand upon the earth in actual human form, no longer a theophany but an Incarnation. Now the 'seed of the woman' was at last to be quickened to manifested birth, that 'woman' being the collective contrite, purified, astral organism of those constituting the Sacred College. This 'woman,' then, was the true Virgin Mary; no one female, but the co-ordinated synthesised psychic organisms of a group of highly spiritualised men and women—'virgins of both sexes' as Dionysius says. As Eve was the name of the collective soul which fell into distribution, so Mary is that of the synthesised souls which served as the focus for the Divine embodiment by which restoration became possible. That was the Virgin which prophecy had declared should conceive and bear a Son. That was the Mary hailed as full of grace and the fruit of whose womb was blessed; that was the Mary who conceived immaculately and to whom the Assumption must be referred; that was the mystical Mary the idea of whom became vulgarised in subsequent times and resulted in a materialised Mariolatry. The actual Mary of the

Gospels was no one person ; she was 'the culminal soul of the spiritual Church, long a-preparing.'

Under a note headed 'Tetrahedron: True Catholicity,' Mrs. Atwood writes: "When perfect conditions are presented the central soul can radiate perfectly through all the vortices and *appear*, and is the great consummation." Her meaning is that, as is exemplified in a sinister way in the familiar psychic phenomenon of 'materialisation' when nervous matter exudes from a circle of sitters and assumes a form, so in the transcendent work of the Sacred College the collective soul of its members forth-radiated from them to constitute a 'body prepared,' a 'psychic Bethlehem,' into which the Divine Principle entered and took human form. All their gates lifted up their heads, liberating their collective psychic essence into which the King of Glory condescended to come in. Earlier efforts to prepare this body had resulted in imperfect forms; the Assembly was not yet sufficiently purified. The Advent was the perfection. "Christ was born of woman—the 'woman' of Scripture—which is the Church psychic and astral in her philosophic process under the eye of God."

Think of it (she says). A number sitting as an Assembly, all arranged to weight, number and measure; each person representing a principle; all in trance; the image evoked; the soul of all—the virgin soul of the Church. Shepherds abiding in the field, watching their flocks, by night; no pastoral scene this, as popularly supposed; those shepherds were hierophants watching on the ground of life; psychic watching; psychic sight, viewing each other one within the other telescopically, correcting and purifying one another.

Out of their corrected, highly purified and refined organisms was at length contributed the psychic material, the body, for a new creation, a second Adam,



a firstfruits of a new and higher order of life transcending that which derives from animal methods of generation. Such a birth would indeed be a virgin birth; the offspring so born would be man—"the truest humanity"—and would be 'of the substance of his mother' and 'born in the world'; his flesh would still be human flesh though not flesh of the same order as natural man wears. And if into this new creation, like the uniting cones of a waterspout, flashed the quickening ray of Divine Being begotten before the world, a new life-nexus for the race thereby became established, and there was accomplished that blending of the Divine and human nature, that assumption by God of human flesh, upon which Christian doctrine has always insisted.

The Christian Fathers speak infrequently and with great reticence and respect about the body, the external organism of the Lord, as if shielding a knowledge about its generation and nature for which the public understanding was not ripe. Mrs. Atwood often refers to this reticence, and in a note upon the silence of Josephus as to His personality she observes that "that very silence is a confession in a negative way of the position of Him whose personality was so perplexing that the historian thought it best to leave it untouched. He as a Jew of the Hebrew Church probably knew more about it than the Christian of to-day, when the whole tradition is let down to vulgar interpretation." She goes on:

He did not eat and drink as common man, yet man He was; the truest humanity; the *revealed* perfected man whose recreation gives the hope of the world. If it were not for this hope and achievement what hope should we have? If a thing be not accomplished once, how do we know it ever will? and we should

never have imagined it if the realisation of the Divine Ideal did not exist somewhere.

The Incarnation revealed a complete new birth, and new method of birth; not a mere mechanical development from mechanical conditions, but a real new departure under the ægis of a new law and higher order of life. Her views, I submit, are entirely corroborated by some of the Greek theologians. Dionysius<sup>1</sup> in particular makes casual allusions to what he terms "the most conspicuous fact of all theology—the God-formation of Jesus among us." Again and again he speaks of the great marvel which had occurred within the precincts of the Church; he refers to 'the super-physical physiology of Jesus,' who had been "formed from virginal bloods, by a different law, beyond nature" and yet "with bodily bulk and weight of matter had marched upon the liquid unstable material" (of this world). He says that the Lord was "not man, not as being man, but as being from men was beyond man and above man [superman], having truly been born from man," and he asserts that "the Superessential proceeds forth out of the hidden into manifestation by having taken substance as man; for in truth this (manner of manifestation) of Jesus has been kept hidden, and the mystery with respect to Him has been reached by no word or mind, but even when spoken remains unsaid and when conceived, unknown." Mrs. Atwood adds that over this objectified super-humanity the Lord Himself drew another veil of mortal matter when entering into relations with the outer world of sense. He was the "seed of the woman"; yet "to every seed its own body and God giveth it a body as it

<sup>1</sup> *Divine Names*, § ix., and *Letters*.



pleaseth *Him*." So He assumed a physical form over and above His super-physical objectivity. He *appeared* as man to other men, for we can only see what our physical eyes are fitted to see, and without a material vesture, assumed and put off at will, the outer world would never have seen Him. And in that outer vesture, He passed through the life narrated in the Gospels, as the exemplar of the process necessary to the perfecting of re-created man.

The life portrayed in the Gospels (she writes), full as it is of touching human traits, is essentially a divine life, and, except so far as a super-natural power is derived by the believer from the Saviour to become a new creature, it is strictly not imitable by us at all [for it belongs to a higher order of life than the natural man shares]. While, on the other hand, when that super-natural power is received, the life in us becomes more important than the life which *He* lived on earth for us; it develops in ways which the earthly life was never intended to enter, and becomes like an organic spiritual growth ever adapting itself to the changes of the world's evolution.

This ineffable birth, the life and especially the death and resurrection which ensued upon it, created, Mrs. Atwood proceeds to point out, a "catholic change in the world-soul, a change which enabled faith to feed as it could not before the Advent." It introduced as it were a strong arch-chemical ferment into the core of natural existence, inducing a universal, ontologic change of which individuals can take advantage and ensure their own re-creation independently of the intensive Hermetic process described in the *Suggestive Inquiry*. For she says of the Hermetic experiment:

Alchemy is not for this world, which has to be satisfied without the proof, but by faith,—faith which will be realised in the next world. Only those who are able can *know* Alchemy. *It is not good for the world.* . . . It is good to show forth the

glories of God, but not to utter the 'secrets of a King,'—that is, it is right to preach and teach the macrocosmic glories but not to teach Alchemy and shew the *inner workings* of a man, nor unseal his signature. . . . St. Augustine urged salvation [*i.e.* transmutation] by faith as a safer way for the mass of mankind, lest from insufficient knowledge, having no capable body or vehicle for the reception of truth, man should fall a second time. This would be irremediable, for the fall would be *below* humanity.

The purpose of the Christian Revelation was twofold. First,

An Avatar was needed to exemplify in his own person the whole doctrine of re-creation or re-generation; immaculate birth, descent into matter, temptation, death of the lower personality—its body and soul—and resurrection. The life of Jesus Christ exemplified the mystic life of the soul. The gospels have nothing to do with common history, though the truest ethics are necessarily in them, as outcome of the preparation of the soul. •

And secondly, besides exhibiting a living example of the soul's progress before the eyes of all, it brought within the *reach* of all a new life-substance, the appropriation and assimilation of which would graft man's psychic nature on to a new susceptibility of life, whilst the new nexus, thus once established in this life, suffices to ensure the completion of the re-creative process in the life hereafter.

The change (she asserts) must begin on earth. The knitting must be begun while the *will* is present to make the first stitch, that it may go on to manufacture a perfect vestment woven throughout without flaw. *He* rose again for our justification; He raised His body, already assumed, elevated His mortal vestment to be for evermore the instrument of the Spirit; a centre of energy for the transformation of our dependent faithful lives. And it is an energy.

We now pass to Mrs. Atwood's thought concerning the Church since the Incarnation. And in speaking of the Church she implies not the exoteric communi-



ties calling themselves by that name, which more frequently are but sects—something dissected, cut off, severed from the true idea of the Church—but the one central Catholic Church whose oversoul and paradigm are in the heights and its physicalised image upon the earth in the persons of those living stones out of which alone the Church is built. She is almost passionate in her love and contemplation of the Church within the veil. Her persistent ‘perscrutation’ (to use a word of hers), her intense concentration of inward gaze towards it, seems to have penetrated all obstacles to its perception and made her free of its precincts. She knew Zion well, the ‘city set upon a hill,’ and what it was to ‘go up to the hill of the Lord.’

It is not everyone (she says, quoting the Psalm) who *has* “marked her bulwarks,” who *has* been able to “set up her houses”; nor have those who have seen the beauty of Mount Zion’s situation been always able to understand that she is “the joy of the whole earth” (*Ps.* xlviii. 13). . . . Note and read well as *fact*, as transcendent *fact*, *Hebrews* xii. 22: “Ye are come unto Mount Zion, unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn.” Keep well in your mind the *reality*, the transcendental reality, of Christian promises. Keep it well in your mind as the grand hope. Christianity is a grand achievement. Take the promises literally,—a new Jerusalem, *i.e.* new to us. . . . The members of the Church behind the veil are swelling day by day. The number of the elect will be made up. Christ’s Church is a kingdom, and it is organised. It is a living body, the body of Christ, wise, and we cannot conceive it other than living and performing its functions. The full effect of this idea of a perfect Church we do not take in at once, but if we can receive it the revelation is salutary and convictive.

In view of her intimacy then with the Church Invisible, it is perhaps not surprising to find this wife

of an Anglican clergyman, when speaking of the outward established Church, exclaiming in one of her infrequent moments of humour: "Who wants to go to Jerusalem the brazen?"

"The very moment the Gospels close (she writes) the *externalising* of the Church begins out of which these very Gospels sprang at Pentecost from a holy Assembly of Apostolic souls." And that externalising has gone on ever since in the double sense of testifying to the existence of its overshadowing paradigm, but also of debasing and materialising everything which was meant to be regarded spiritually and transcendently. Yet—

It is better to have the shadow of religion than none at all. Even benightedly the outside secularised Church is keeping open channels of faith and grace through the desert of this world. The time for its rekindling will come again, and meanwhile it is hazardous to remove *her* landmarks, her bulwarks or even the scaffolding of the tradition, until the inner building shall be found complete. As once the Perfect Man was manifested, so one day will be also manifested the Perfect Church—which Church will be Perfect 'Woman' (in the mystical sense) as Universal Mother, Daughter, Bride, whose foundation and head is He.

But that manifestation, like the former, will come only at its due time and crisis and when the number, measure and weight of the elect have been made up and constitute the requisite conditions. Then once again will the practical work of human regeneration be resumed under competent auspices and safe guidance, as distinct from the merely pious counsels and theoretical ideas about regeneration now obtaining. For—

The tradition of regeneration, as originally taught by our Lord and His Apostles, finds no place or due allowance made for



it in modern thought. The tide of secular persuasion is dead set against the progress of the New Jerusalem Ark. But that which has been comes again. The Sacred Vessel cannot drift but keeps on her anchorage, below as above, ready to float with her immortal freight by the returning wave.

What then is Mrs. Atwood's notion of a true Church as against the churches in our midst to-day? It is one very different from that represented by the promiscuous congregationalism into which Christendom has resolved itself. For her a Church is not an indiscriminate collection of undisciplined people content to subscribe to certain doctrines and join in common worship and sacraments. Such an institution doubtless has its uses and serves a purpose, but to the eye of the scientific mystic versed in the laws and ways of the Spirit it is but a bear-garden. For her a Church is an assembly of 'perfect parts constituting an absolute whole.' Individuals *per se* count for nothing; they are but parts, fractions, not wholes; it is their fitness to combine with other individuals to create a new whole, a higher synthesis, upon the spiritual plane, which alone gives them worth. This was what the Holy Assembly of Israel aimed at and achieved, but to which modern churches are entirely blind. The true Shekinah is man, but not single men; rather a group of men and women scientifically co-ordinated to form a focus for and contact-point with the Church Invisible.

A whole world is represented by the human physical body and its organs. What wonder if Jerusalem below were comprehended within the precincts of a select congregation making up a whole Shekinah from the whole of all? The tabernacle of the Divine is not the soul of the individual but of the *associated* soul of man perfected in every part, co-ordinated with its foundation, which is its offspring and Archetypal Law. . . . The ecstatic

ascent and conscious interspheration of counterpartal souls in union attracts their Autotype.

Under this head—the nature and function of a true Church—I find the following further note by Mrs. Atwood. She has been reading an utterance by a well-known Nonconformist minister (the late Dr. Dale of Birmingham) who had unburdened himself thus :

To be at a Church-meeting, apart from any prayer that is offered, any hymn that is sung, any words that are spoken, is to me one of the chief means of grace. To know that I am surrounded by men and women who dwell in God, who have received the Holy Ghost, with whom I have to share the eternal righteousness and eternal rapture of the great life to come, this is blessedness. I breathe a divine air. I am in the New Jerusalem which has come down from heaven from God and the nations of the saved are walking in its streets of gold. I rejoice with the joy of Christ over those whom He has delivered from eternal death and lifted unto the light and glory of God. The Church is a divine society.

Upon this Mrs. Atwood's trenchant comment runs thus :

How much more so if such a society were divinely organised in order, weight and measure, culminating in an apex where two or three are gathered together truly in the name of Christ, co-ordinated to His life and deriving from thence, as by a representative triunity, from the Divine Presence Himself in Holy Communion! If a churchman would take such words into his mouth, he must imagine himself in the Christian Assembly with all the sacramental pledges of Christ's presence as an outward fact removed and the proof of it thrown upon the subjective experience of the human souls engaged in worship. The ministry loses its commission and its power as a link with Christ unless it be organised. . . . A congregation does not imply a *communion* of saints. A *congeries* is not a whole, unless the parts are organised in co-ordination to their principle, which thence arises as a Whole from wholes, perfect, exempt, absolute, free from old age and



disease. An Avatar, a new era, thence may arise. . . . Can we ascribe to the hand of God a process which works itself out through majorities in meetings? He governs no such process, but according to the sinfulness it gets its answer in results. If God meant only to renovate 'the lonely pieties of individuals' (as Martineau calls them), surely the means was strangely chosen; better solitude.

I have referred to Mrs. Atwood's confidence in a return to a spiritually scientific method of religion, and with that one might conclude. Yet to do so without mentioning some qualifying ideas of hers would not be representing her thought completely. Clear as was her vision, strong and bright her faith, she was far from being irrationally optimistic, and her moments of doubt and objection have yielded many comments of stern warning in regard to the way of the modern world and the trend of contemporary civilisation. I can refer to them but briefly, though they are extensive and worthy of elaborated consideration. "When all religion is gone, mysticism will come to the rescue, but with it a belief again in magic." Well, all religion *is* gone (*i.e.* religion as she thought of it, as the traditional doctrine and science of regeneration); mysticism, and much that masquerades as such, *has* come to the rescue, in the sense of ministering to the void left in the minds of many by the break-down of orthodox religion; the land swarms with cults and systems professing to purvey Divine Knowledge and giving instruction in unwholesome psychic practices for which magic is a comprehensive name. Doubtless the majority are mercifully too ignorant to become more than harmless dabblers in magic, but the potential peril from widespread deviation into paths of psychism and 'crank' systems of astralised theory

is incalculable.<sup>1</sup> For in the present age, as Mrs. Atwood says, "the Man of Sin wields universal power, he having laid hold of the universal centre." The 'Man of Sin' is the synthesised evil of our race, generated by ourselves and constituting an intelligent energy upon the psychical plane, to infestation from which everyone is liable who in the strength of his unregenerated self-hood opens his own psychic and mental doors. "There is a terrible responsibility in magic (psychism), but it will not come until the elect are ready for the Kingdom. Signs and wonders will come which, if it were possible, would deceive the Elect." The rivalry between the worshippers of the one God and of the Golden Calf, the struggle denoted by the episode of Elijah and the Baal-prophets, these were but types and preludes of a sterner combat yet likely to befall. Mrs. Atwood observes: "If this comes again, then will be the battle of Armageddon. The pull will come, but He who lets will let for a time. There seems even now to be as it were a *lapse* of Providence; things seem *wrong*. But how much more when the battle begins. Oh, the suffering there will be! It needs must be that offences come; but woe to him through whom they come."

Further she imagines this,—as a possibility. In this world of mingled good and evil, each of those opposites can, and usually does, manifest separately and untinged with the other, as blazing sun-light is alternated by unrelieved night. Now just as perfect

<sup>1</sup> A similar warning is given in a recent work *Dominant Ideas and Corrective Principles*, by Dr. Gore, late Bishop of Oxford, in which he says in connection with 'spiritualism': "In the world of spiritual influence there is a grave risk that, if we are wilful, we may fall a victim to a guidance from the spiritual world which is real indeed, but misleading, and proceeds not from the fountain of light but from the spirit of error, and is part of an organised system of deceit."



Good once manifested among men, and was born from men, in the Advent of Christ, so may Evil absolute yet take objective living form and manifestation among us and from us. To the Incarnation for which Israel worked in sanctity for generations, there may yet be opposed a complementary counter-incarnation of the 'Man of Sin'; an objective emanation of our evil principle, brought to manifestation either deliberately by perverted human wills or involuntarily through widespread unenlightened traffic with the psychic world,—that 'frontier between sense and spirit' which Coventry Patmore well described as 'the devil's hunting-ground.' How such a sinister possibility may arise, Mrs. Atwood tells us theoretically: "An assembly of the unrighteous, travestying the original Sacred College, a wide circle of unholy people; the whole sacred process reversed; the sorcerers and adept psychics accomplishing their devilish will, realising it by an arch-chemistry (just as the righteous will of the Holy Assembly was realised in fact and perfect form) and liberating their monstrous incarnation of evil about the world."

For a generation back I find her notes and private letters emphasising the impendence of a cataclysm in human affairs and pointing with uncanny prescience to its signs and omens. Though so great a recluse, she kept herself intimately in touch with the world's activities and varied thought-currents. Like a physician closely watching a patient dangerously ill for a change in his condition, so she sat as it were by the bedside of a sick world alive to its possible developments whether along the path of good or that of evil. "The present period of electricity (she says) may culminate in a catastrophe by destroying the axis of the earth. 'It

shall reel to and fro.' All catastrophes are caused by man " (*i.e.* by the ignorant mishandling of natural forces or by the precipitation of his cumulative thought-energies). When Wagner's music appeared, defying and revolutionising the simple harmonies and melodic methods of earlier schools, without in any way criticising its artistry or its value as music, she instantly sensed in it a change in the human spirit,—music being the externalised voice of spirit,—and declared that that music foreboded a spirit which would presently declare itself from Wagner's nation in ways that would shake society to its foundations. She was glad to leave so turbulent a world before the storm broke, and during her later years drew ever closer her cloak, plunging herself into depths of thought which few are equipped to enter and contemplating the heavenly rather than the earthly city. Her prognostications have so greatly justified themselves in present events that one wonders whether the full possibilities of the mystery of evil, which she foresaw and dreaded, have yet to be experienced. God grant they may not, for that (she shews) involves the *chance* of a fall from grace so much farther than the first as to render man *sub-human* and put him beyond the *possibility* of redemption, at least for the present era of manifestation. What she declares is assured, beyond all flux and harm, to those who will to take it, is the freedom of the City of God already built imperishably of living stones accepted and joined together in Christ and serving as a mighty lodestone, increasing daily in size and power, to draw our wills to their true polarity. It may be, and one so cherishes the hope, that our liability to disaster greater than we know or imagine is even now being averted and



neutralised by the catastrophe we are experiencing, and that the world's long-accumulating evil, which has been manifesting itself lately in forms of unabashed diabolism, is being remitted by the shedding of blood and atoned for by the sacrificial hecatombs of war.

Mrs. Atwood though dead, and though so silent while she lived, still speaks. Indeed I feel she can yet utter far-reaching messages of wisdom and instruction, if an adequate presentation of her reflections, from which here I have but briefly selected, can be made public. Miserly almost of her riches of thought, averse from all propagandism of ideas beyond the capacity of most, her life seems an incomplete and perhaps an invalorous one when one thinks what work she might have done, what invaluable apologetic and expository contributions she might have produced both in ontologic science and in the cause of Christian theology and philosophy, which so greatly need restatement from the psychological and metaphysical standpoints of which she had so consummate a command. All that is known of her, however, is contained in the *Suggestive Inquiry*, the work of her youth though of a powerful masculine mind of an order suggesting ethnic thought at its highest. The strong streak of ethnicism in her, derived largely no doubt from close intimacy with the philosophy and poetry of the ancients, but perhaps also a semi-inheritance from the past, persisted in her to the end, manifesting even in trivial things. Her canary she called Jupiter, doubtless for some occult reason discernible to herself, for she never used words or names lightly or without reason, whilst the domestic cat which shared her lonely hearth during her philosophic musings went by the name Triptolemus! But in the alembic of her later years that thought under-

went not a contradiction but a transmutation. It became more and more Christianised; and, without losing its virility, it became feminised, softened as it were by contact and constant communion with the mild, meek light of the eternal Virgin-Wisdom,—that *Sophia* to find which within the mind is the end of all philosophy worthy the name. The boldness of her youth which prompted her to write and issue her great work, melted in her later years into a corresponding timidity which reconciled her to its withdrawal and sealed her lips from further public utterance for ever after. For her the ‘fear of the Lord’—reverence for the high sanctity of the secret laws of being—was not only the beginning of Wisdom but its increasing consequence, and she lived in constant dread of profaning it by disclosures which might easily be abused in this age of irreverent inquiry and unenlightened self-willed experiment.

Had she been asked to sum up the conclusions of her ninety-two years of intensive thought-life in a few words, she might have done so in two versicles which I find copied by her as having impressed her greatly. They seem to epitomise her two leading ideas and to contain all the counsel she would think necessary to extend to anyone anxious to achieve the ‘Great Work’ of alchemic transfiguration. The first of them has been attributed to Queen Elizabeth, and witnesses to the doctrine of self-transmutation by faith in the Universal Regenerator:

“He took the Bread and brake it;  
And that the Word did make it  
That I believe, and take it.”

The other, an epigram from an 18th century



bookplate, testifies to the consummation of the 'Work' as the result of that humble faithful 'taking' and assimilation, coupled with a persistent energy of will and love:

"A shadow vain in Adam I was made;  
I'm now, in Christ, the substance of that shade."

In those two lines lie the whole gist and marrow of the Alchemic purpose about which the *Suggestive Inquiry* had discoursed so lengthily and learnedly. But in the far larger knowledge of the subject to which she confessed she came in her later years, she asserted that the Alchemic experiment as described in that book was not for all, was not good for all, not even theoretic acquaintance with it; but that whilst in due course the time will come for its revival under proper conditions and safeguards, for the present there lies to the hand of each of us who desires the re-creation of his nature an alternative way of sublime and uttermost simplicity—one, in the presence of which, after all our intellectual explorations and deep-sea soundings to reach perfection and the heart of life, thought folds its tired wings, and the soul, nourished only by the Bread of Heaven, yields itself up in humility to the arch-chemistry of Christ, until its single eye opens in that Light in which the pure of heart see God and know themselves one and of the same substance with Him.

W. L. WILMSHURST.

## PEACEWARDS.

THE EDITOR.

WE have peace, we say, after the most terrible war our little world has known. Yes,—whispers the voice of the ideal from the depths of conscience—maybe for a time, a shadow of peace perhaps, a temporal appearance at best, and therefore temporary. In our hearts we have no peace about this so-called peace. The spectre of war still haunts us; it dogs our footsteps when we go forth discursively in thought; it dwells upon the threshold when we return and retire within to meditate and refresh our wearied spirits. The very recollection of war's horrors stuns us; we are still appalled and peace departs at the bitter memory of the spectacle of what so recently has leapt out upon us from the impure depths of human nature. We know indubitably by that which compels more potently than any reasoning, for it constrains reason itself, that we can have no true peace so long as those depths remain unpurified.

What we call peace we should call rather pause. Pause is not peace, but its counterfeit shadow. Yet even for that fictitious image of what peace really is, for this respite from armed conflict, we are profoundly thankful. It brings immense relief to see the fury of hell's savage forces battled down and driven off; hope springs to vigorous life once more and we are gladdened no longer to behold the ghastly paroxysms of the common body of humanity seized in a monstrous fit of



titan passion. Yet are we anxious still, and justifiably anxious, for the patient's future sanity; for such ungovernable temper, so savage, so murderous an outbreak, argues a morbid mentality, a deep-seated disease of the soul. All who have the instinct in them of the good physician must then needs be anxious. Exhaustion is not cure. The disease, they know only too well, may break out anew, when the body waxes vigorous again and lusts afresh. As long as the mind of the sufferer is not cured there can be no peace for the world and no peace for the physician. They who would work on the side of the healing powers of the spirit, who would devote themselves to the cure of souls and share in the sorrows and the joys of this divine calling, know that they must still strive strenuously, must wage unceasingly the holy war against the forces that corrupt man's inner life. They cannot but be anxious, anxious to effect a genuine permanent cure; for only then are warriors for the kingdom of the good permitted to lay aside their arms, and knights of the holy spirit authorized to rest from their labours. For them there never can be peace until the enemy of man is slain past resurrection. In this sense there must be war as long as man is man. But war as we have so recently experienced it all but the spiritually dead know in their hearts ought no more to be; it has no right to exist in human society at this late hour of man's day on earth. It stands condemned by every holy thought and every generous instinct in us that strives for betterment. Such war at this stage of our development is an outrage on humanity, a thing most damnable, a letting loose of hell's miasma rising from the cesspit of the dross and dregs of life's corruption.

To say, as some say who would confine the inexhaustible riches of the divine life in man to the beggarly elements of their little water-pot of opinion and pseudo-science, that war of this sort can never be eliminated from human society, that it is an indispensable element in evolution and the process of things, is treason to the spirit, a base surrender to the enemy; it is an abandonment of man's most sacred trust, a failure in his most proper duty to the world as the appointed instrument of its regeneration. Humanity is not simply the product of natural processes mechanically determined; human nature is not solely the continuation of that external order which some think they know when they do violence to what is best in it and negate their reason by presuming to abstract all life and mind and purpose from it. Man stands midway between the impure mixture of imperfect nature and the pure essence of the perfect good, between the 'has been' of his lower self and the 'may be' of his diviner portion, between what seems to be as given in sense and what ought to be as revealed by spirit. And the will of wisdom is that man shall have no peace until he is converted wholly from the changing things that have no real value to love of the true good that is eternally; the law of his spirit is that he shall find no rest save in the determination to strive for nothing but to make the 'ought to be' come true.

Those who would be obedient to the will of that which is supremely good can have no inner peace except by striving to make, not only all war to cease, but also strife of every kind for selfish ends lay down its subtle arms. The battle of goodwill for good is ceaseless; the warriors of the light must fight the good fight until the dark forces of lust and ignorance are driven from



the human field, back into that non-human nature where they rightfully have home and sway as long as they remain within their proper confines. They have no right from the good law to savage in humanity to-day; it is we who let them in unlawfully, and in so doing pay a spiritual penalty and do not simply experience a natural reaction. It is against nature for man to re-become a brute. The brute is innocent and rightly exercises its proper nature. But man is of a higher grade of life and corrupts his spirit by suffering it to company with the life of brutes. And the corruption of the spirit means a hellish life and not a simple return to a pure animal existence. Man in his essence is of divine lineage. As he can rise to heights of value far beyond the greatest goods of the natural world, so can he sink to depths of perversion to which the natural order of existence yields no parallel. Man stands midway in the universe; in his life is the turning point of the life-tide. His distinctive nature constitutes the critical state of the going forth and the return of universal life. Through him is being wrought the in-gathering and harvesting of the fruits of the whole process. In him dwells the promise of that future in which the full meaning and the true value of creative life are realised. His prime duty is therefore so to will and work and live as to become a knowing co-operator in perfecting the cosmic scheme of which it is his high privilege to be the destined regenerative means. True peace can then never be his lot before thus of his own will and innermost conviction he whole-heartedly devotes himself to carrying out this highest purpose of his life and so becomes reborn spiritually.

In contrast with the state of storm and strife

which constitutes the life of mortal man plunged in the reason-baffling mixture of opposed and contradictory elements that hem him in on every side, there is no more sublime ideal, no more valued mode of the good, than peace. The greatest minds and most saintly souls all sing its praises fervently. Peace reconciles the greatest contradictions of the mind and makes the heart whole; all blessings follow in its wake. Peace is more potent than power, more refreshing than rest, more stable than contentment, more sufficing than bliss. Peace is the spiritual knowledge of achievement in the very process of its being achieved. It is not to be thought of as a ceasing from the way of going of that reciprocal and complementary activity that constitutes the simultaneous mode of being of creative and regenerative life, as a passing away into some withdrawn or abstract state of being removed from all activity. Peace is rather the perfection of activity; and the full activity of the spirit is the most perfect form of actuality. This activity, however, is not to be confused with what we call movement. Motion is the way of going of material things, all mutually external to each other; it is natural to the realm of the apparent, the seeming side of life, where all is partial and potential, the shadow of true life and being. Nevertheless motion if it be configured perfectly becomes the mirror of its opposite. Circular or spherical motion can be converted by its own intensification at a certain rate of velocity into the most stable element in the flux. Peace might thus be dimly conceived as the spiritual analogue of stable homogeneous motion, but only if motion is thought of in terms of life. Its elements or modes compenetrates, being simultaneous, and might be distinguished as figured by the movements of attrac-



tion, repulsion and circulation. Or to put it otherwise, in terms familiar to students of mystical Platonic philosophy, the three simultaneous moments of the life of the spirit are a perpetual going-forth and a return while it remains forever in itself.

Spiritual peace might then be conceived of as the realisation of the activity of being in every mode of becoming; becoming when fully lived is the very reality of the life of the spirit. The immanent good that lies at the heart of every mode of life is always wholly there in every moment of its being lived. To live spiritually is thus to live in the sunshine of the peace of life eternal,—the illumined life of a conscience sensitive to the good in all things as the indwelling presence of the divine. This apprehension of the good as perfect peace is spiritual gnosis—an expansion and illumination of our whole being deeper far than any partial mode of knowing. There is no separation here of knower and known, no distinction even of subject and object, as in the realm of things phenomenal and the flux of ever-changing thought. Spiritual knowledge is realisation; for the spirit knowing is being. Spiritual life eternally creates the self-expression of its own reality within itself by the unceasing contemplation of the good that is at once its source and end.

It goes without saying that our brain-limited mind, our discursive intellect, is utterly incapable of grasping the living truth revealed by spiritual insight that transcends or is independent of the forms of time and space. The formal processes of our logical activity have scope only within the prison walls of antithesis. To free ourselves we must convert its energy, collect it into quietude and cause it to

withdraw within itself. Then shall we learn that what is for it insoluble contradiction, the thus far and no farther of its out-turned energy, is no contradiction for the spirit. For spirit can convert this mode of opposition to itself and liberate the soul into a deeper mode of consciousness, in which it realises that the experience of opposition and contradiction is the prerequisite condition of conscious freedom and the most effective means of revealing its value. According to the ascetic practice or self-discipline of the later Platonic school, purgation was not only a negative freeing of the discursive intellect from its entanglement with the confusions of the life of sense, but also the positive awakening of the love of the good in the purified, impassioned intelligence. If the heat of the passions was to be cooled by the clear light of reason, equally was the intellect to be made passionate with the fire of spiritual love, before the light of the illumined life of mind could make man spiritually gnostic.

This spiritual illumination is as it were the great awakening out of the busy dreamings of the imagination and discursive intellect. It has been thought by many that illumination of this order means a state of consciousness utterly removed from all contact with the world of sense and concrete life. But those who have drunk more deeply of this cup of wisdom, affirm that spiritual gnosis takes up all into itself and makes all things new. There is no change in the going of existent things, nor is there withdrawal from the life of the general world-soul. What is changed is the whole attitude of man to life; a new way of being conscious opens up its limitless vistas, he sees life whole, contacts it with his deepest being. This



spiritual wakefulness, the awareness of the divine presence in all things, is the true rising from the dead; it is a waking from the dream of becoming into the reality of being, from a state of spiritual inanition into the actuality of eternal life.

I recently read a strange mystical romance, called *Das grüne Gesicht*, by Gustav Meyrink, who once contributed to THE QUEST (Oct. 1910) a touching and beautifully conceived and expressed sketch, entitled 'The Buddha is my Refuge.' Meyrink is an Austrian Jewish man of letters and a mystic. His novels are widely read, upwards of 100,000 copies of his romance about Old Prague have been printed. *The Green Face* had already two years ago been impressed to the number of 50,000 copies, only one of which in all probability reached this country and by good fortune came into my hands. This popularity is somewhat remarkable, for Meyrink's material and the way of its treatment are far superior to what one meets with in the fashionably conventional psychic novel.

*Das grüne Gesicht* is a strangely weird romance of the end of the war and of the age. The drama is played out in Amsterdam. In the background stands the haunting presence of a mysterious figure whose lineaments are suggested by imaginal associations drawn from the legend of the wandering Jew and of the hidden prophet of mystic Islam, the great Green One. Strange sects of contemplatives striving after spiritual illumination are brought on the scene; their watchword is: "To be awake is the whole secret." And by this they seem to mean that it is possible to be conscious of the two worlds of spirit and of nature simultaneously. But

before this consummation could be reached, there must be a transformation and conversion of the whole nature of man, and first of his two main modes of being conscious—his feeling and his knowing powers; so at least I conjecture. It was Al Khidr, the Green One, who was said to change the two lights; but no explanation is given, and I have come across no direct reference to this mystic operation elsewhere. It is, however, fairly clear that these lights are the two lights either side the mystic altar on which the *shekinah*, the light of glory or the divine presence, is to shine forth. I therefore conjecture that the one is the light of the 'heart' and the other the light of the 'head.' In other words, before we can be truly awake spiritually we must interchange and transmute these normal modes of being conscious, and learn how to feel with the 'head' and think with the 'heart.' It is a sublimation of sense towards insight and a deepening of thought towards gnosis. This mystic conversion is the transmutation of the two natures in us that are so frequently opposed and antagonistic. These then are made ready to blend in the union of a perfect love in which our spirit shall be for ever wakeful and at peace, no matter what betides us in the everchanging life-conditions of our unstable and imperfect bodies, souls, and minds.

It is exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, for those who have been brought up in the conventional scientific or orthodox religious notions of the West to conceive the fulness of the freedom of the spirit. Under the illusion of an entirely false notion of eternity, most people would like to continue to be what they have been in the brief life-span of their earthly pilgrimage, endure as such for never-ending



time. They cling desperately to what is not their true self but the shadow of that self thrown on the ever-changing waves of the great ocean of becoming. They would be for ever John Smith or Susan Jones. Far otherwise has been the profound persuasion of the most exalted minds and saintly souls that have given expression to the highest ideals of the East.

In ancient China, for instance, the philosophers of the way of going of the universe, which was known pre-eminently as the Tao, were well-nigh cosmically minded in such matters. This mystical naturism, as it may be called, was presumably in the first place inspired by the contemplation of the utter calm and peace and unchanging order of the way of going of the heaven-sphere. It changed not, yet was it the cause of all the manifold changes of the life of earth. The true or perfect man, according to this high doctrine of the spirit of the universe, had no anxiety as to what the future embodiment of his spirit might be. It might be vast or tiny, it might be the whole world-order or a speck of thistledown,—‘the tip of an autumn spikelet.’ That was not what counted for man’s spirit; it was not in such considerations that true value was to be sought. What was of supreme importance was that man’s deepest life should be allowed to go the way of universal life, be one with it, and so his spirit be at peace. These old philosophers have been taunted by modern Western critics with preaching a gospel of utter sloth and lethargy and the abandonment of all social, political and religious duties. But this is a vain and empty gibe. The doctrine of inaction which they preached refers to an inner attitude of the will and not to an outer ceasing from

activity. As I have written before, quoting from the sayings of these Sages<sup>1</sup>:

“By inaction we can become the centre of thought, the focus of responsibility, the arbiter of wisdom. Full allowances must be made for others, while remaining unmoved oneself. There must be thorough compliance with divine principles, without any manifestation thereof.”

That is, the true man's activities are all spontaneous and immediate, not calculated. It is by means of this inner inaction that he is able to adapt himself to the natural conditions of existence without struggle; in this way he adapts circumstances to himself and not himself to circumstances, the very opposite of the chief dogma of the evolution gospel. Yet he does not stand apart from the flux. He alone “who respects the state as his own body is fit to support it, and he who loves the state as his own body, is fit to govern it.” In brief:

“The true sage looks up to God but does not offer to aid [but only to serve]. He perfects his virtue, but does not involve himself. He guides himself by Tao, but makes no plans. He identifies himself with charity, but does not rely upon it. He extends his duty towards his neighbours, but does not store it up. He responds to ceremony, without tabooing it. He undertakes affairs, without declining them. He metes out law without confusion. He relies on his fellow men and does not make light of them. He accommodates himself to matter and does not ignore it.”

Thus “while there should be no action, so there

<sup>1</sup> *Quests Old and New*, ch. ii. ‘The Doctrine of the True Man in Ancient China,’ pp. 37, 38.



should be also no inaction"—a paradox indeed, but a mystic index pointing peacewards.

In developed Buddhism we find the supreme ideal of the Great Peace envisaged very differently from the notions of *nirvāṇa* which we glean in general from the earlier books. In the latter the greatest stress is laid upon the absolute antithesis between the nature of *nirvāṇa* and the way of going of existing things, of the ever-turning wheel of life and death (*samsāra*). We feel ourselves here almost face to face with an irreconcilable dualism. Such, however, can hardly be supposed to have been the teaching of the Buddha himself; for unbroken tradition assures us that after his enlightenment, when he had reached the great peace of perfect spiritual wakefulness, he still continued to teach for nine and forty years. It follows clearly that the two states could not have been utterly incompatible. There was inner peace, sure knowledge of reality. Yet this was manifestly not a state of individualistic liberation, a cutting off all interest in the world and a passing away into the universal. Against this notion of an unsocial end, stands the record of half a century of loving patient teaching, of compassion and anxiety for others, of sympathetic helpfulness and doing good. In course of time the memory of this great example cast out the narrower view of individual salvation, the *nirvāṇa* of the 'head,' and developed the sublime doctrine of the renunciation of the joy of liberation for the sake of helping all who live the life of separation and suffer in the bonds of everchanging circumstance. Philosophic speculation kept pace with this profoundest intuition of the heart, and evolved what for holders of the narrower view must have appeared a shocking heresy. It was finally

asserted that *nirvāṇa* and *saṃsāra*, the state of perfect peace and the state of perpetual warfare in the world, were of one and the same reality. Both were rooted in one single mystery which no words could express because the human mind could form no notion of its transcendent nature. And so in the later sacred books we find reiterated statements as to the essential identity of what earlier tradition had asserted to be absolutely irresolvable contradictions. Thus in the *Mādhyamika Shāstra*, the saint Nāgārjuna declares :

“The sphere of *nirvāṇa* is the sphere of *saṃsāra* ; not the slightest distinction exists between them.”

That is to say, there is no difference in reality ; the distinction is made by our own imperfection. It is a question of the realisation of true value, and this is dependent for us on the attitude of the will. So again we find Devala writing in *The Discourse on the Great Person* :

“*Nirvāṇa* in truth consists in rejoicing at others being made happy, and *saṃsāra* is not so feeling. He who feels a universal love for his fellow creatures will rejoice in distributing blessings among them and find *nirvāṇa* in so doing.”

The secret of peace is thus to be found in continual good-doing ; it alone can perfect the spirit of man and so suffice him in every mode of being.

Spiritual Christianity also evolved the doctrine that peace is the highest good and also that it may be an actual present possibility for man. It must however be confessed that traditional teaching is confused in its earliest utterances and hindered somewhat in its subsequent exegesis by the too personal view it takes of the nature of spiritual reality. If we turn to its most authoritative scriptures, the synoptic gospels,



we find that the writers are so absorbed in the tragical happenings of the brief period of the ministry, that they have left the picture bare of any adequate indications to suggest the presence of abiding peace in the inner life of the great teacher of the West. Their portraiture limns the picture of the 'man of sorrows'—anxiety, disappointment, agony, despair. All these outer signs they stress and emphasize in the most painfully graphic fashion. To the deeper vision of the peace of perfect service they seem unawake. The writer of the fourth gospel, which from early times was distinguished as the spiritual gospel, sees more deeply into the mystery. For him the Saviour is not only the possessor of peace, as the perfect doer of the divine will and wisdom, but also the giver of peace.

Generally it may be said that for the faith of the West as a whole peace has been too frequently conceived as a consummation to be enjoyed in the future, and for the most part has been little distinguished in the popular mind from rest and bliss. Indeed it is very apparent in the general traditions of popular religion of both East and West that the majority of the faithful set their hearts on states of happiness in the hereafter, on withdrawn and protected conditions of life divorced from the concrete actuality of things as they are. There are doubtless innumerable such states in the invisible realms of being, in keeping with the rhythmic law that governs the alternations of life and death, the active and the passive modes of partial existence; but none of these withdrawn states can give the spirit the true peace it craves.

We are passing through the greatest human upheaval the earth has known; we are only too painfully aware of the fact and of the general instability

into which all our affairs, social, political and economic, have been thrown. Surely there must be some great inner change going on in keeping with these potent outer happenings. When all is outwardly so shaken and distraught and mankind in incarnation is agonizing in anxious doubt and perplexity, it is permitted to believe that the earth-need is permeating the soul-states out of touch with incarnation, and knocking imperiously at the door of secluded chambers of rest, summoning the sleepers to wake and take an active part in the great work and do all that they can to revitalize a spiritually enfeebled world. The dwellers in such paradises and even heavens and in the states of individual liberation, we may well believe, are being summoned at last to awake out of their ecstatic dreams to the service of the new age of universal responsibility. The physical articulation of the earth-dwellers into a genuine world-society which is just beginning, the new consciousness of world-responsibility which is dawning in the hearts of many, is thus in all probability the outer sign of a great inner change in the general soul of our whole humanity, incarnate and discarnate. The dwellers in the paradises and the heavens and the rest cannot remain indifferent to the call with impunity. We are all fundamentally one of another, whether in or out of a physical body or any order of embodiment. Each must work for the common good of the whole if he would enter into the true peace of God.

G. R. S. MEAD.



## BLAKE AND SWEDENBORG.<sup>1</sup>

H. N. MORRIS.

AN eminent German painter who visited England at the end of the eighteenth century, is reported to have said that he saw here only three men of genius, Coleridge, Flaxman and Blake, and of these Blake was the greatest. It is a curious coincidence that all three of these were appreciative students of Swedenborg.

Flaxman was generally described as a Swedenborgian, a vague expression, meaning to some minds specifically that he accepted as authoritative all the theological writings of Swedenborg; to others simply that he was an affirmative student of Swedenborg's scientific, philosophical and theological writings, just as one might call a student of Blake a Blakean or of Cowper a Cowperian. Certain it is that Flaxman, the most faithful and intimate friend Blake possessed, was a student and admirer of Swedenborg's writings and a member of the Swedenborg Society of London from its inception in 1810 till his death.

Coleridge did not become a Swedenborg student till late in life, and then expressed himself in no uncertain language and even offered to write for the Swedenborg Society a treatise on the Science of Correspondences or Symbols.

Blake, the third of the three men of genius, was the son of an ardent admirer of Swedenborg, who

<sup>1</sup> An Address given before the Blake Society, London, by H. N. Morris, author of *Flaxman, Blake, Coleridge*, etc.

believed that Swedenborg was the divinely inspired herald of a new age and that through his writings the Christian Church would be reformed. When, however, it was found that the then existing Churches were not likely to revise their Creeds and their forms of worship in accordance with what the Blake family deemed to be the new and eminently practical and rational views given to the world through Swedenborg, they joined with a number of others in the formation of a new religious organisation variously denominated: 'The New Christian Church,' 'The New Jerusalem Church,' or simply as now 'The New Church.' William Blake was one of those who first separated from the so-called Old Church and formed a New Church organisation.

The first General Conference of this new denomination met in Great Eastcheap on Easter Monday in the year 1789.<sup>1</sup> The condition of admission to this Conference was the subscribing to the following statement:

"We whose names are hereunto subscribed do each of us approve of the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, believing that the doctrines contained therein are genuine truths, revealed from heaven, and that the New Jerusalem Church ought to be established distinct and separate from the Old Church."

Among the signatories to this document we find Wm. and C(atherine) Blake. This gives some insight into Blake's views in 1789 when he was thirty-two and had been married for seven years.

His early poetical sketches had been published at the

<sup>1</sup> Its Minutes were reprinted in a volume, entitled *Minutes of the First Seven Sessions of the General Conference of the New Church*, published in 1885 and largely cited below.



suggestion and at the expense of Flaxman and another friend six years before the meeting above referred to, and he is known to have written at least the *Songs of Innocence*, the *Book of Thel*, *Tiriel*, *Notes to Lavater* and the marginal notes to Swedenborg's *Divine Love and Wisdom* before this date. It is quite evident that up to this time he was largely dependent for his ideas upon, and was a warm admirer of, Swedenborg. This is confirmed by an examination of certain resolutions passed at the Conference referred to and which are reported to have been passed unanimously. Both Blake and his wife were present at this Conference, and had signed the general statement of approval of the theological writings of Swedenborg and of a desire to form a distinct and separate Church. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that he approved of the resolutions passed unanimously at that Conference.

The precise indebtedness of Blake to Swedenborg has been dealt with so unsatisfactorily by most of his biographers and critics in the past that I ask consideration of a few of these resolutions which I venture to predict will astonish not a few of his admirers.

No. 1. Resolved unanimously, "that it is the opinion of this Conference that the theological works of the Honble. Emanuel Swedenborg are perfectly consistent with the Holy Word, being at the same time explanatory of its internal sense in so wonderful a manner that nothing short of Divine Revelation seems adequate thereto; that they also contain the Heavenly Doctrines of the New Church signified by the New Jerusalem in the Revelation; which Doctrines he was enabled by the Lord alone to draw from the Holy Word while under the inspiration and illumination of His Holy Spirit."

No. 8 runs: "that all Faith and Worship directed to any other than the one God, Jesus Christ in His Divine Humanity, being directed to a God invisible and incomprehensible, have a direct tendency to overturn the Holy Word and to destroy everything spiritual in the Church."

Every Blake student must have remarked how impregnated his writings are with the idea contained in this resolution, that the one God, the Creator of all things, clothed Himself with a human form, came into the world as a little child and became the Saviour of the world. It runs through the sweetest of his songs:

"Little lamb, who made thee?  
 Little lamb, I'll tell thee.  
 He is called by thy name  
 For He calls Himself a lamb.  
 He is meek and He is mild,  
 He became a little child."

And in the lines:

"Sweet babe, in thy face  
 Holy image I can trace.  
 Sweet babe, once like thee  
 Thy Maker lay and wept for me."

It is the central teaching of Blake as it is of Swedenborg.

Resolution 9 is: "that the Doctrines and Worship in the Old Church are highly dangerous to the rising generation, inasmuch as they tend to implant in young people the idea of three Divine Persons, to which is unavoidably annexed the idea of three Gods; the consequence thereof is spiritual death to all those who confirm themselves in such an opinion."

No. 14 runs: "that the establishment of the New



Church will be effected by a gradual separation from the Old Church, in consequence of a rational conviction wrought in the minds of those who are in search of truth for the sake of truth, and who are determined to judge for themselves of spiritual things without any regard to the influence or authority of the clergy of the Old Church or the hope of preferment either in Church or State."

This encouragement to every man to search for truth for the sake of truth and to exercise his own judgment in spiritual things is of the spirit of the New Age and of the spirit of Blake.

Resolution 19 is: "that the Doctrines of the New Church concerning the nature of man's resurrection, his eternal state and condition after death, according to his past life in this world, and the seminary from whence both heaven<sup>9</sup> and hell are peopled; concerning Charity, Faith and Good Works; concerning the order whereby man's life ought to be regulated; concerning Freewill, Repentance and Regeneration; the exercise of the Rational Understanding in matters of Faith; and the necessity of a life of Uses; and concerning true Conjugal Love—are Doctrines drawn from the genuine sense of the Holy Word and calculated through Divine Mercy to instruct, reform, and bless mankind."

Blake students will recognise in the suggestions of this resolution some of his life-long convictions on the nearness of the spiritual world, that:

"The door of death is made of gold  
That mortal eyes cannot behold,  
But when the mortal eyes are closed  
And pale and cold the limbs reposed  
The soul awakes and wondering sees  
In her mild hand the golden keys.

The grave is heaven's golden gate  
And rich and poor around it wait."

Not only is death to Blake a mere passing from one room to another or a wakening to the consciousness of the real world which is all round us here, as described by Swedenborg, but the other teachings of Swedenborg regarding the necessity of a life of uses, and of the beauties of true conjugal love were exemplified in his life as well as in his words.

Resolution 26 is: "that the true Christian Religion is alone to be found in the New Jerusalem Church because this is the only Church that acknowledges and worships Jesus Christ alone, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in one Divine Person, and consequently as the Great Jehovah, the everlasting God of Heaven and Earth, in a visible Human Form, which Church being the Crown of all Churches which have hitherto existed on this earth will never have an end."

This central teaching on which all Swedenborg's theology and philosophy is based, One God in One Divine Humanity, certainly took complete possession of Blake.

Resolution 27 runs: "that men of every Religion or persuasion throughout the whole world, even Pagans and Idolaters, are saved, after receiving instruction in the spiritual world, provided they have lived a life of charity, according to the best of their knowledge; that nevertheless the True Christian Religion being founded on the Word, which is the Lord Himself as to Divine Truth, is that to which all other religions tend as to their centre, and from which they receive all their sanctity together with all their power of salvation."

It is a pleasure to think that the author of the *Songs of Innocence* was so just to the Gentiles, even



idolaters, who in their ignorance do as their fathers did and that his scheme of salvation, based as it obviously was on Swedenborg, had a place for all who are willing to receive it either in this world or the next.

Resolution 28 is: "that the evidence of the Truth of Christianity arises chiefly from the internal sense of the Word, by virtue of which sense, rationally understood, according to the science of correspondences, the New Church is in possession of more certain evidence in favour of the Christian religion than it is possible to obtain without it."

Here we have an acknowledgment of that science of correspondences which so fascinated Coleridge, a knowledge of which will undoubtedly help those who wish to find some meaning in the later and, to the man in the street, more or less obscure writings of Blake.

Resolution 31 runs: "that the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg are calculated to promote the Peace and Happiness of Mankind by making them loyal subjects, lovers of their country, and useful members of society. And therefore these resolutions are not intended to militate against, or in the smallest degree to annul the Civil Authority in any country; but only to emancipate mankind from mental bondage and slavery, wherein they have so long been held captive by the leaders and rulers of the Old Church."

These quotations have been made in order to explain a little in detail the much misunderstood influence of Swedenborg upon Blake. These and other resolutions of a like nature he subscribed to at the age of 32. It was eight years later that a new place of worship was built and opened in Cross Street, Hatton Garden, and we have it on the authority of

C. A. Tulk, then Member of Parliament for Poole, and an enthusiastic Swedenborg student, that Blake's poem on the Divine Image—beginning with the words, "To Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love"—was composed by him whilst sitting in the Hatton Garden Church. He was therefore a frequenter of that Church up to the year 1799 when he had reached the age of 43. How frequently he attended this or other churches is not recorded but he seems gradually to have discontinued the practice of public worship.

As a child he saw visions and the visionary power remained with him all through life. He claims that he was able to see into the spiritual world, and many of the things he wrote and the designs he executed were suggested or dictated by the inhabitants of that world of spirits. For this he was considered insane especially during the latter part of his life.

Changes have taken place since his day. Sir Oliver Lodge, for instance, has rendered a distinct service by his researches to prove how slender is the veil that divides this world from the world of spirits. To Swedenborg this veil was lifted and he was able to see things not visible to natural eyes. He claims that he was specially prepared under Divine Providence to be the forerunner of a new age. If we read his private diary, which was not written for publication, we find much that is strange and incomprehensible; but to what he wrote for publication we can only apply the words of one of his biographers and express our astonishment at "the wealth of deep thought and pregnant experience everywhere visible in them; at the amount of important things plain there which are totally unknown to and unheeded by the human race"; and amazement at "the universal compass of these



writings, the pillars of thought and insight in which appear to be co-extensive with the spiritual and natural universe."<sup>1</sup> These writings of Swedenborg explain how it is possible to have communication with the world of spirits. They lay down the laws underlying such communications, and give warnings of the dangers to be encountered. According to him, we are surrounded every moment by countless numbers of intelligent beings, but these beings have all passed from the earth to the spiritual sphere, and have taken with them the dominant character which they had in the body.

That Blake saw and spoke with inhabitants of the spirit world no Swedenborg student would deny as a possibility and even a probability. So far as the visions are concerned, there is no reason to doubt that they may have represented realities of the spirit world. Blake's drawings of them may have been accurate, but some of the descriptions or explanations may have been suggested by deceptive and lying spirits. We have it on the authority of Crabb Robinson that Blake said "when I am commanded by the spirits, then I write." Whilst there is no reason for doubting such a statement it must be remembered that the world of spirits is a mixed society and communications or commands to write may come either from well-meaning spirits or from wicked and deceptive ones; and we must therefore discriminate between the true and the false, just as we have to do with this world's literature. That Blake's states varied and that at one time he was in communication with evil spirits and another time with good spirits seems evident from the statement

<sup>1</sup> Wilkinson, *Life of Swedenborg*.

made by him to Charles Augustus Tulk. Blake informed Tulk that "he had two different states, one in which he liked Swedenborg's writings and one in which he disliked them. The second was a state of pride in himself and then they were distasteful to him. The first was a state of humility in which he received and accepted Swedenborg." This is an important statement and throws much light upon the apparent inconsistencies of some of Blake's later work. The statement was published in 1887 on the authority of a letter written by Dr. Garth Wilkinson,<sup>1</sup> but no reference to it seems to have been made in any subsequently published biography of Blake.

Produced in a most materialistic age, it is not surprising that Blake's work was appreciated by few in his life-time. He received little remuneration for his pictures and less for his writings. He was still more neglected after his death. A few short obituary notices appeared in the newspapers and some years later an unappreciative notice by Cunningham in the *Biographies of British Artists*.

It was not until 1839, or twelve years after Blake's death, that Dr. Garth Wilkinson published the first letter-press edition of the *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, with a long and excellent preface. This is a biography and criticism by one of the ablest Swedenborg scholars that has ever lived, and strange to say it was almost over-looked by subsequent Blake students until in 1905 Sampson referred to it as "a true line of investigation apprehended by Wilkinson and finely expressed with entire insight and sympathy." I take the liberty of suggesting that in some future biography of Blake this article by Wilkinson should be reprinted in full as

<sup>1</sup> See *New Church Magazine*, 1887.



showing the attitude of a Swedenborg student who is at the same time an admirer of Blake.

Unfortunately his later biographers have not shown the intimate knowledge of Swedenborg that I suggest is required in order to understand the mind of Blake. One even refers to Swedenborg as 'the learned German,' and compares Blake with Swedenborg to show that both had visions of eternity, that Swedenborg after being called by vision devoted his life to abstruse theological discussions and dilations which after being developed in vision he wrote. Comment on this is needless. Another biographer puts forward the extraordinary statement that when Swedenborg grew old he grew suddenly anxious about his sins. He began to tremble before God and wrote his mystical system, while Blake in contrast cared little about his sins and his last days were accompanied by a holy peace. It should be unnecessary to say that there is not the slightest foundation in fact for such a contrast. There may, however, be some truth in a subsequent statement made by the same biographer that Blake followed Swedenborg entirely in his interpretation of the Bible.

According to another biographer, Swedenborg's *Arcana Caelestia* is his great symbolic dictionary by which Swedenborg stands or falls, and Blake's father is said to have possessed a copy, also the *Divine Love and Wisdom* and the *Apocalypse Revealed*, and it is inferred that Blake may have studied these in his father's house.

Now the account above given of the Conference held in 1789 and of the resolutions to which Blake and his wife subscribed should be sufficient to show that Blake had been a student of Swedenborg not only in his father's house but long afterwards. At the time

of the Conference there were at least ten other works of Swedenborg published in English. The *Arcana Caelestia* is not a dictionary of correspondences, but an exposition chapter by chapter and verse by verse of the internal sense of the books of *Genesis* and *Exodus*. Whilst it is possible Blake studied the *Arcana Caelestia*, there is no evidence that he did so. We do know, however, that he studied and admired that *magnum opus*, *The Universal Theology or True Christian Religion*, from which he obtained ideas for his pictures. The *Spiritual Preceptor* was, according to Crabb Robinson, taken from Section 623 of that work; Blake's comment upon it being, "the works of this visionary are well worthy the attention of painters, they are the foundation of grand things." We know that there were in existence a few years ago copies of Swedenborg's *Divine Love and Wisdom*, *Heaven and Hell* and *Apocalypse Revealed* with Blake's marginal annotations; and that one of the pictures exhibited at the Burlington House Blake Exhibition had a marginal note in Blake's handwriting recommending the public to read Swedenborg's *Worship and Love of God*. The marginal notes to the *Divine Love and Wisdom* have been published and are a most valuable contribution to Blake literature. It is strange that Professor Berger, who has seriously attempted to show the precise indebtedness of Blake to Swedenborg, and who in the French edition of his work included a chapter on the Swedenborg annotations, has allowed this particular chapter to be omitted from the English translation. All the other chapters are included in the English version.

There is little doubt that Blake's indebtedness to Swedenborg was far greater than any of his biographers



have imagined. The particulars given above of the Conference and its resolutions prove the claim conclusively; Tulk's statement about Blake's varying states and the annotations to Swedenborg that have so far been published all confirm it. The publication of the annotations to *Heaven and Hell* and other of Swedenborg's works, the correspondence of C. A. Tulk, Flaxman and other of the early admirers of Swedenborg who separated themselves from the then existing Old Churches, would confirm it still more. It is however to be doubted whether we can go further than Wilkinson who, after brushing aside the common views of Blake's insanity said: "In thus condemning the superficial canons by which Blake has been judged, it is far indeed from our intention to express any approbation of the spirit in which he conceived and executed his latest works; or to profess to see good in the influences to which he then yielded himself and from which his visional experiences proceeded. But since every human being, even during his sojourn in this material world, is the union of a spirit and a body—the spirit of each being among spirits in the spiritual, even as his body is among bodies in the natural world—it is therefore plain, that if the mind has unusual intuitions, which are not included by the common laws of nature and of body, and not palpable to the common eye, such intuitions must be regarded as spiritual facts or phenomena; and their source looked for in the ever present influences—Divinely provided or permitted, according as they are for good or evil—of our own human predecessors, all now spiritual beings, who have gone before us into the land of life. On this ground, which involves the only practical belief of the immortality of the soul, and the only possibility of the

past influencing the present, it would be unphilosophical and even dangerous to call our very dreams delusions. It is still indeed right that we 'try all spirits, at the judgment bar of a revelation—enlightened reason'; yet be the verdict what it may, it can never retrospectively deny the spiritual existence, on whose qualities alone it is simply to adjudicate."

This, I take it, would be the average Swedenborg student's attitude towards Blake and his work; and all would agree with Wilkinson's concluding remarks which he applied to his publication of the *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, but which we may apply generally to Blake's teaching, that if it gives "one impulse to the new spiritualism which is now dawning on the world; if it leads one reader to think that all reality for him, in the long run, lies out of the limits of time and space; and that spirits and not bodies, and still less garments are men; if it gives one blow, even the faintest, to those term-shifting juggleries which usurp the name of 'Philosophical Systems' (and all the energies of all the forms of genuine truth must henceforth be expended on these effects) it will have done its work in its little day."

H. N. MORRIS.



## THE 'INTELLIGIBLE LIGHT' IN PLOTINOS.

KENNETH SYLVAN GUTHRIE, A.M., Ph.D., M.D.

It is to Plotinos that, in one form or another, most of our modern mysticism harks back; only, it was transmitted in a sort of round-about, second-hand way, due to the difficulty of the text, the chaotic nature of its arrangement, and the lack of an index. These hindrances being now removed, it becomes possible, for instance, to take up some idea and study its origin in the mind of the last light of Greece and the first of Christianity. One of the most important of the ideas of mysticism is the 'intelligible light,' of which we hear so much from Isaiah, the Psalms and St. John, in the Bible, and even among moderns who talk of the 'astral light.' It is an idea that has always attracted the writer, but has recently grown to be, to his thinking, the central problem of what is called 'initiation.' It will therefore pay us to follow Plotinos's argument, not as it arose in his mind, but in its logical development. For simplicity the references will be to pages of the writer's recent translation of the complete works.

### I. THE LIGHT OF THE EYE.

We read (*Luke xi. 34-36*): "The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body is full of light; but when thine eye is evil,

thy body is also full of darkness. Take heed, therefore, that the light which is in thee be not darkness. If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light." Unfortunately these words are too familiar to impress the average reader with the strange assumption that within the eye there is a light. Not till one reads Plotinos is one informed that this is no fancy, but the then accepted Platonic doctrine (334, 500, 586).

This compels a consideration of the theory of vision such as proved the foundation of Berkeley's philosophical system, and it will later be seen that it thus also forms the logical foundation for Plotinos's view of the universe. As this latter is not our main object of study here, it will suffice to note that every act of sight is said to be composed of twin elements—light and form (586), and that this light is finer than the air and is not dependent on it (524).

No doubt the theory originally was due to the crude physical experience that a blow on the eye produces the sight of 'stars,' and that when one closes the eyes one can see moving images; Plotinos, however, explains it in a more systematic philosophic manner: every body which is active exteriorly actualizes a luminous emanation (527). This philosophic assertion agrees with the experiments of 'magnetism,' which describe luminous emanations from various hysterogenetic centres, senses and functions. All bodies, says Plotinos, to some extent emit some sort of light (296). The light emitted by the soul forms the animal nature (1198).

The soul is said to remain within herself while making use of the light (emanated from the eye) as a



rod to reach the visible object (522). This objective illustration explains the more abstract statement that light is an 'actualization,' whether of the soul, or of the intelligible world (527), and as such is not exposed to wastage (826).

## 2. THE LIGHT AND RAY SIMILE.

Another fundamental experience which has underlain human thought universally, especially before the days of experimental science, is the light and ray simile. For instance, Athanasius depended on it chiefly for his arguments against the Arians, blissfully unconscious that the experiments and causation-theory of science would some day validate the arguments of his opponents. Athanasius's use of it was only a continuation of Plotinos's, who observed that it emanated from the sun (1112) and that it existed everywhere (295, 296). The sun's light is shed in a double manner: both by rays and as present everywhere simultaneously. This also depended on a crude method of observation. As light is lit from refraction, so is generation effected (376). Objective light does not transmit by relays (522). Plotinos here relied on the *prima-facie* experience of the immediacy of light-transmission, a notion which, of course, has been altered by scientific experiment. So also he was loth to acknowledge that light, abandoned by its source, would perish; he decided "it was not there," an explanation which, nowadays, would seem an evasion.

## 3. MUTUAL RELATION OF BOTH LIGHTS.

Let us study the mutual relation of these two lights, that within and that without.

Visual light is then not a medium (522), as the exterior light extends between the eye and the object (520). Light itself is an unaffected medium; and as it is incorporeal (527), it needs no corporeal medium (521), and is independent of the air through which it filters (527). Such a medium would be no more than a hindrance (521).

Light then exists simultaneously within and without (295), and is a composite of the light in the eye and that outside (334).

In studying this relation of inner and outer light we have really been studying the relation of the microcosm and macrocosm, the conclusion being that they interact, and that the truth is a conjunction of both. The significance of this we shall see presently.

#### 4. THE INTELLIGIBLE LIGHT.

As visual light is the actualization of the soul, so the intelligible light is the actualization of the intelligible or celestial world. So the celestial flames interact with the earthly flames (825). The intelligible light is then incorporeal (527) and in no way spatial (587). As the actualization of the celestial being, it is its very nature (528). It is as if an image was reflected in a mirror without any wastage (528). The actualization dwells in the body as long as the soul does; and therefore, as the intelligible world inheres in the outer, so also does its light perpetually emanate.

#### 5. CONCLUSIONS.

We are now ready to draw some conclusions. If every actualization of the soul is perceived as light on the intelligible plane, and if there is a continuous interaction between the inner and the outer, it is evident



that every exertion of the soul implies a corresponding response from the intelligible world. If a soul is inactive or lazy she may save energy, but she also deprives herself of celestial interaction. It is a case of the finding of the bread cast on the waters, of the wisdom of self-sacrifice. Of course, there are all kinds of actualizations; physical would excite responses that are physical, and only the intelligent would draw an intelligible response. Then there are all sorts of physical actualizations, occasional or regular; so physical motion would draw only occasional physical responses, while the continual one of breathing would excite uninterrupted responses, if intellectualized by prayerful desire. The ocean of intelligible light, therefore, is accessible to all souls, and they who lack intelligible light, warmth and intelligence, or wisdom, have none but themselves to thank; for the intelligible light is continuously streaming on the just and the unjust, and the gates are ever open to energetic actualization.

KENNETH S. GUTHRIE.

## THE MYSTIC, THE ARTIST AND THE PHILOSOPHER.

### LETTER TO A MUSICIAN WHO ASKED FOR ADVICE ON BEGINNING A COURSE OF PHILOSOPHICAL READING.

YESTERDAY . . . gave me the letter to read which you had written after reading my letter to him. My letter to my friend was written with the simple purpose of explaining the reasons on account of which, as it seems to me, M. Romain Rolland has been read so widely and by so variously composed a public. That it should have contained anything to interest you is of course both gratifying and in the profoundest sense encouraging to me; and your own letter contains expressions so vital that I hope you will bear with me if I send you a few words in reply. I am accustomed to say in some form or another what I think, and to express what I feel, so that I can only ask you at the outset to be lenient in your judgment should some of my phrases irritate or jar; for beyond the fact that what I say has been tested by experience, and that it is sincerely believed, I can guarantee nothing. I have your letter by my side; but I have read it once only, and the first few notes I prefer to put on paper relying simply upon my memory of the first impression, since after all the first impression is likely to be the most poignant impression.

Somewhere in your letter you write that you will immediately read the books of Boutroux and Bergson.



Now may I escape the charge of presumption if I warn you against an attitude which I feel sure cannot be yours in any whole-hearted sense, by saying with great stress: *Never look for salvation in a book.* Never expect to get more out of a book, any more than out of a friendship, than you put into your life. Besides the question, what are you going to get out of it, there is the question, what are you going to put into it? Now all this is very commonplace, and indeed hardly applies to you at all; but I mention it simply by way of a warning in case you fail to find in these writings that for which you are looking. Most men, most serious men, who in life have found what, for lack of a better word, I call a self, that is, a spiritual harmony and an adjustment between what they ask of life and what life demands from them, can hardly prevent themselves from thinking of those material conditions which were the setting of their own illumination, as the only truly sufficient rungs of the ladder which leads from Purgatory to Paradise. In this they are quite false. One of the earliest lessons of hard experience is that you are only one of many forces that are working in the same direction. To find this truth it is necessary that at some time or another we should have stood quite alone, beyond the range of help from others. We stand in utter darkness, alone in the world; our difficulty is such that it brings no help to argue the pros and cons of different solutions; no solution offers itself; our foresight is set at naught; the difficulty is overwhelmingly greater than any we have as yet been called upon to face; our customary valued judgments fail; our intellect refuses its aid. At this point we resign our personal will; we allow our feelings to lead us; we have faith; we step out relying solely on some

power greater than ourselves, a power of which we make ourselves the passive instrument at the moment at which we are most active. We step out into the dark. Are we on the verge of a precipice, and is this one step going to send us hurtling into the cavern below; or are we on the edge of a wood, and is this step taking us beyond the shades of the trees? We do not even ask. There is no choice. All our experience, all our strength, just suffice to enable us to take one step; and then, provided we really did allow ourselves to be led, a very wonderful thing happens. There is an echo—somewhere—far away. We are not alone in the world! This echo is re-echoed; the sound is rolled from peak to peak. The world is alive with music: it is blown to us in a typhoon; it whispers to us in a dream; it speaks to us “from the moan of thunder to the song of night’s sweet bird.” The discovery is with us here, now. We are not alone in the world. But have another look. Is there no more? There is a great deal more: for behold the stars are coming out one by one; the heavens are ablaze. It must needs be dark for us to see the stars; but the stars are shining with such lustre that we can see the road.

I do not ask to see the *distant scene* ;  
One step enough for me.

A friend of mine once wrote to me: “I do not ask to see; for vision is limited and false, but experience is common and divine.” Life is very simple to those who have courage. We are never left alone. We have to take risks and face the consequences. But if we are prepared to do this, we find that it is our boldest and apparently most unexpected actions which in one sense are precisely those actions that are expected of us, and precisely those actions which reveal to us that



other powers are on our side, and that it is our insignificance that constitutes our significance, for nothing is liberating which may not also be death-dealing.

Thou sayest that there is  
One sun in heaven found;  
But I say that there are  
Thousands of suns around.<sup>1</sup>

This much then as the merest apology, and to explain why I shall in no sense be disappointed in case none of the books which I may mention to you succeed in conveying anything that is fecund and inspiring. What above all I would ask you to do, and I force myself to break through my hesitation to do so, is never to look to someone else's thoughts for a complete solution, but rather to regard others, no matter who they may be, as welcome fellow-travellers, welcome fellow-workers, pioneers may be, but travellers like yourself, not conquerors sitting supinely on the throne vacated by the Epicurean gods. Though others have preceded you, it is for you to pursue your course.

Some friends of mine at the Hague were anxious to read some philosophical writings together, and they asked me to give them an introductory lecture. The one thing I felt myself most called upon to say was this: You are setting out to do what you call read 'philosophy'; but above all else you should keep in mind that you are going to do something very ordinary and commonplace and not something extraordinary and strange. What is called philosophy is no more than a particular process of your work-a-day activity carried through with conscientiousness.

You see, my dear . . ., when I am writing to

<sup>1</sup> Angelus Silesius, tr. H. M. A.

you I have the consciousness that I am addressing an artist, and it is therefore very easy for me to choose my examples. Let us take the case of Art. What is after all important in Art, is not the work of Art in its material composition, the groups of stones, for instance, of which the glory of Chartres is composed, but the artist's life. The artist does not have to enquire of external criteria, in the form of the creations of other artists, before he is assured of the impulse, which is his own and which, while it joins him to others, separates him from them. Nor does the essence of the artist lie in the attributes of will-power, sympathetic imagination or physical sensibility which are associated with an artist, but rather in a particular modality which qualifies all the processes of his feeling, will, intellect, action. Now the less gifted require, if they are to be affected by the life of the artist, and if the life of the artist has fundamental value they certainly will desire to be affected by it and to make it their own, require, I say, the external expressions of artists. This is the real point then: what we ask of the artist is that he should give us the artist's life. We all know, I once heard said, that ghosts will not speak until they have drunk blood; and if we would understand we too must give them the blood of our hearts to drink. Do you ask me for examples? You shall have them, though I cannot vouch for the correctness of each word, for I have no books by my side. We do not want an artist to tell us that London fogs are grey, and that the eyes of Mrs. Spifkins are grey as well. Here are examples of the heart's blood of artists. I purposely do not mention any names, so that the verses may be judged on their merit:

•



1. *Nous écoutions se taire en nous la violence  
De l'exaltant amour qu'emprisonnaient nos bras,  
Et le vivant silence  
Dire des mots que nous ne savions pas.*

2. *La lune blanche  
Luit dans les bois ;  
De chaque branche  
Part une voix  
Sous la ramée. . . .*

*O bien-aimée.*

*L'étang reflète,  
Profond miroir,  
La silhouette  
Du saule noir  
Où le vent pleure. . . .*

*Répons : c'est l'heure.*

*Un vaste et tendre  
Apaisement  
Semble descendre  
Du firmament  
Que l'astre irise. . . .*

*C'est l'heure exquise.*

3. *Like a poet hidden  
In the light of thought,  
Singing songs unbidden  
Till the world is wrought  
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not.*

*Like a high-born maiden  
In a palace tower,  
Soothing her love-laden  
Soul in secret hour  
With music sweet as love which overflows her bower.*

Like a glow-worm golden  
 In a dell of dew,  
 Scattering unbeholden  
 Its aerial hue  
 Amid the flowers and grass that screen it from the view.

Like a rose embowered  
 In its own green leaves,  
 By warm winds deflowered  
 Till the scent it gives  
 Makes faint with too much sweet those heavy-winged  
 thieves.

4. He that bends to himself a joy  
 Doth the winged life destroy ;  
 But he who kisses a joy as it flies  
 Lives in eternity's sunrise.

I am made to sow the thistle for wheat, the nettle for a nourishing  
 dainty.

I have planted a false oath on the earth. It has brought forth a  
 poison tree.

I have chosen the serpent for a counsellor, and the dog for a  
 schoolmaster to my children.

I have blotted out from light and loving the dove and the  
 nightingale.

I have caused the earthworm to beg from door to door.

I have taught the thief a secret path into the house of the just.

I have taught pale artifice to spread his nets upon the morning.

My heavens are brass, my earth is iron, my moon a clod of clay,

My sun a pestilence burning at noon, a vapour of death in the  
 night.

What is the price of experience ? Do men buy it for a song ?

Or wisdom for a dance in the street ? No, it is bought with the  
 price .

Of all that a man hath,—his wife, his house, his children.

Wisdom is sold in the desolate market where none come to buy,

And in the withered fields where the farmer ploughs for bread in  
 vain.



It is an easy thing to triumph in the summer's sun,  
 And in the harvest to sing on the waggon loaded with corn.  
 It is an easy thing to talk of patience to the afflicted,  
 To speak the laws of prudence to the houseless wanderer,  
 To listen to the hungry ravens' cry in the winter season,  
 When the red blood is filled with wine and with the marrow of  
 lambs.  
 It is an easy thing to laugh at wrathful elements,  
 To hear the dog howl at the wintry door, the ox in the slaughter-  
 house moan,  
 To see a god on every wind and a blessing on every blast,  
 To hear sounds of love in the thunderstorm that destroys our  
 enemy's house,  
 To rejoice in the blight that covers his field, in the sickness that  
 cuts off his children,  
 While our olive and vine sing and laugh round our door and our  
 children bring fruit and flowers.  
 Then the groan and the dolor are quite forgotten, and the slave  
 grinding at the mill,  
 And the captive in chains, and the poor in prison, and the soldier  
 in the fields,  
 When the shattered bone hath laid him groaning among the  
 happier dead.  
 It is an easy thing to rejoice in the tents of prosperity.  
 Thus could I sing and thus rejoice: but it is not so with me.

The same method could of course be applied to  
 any other form of artistic expression, and should I at  
 some time or another be given the opportunity of  
 meeting you, I shall be glad to show you Blake's  
 etchings which illustrate Young's *Night Thoughts*.  
 Words, however, are the most organic creation of the  
 human spirit, and words lie ready to hand.

Now I think we need hardly spend our time in  
 justifying the life of the artist: it contains its own  
 vindication. But let us pass to philosophy and the  
 life of the philosopher. I am at this moment thinking

of an acquaintance of mine—certainly not a friend—who is a professor of philosophy. He is a man of considerable intellectual power, but without any profound life of feeling; he is, in fact, one of those men for whom half the world is an incarnate principle of madness and the other half a tamed and regulated Holy Ghost. I am ready to go to this gentleman for information; but should I be called upon to make an important decision while he was with me, my first act would be to ask him to leave the room at once. I find no pleasure in his society; whereas I find the greatest pleasure in the society of a *Ruhleben* friend of mine, who is a stoker on a cargo boat. Does this mean that philosophy is incapable of affecting men in any vital way? Certainly not. It means that my acquaintance, the professor, is not a true philosopher. If a man does not touch you at your deepest, he is not a creative philosophical genius, whatever else he may be. One type of the philosophical genius is represented by the founders of religions. In the generations in which Europe was being civilized, the thinkers, the fathers of the Church, were the great men of action. "When we say that a man is wise, we mean that he thinks well and acts well." An idea, as *Boutroux* has said, is a permanent disposition towards a certain kind of action under particular circumstances. My conclusion is that just as you may say of a man that he is an artist or that he is religious, you have the same right to say that a man is a philosophical person, in the sense that he is a seeker after a spiritual and intellectual harmony, and that the instinctive processes of his activity tend towards the generalization of his observations as well as towards iconography rather than portraiture. What we ask of the philosopher is that



he should give us the philosopher's life. But here comes the difficulty; for just as comparatively few are able to enter into the experience contained in the creation of a work of art, which once it is completed seems to hang between heaven and earth, so also comparatively few apprehend the truths of a philosophical system, since a system is the closed unity which only opens its petals and its iron doors to those who approach it with strength and humility.

Pure as the purest gold,  
As rock so rigid hard  
And clear as crystal, keep  
Thy soul within thy guard.<sup>1</sup>

Nothing is so weak as much that passes for strength; nothing is so strong as much that is called weak; nothing is so strong as weakness; nothing is so weak as strength.

From what I have said, it will, I believe, be clear that I regard as philosophers many who are not called such in the customary, very material sense of the word. For example, I regard Dostoevsky as one of the greatest thinkers of the 19th century. He has the amazing power of pure genius, of *seeing* the actual as a symbol of the spiritual, and of seeing the spiritual as a symbol of the actual to be. Not until you have analysed his characters with the greatest care do you find of what importance his descriptions of their physical attributes are. Dostoevsky creates a whole world of symbols of his own for the purpose of giving what he proposes to give—namely, the physiology of the character of a man. Let us then not be afraid of

<sup>1</sup> Angelus Silesius, tr. Paul Carns.

being abandoned to our own resources; for after all our own resources are always with us, and it is precisely when we are forced to rely on them alone that we are least abandoned. Material for our thought and action always lies ready to hand. "The idea can arise to consciousness from anything" (Hegel).

Difficulties of thought often resolve themselves if we face them, remembering that if, as Herbert Spencer wrote, two antagonistic principles confront us in action, there must be a fundamental harmony between them' (*First Principles*, bk. i., ch. i.), but remembering also that their strength and vital fecundity may lie in their separation, which it would be folly to ignore.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover there is no need to be in a hurry to do it all ourselves; but there is rather every need to be passive on occasion and to simulate the flower which gives the honey by welcoming the visit of the bee, instead of constantly imitating the bee busying ourselves with the gathering of honey. The act of recognition that our poor efforts can avail but little may often render those efforts effective beyond our fondest hopes. For example, at the end of his Preface to *Adonais* Shelley acknowledges his admiration for the magnificent way in which Severn attended on Keats in his last illness, in something like the following words: "Had I known of Mr. Severn's action before the completion of my poem, I should have been tempted to add my feeble tribute of applause to the more solid recompense which the virtuous man finds in the recollection of his own motives. Mr. Severn can dispense with praise from such stuff as dreams are made of. His conduct is a golden augury for the

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Émile Boutroux, *The Relation between Thought and Action*, Herbert Spencer Lecture, 1917.



success of his future career. May the unextinguished spirit of his illustrious friend animate the creations of his pencil and plead against oblivion for his name." From the moment these words passed on to paper from the pen of Percy Bysshe Shelley, the fame of Severn was assured to endure until the English language itself has passed into the limbo of the dust and ruin of the ages. The one invariable answer to the cry of "Let there be light" is: "And there was light." But when do we cry: "Let there be light"? We cry it when our lights have failed, when the pillars of faith have tottered and fallen, when the body itself must be changed, renewed and vitalized before the word of the spirit can once more ruffle the waters of Bethesda for the strengthening and the healing of the beloved, when "the eyes of chaos are shining through the veil of order." Such is the position of the world to-day. We are solitaries crying in the wilderness; some of us have found a shining oasis and known the rapture of the crystal stream after days of parching thirst; some of us will never lose the happiness that we have found.

I met a sage at the break of day  
And he welcomed me with a smile,  
He spoke his words of encouragement  
And we parted after a while.

I met a fair lady when all was bright  
And the sun was burning on high;  
She turned to me with her dark, deep eyes  
And sold herself for a lie.

I met a child when the world was dark  
And I was drear and alone;  
The child spoke nought  
But the dark became light,  
The day of glory had come.

The barren ground shone with splendour high,  
Bare branches dripped with gold,  
And the earth was transformed to heaven,  
Just as the sage foretold.

But to those who have chaos within them I say :  
Be not afraid of life. Your chaos is the formation of  
the new order. You are the interpreters of the present.  
You are the constructors of the morrow. Learn to  
overcome your pettiness. Have courage and you will  
come to be at peace in all your strife, at rest while you  
are running, and effectively active while you are con-  
templating. "A man must still have much chaos within  
him if he is to be able to create a dancing star." If  
you ask for a rule of life take this ; and none but this :  
Never compromise with your feelings ! Happiness  
you will come to regard not as a reward, but as a  
test and a searching trial. It is easy to be honest, if  
to be honest is the only way of saving your life. It is  
difficult to be honest when all goes well. Happiness  
will give you strength to bear greater suffering.  
Suffering well borne will bring you greater happiness.  
"Joys impregnate, sorrows bring forth." Ask to give  
and not to receive, and you will cease to indulge in  
that most damnable of practices by which many men  
and women live who excite the affections and passions  
of others merely to warm their hands at the flames of  
others' hearts. Learn to be alone and friends will follow  
and support you ; learn to face the darkness and you  
shall find the light ; and remember above all to "walk  
gently in a world where the lights are dim and even  
the stars wander."<sup>1</sup>

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HENRY M. ANDREWS.

<sup>1</sup> Gilbert Murray, *Four Stages of Greek Religion*, p. 153.



## WIRELESS CONFUSION.

ALGERNON BLACKWOOD.

"GOOD-NIGHT, Uncle," whispered the child, as she climbed on to his knee and gave him a resounding kiss. "It's time for me to disappop into bed—at least, so Mother says."

"Disappop, then," he replied, returning her kiss, "although I doubt . . ."

He hesitated. He remembered the word was her father's invention, descriptive of the way rabbits pop into their holes and disappear, and the way *good* children should leave the room the instant bed-time was announced. The father—his twin brother—seemed to enter the room and stand beside them. "Then give me another kiss, and disappop!" he said quickly. The child obeyed the first part of his injunction, but had not obeyed the second when the queer thing happened. She had not left his knee; he was still holding her at the full stretch of both arms; he was staring into her laughing eyes—when she suddenly went far away into an extraordinary distance. She retired. Minute, tiny, but still in perfect proportion and clear as before, she was withdrawn in space till she was small as a doll. He saw his own hands holding her, and they too were minute. Down this long corridor of space, as it were, he saw her diminutive figure.

"Uncle!" she cried, yet her voice was loud as before, "but what a funny face! You're pretending you've seen a ghost"—and she was gone from his knee

and from the room, the door closing quietly behind her. He saw her cross the floor, a tiny figure. Then, just as she reached the door, she became of normal size again, as if she crossed a line.

He felt dizzy. The loud voice close to his ear issuing from a diminutive figure half a mile away had a distressing effect upon him. He knew a passing shiver as he sat there in the dark. He heard the wind walking round the house, trying the doors and windows. He was troubled by a memory he could not seize.

Yet the emotion instantly resolved itself into one of personal anxiety: something had gone wrong with his eyes. Sight, his most precious possession as an artist, was of course affected. He was conscious of a little trembling in him, as he at once began trying his sight at various objects—his hands, the high ceiling, the trees dim in the twilight on the lawn outside. He opened a book and read half a dozen lines, at changing distances; finally he stared carefully at the second hand of his watch. "Right as a trivet!" he exclaimed aloud. He emitted a long sigh; he was immensely relieved. "Nothing wrong with my eyes."

He thought about the actual occurrence a great deal—he felt as puzzled as any other normal person must have felt. While he held the child actually in his arms, gripping her with both hands, he had seen her suddenly half a mile away. "Half a mile!" he repeated under his breath, "why it was even more, it was easily a mile." It had been exactly as though he suddenly looked at her down the wrong end of a powerful telescope. It had really happened; he could not explain it; there was no more to be said.

This was the first time it happened to him.

At the theatre, a week later, when the phenomenon



was repeated, the stage he was watching fixedly at the moment went far away, as though he saw it from a long way off. The distance, so far as he could judge, was the same as before, about a mile. It was an Eastern scene, realistically costumed and produced, that without an instant's warning withdrew. The entire stage went with it, although he did not actually see it go. He did not see movement, that is. It was suddenly remote, while yet the actors' voices, the orchestra, the general hubbub retained their normal volume. He experienced again the distressing dizziness; he closed his eyes, covering them with his hand, then rubbing the eyeballs slightly; and when he looked up the next minute, the world was as it should be, as it had been, at any rate. Unwilling to experience a repetition of the thing in a public place, however, and fortunately being alone, he left the theatre at the end of the act.

Twice this happened to him, once with an individual; his brother's child, and once with a landscape, an Eastern stage scene. Both occurrences were within the week, during which time he had been considering a visit to the oculist, though without putting his decision into execution. He was the kind of man that dreaded doctors, dentists, oculists, always postponing, always finding reasons for delay. He found reasons now, the chief among them being an unwelcome one—that it was perhaps a brain specialist, rather than an oculist, he ought to consult. This particular notion hung unpleasantly about his mind when, the day after the theatre visit, the thing recurred, but with a startling difference.

While idly watching a blue-bottle fly that climbed the window-pane with remorseless industry, only to

slip down again at the very instant when escape into the open air was within its reach, the fly grew abruptly into gigantic proportions, became blurred and indistinct as it did so, covered the entire pane with its furry, dark, ugly mass, and frightened him so that he stepped back with a cry and nearly lost his balance altogether. He collapsed into a chair. He listened with closed eyes. The metallic buzzing was audible, a small, exasperating sound, ordinarily unable to stir any emotion beyond a mild annoyance. Yet it was terrible; that so huge an insect should make so faint a sound seemed to him terrible.

At length he cautiously opened his eyes. The fly was of normal size once more. He hastily flicked it out of the window.

An hour later he was talking with the famous oculist in Harley Street . . . about the advisability of starting reading glasses. He found it difficult to relate the rest. A curious shyness restrained him.

"Your optic nerves might belong to a man of twenty," was the verdict. "Both are perfect. But at your age it is wise to save the sight as much as possible. There is a slight astigmatism . . ." And a prescription for the glasses was written out. It was only when paying the fee, and as a means of drawing attention from the awkward moment, that his story found expression. It seemed to come out in spite of himself. He made light of it even then, telling it without conviction. It seemed foolish suddenly as he told it. "How very odd," observed the oculist vaguely, "dear me, yes, curious indeed. But that's nothing. H'm, h'm!" Either it was no concern of his, or he deemed it negligible. . . . His only other confidant was a friend of psychological tendencies who



was interested and eager to explain. It is on the instant plausible explanation of anything and everything that the reputation of such folk depends; this one was true to type: "A spontaneous invention, my dear fellow—a pictorial rendering of your thought. You are a painter, aren't you? Well, this is merely a rendering in picture-form of—" he paused for effect, the other hung upon his words—"of the odd word 'disappop.'"

"Ah!" exclaimed the painter.

"You see everything pictorially, of course, don't you?"

"Yes—as a rule."

"There you have it. Your painter's psychology saw the child 'disappopping.' That's all."

"And the fly?" But the fly was easily explained, since it was merely the process reversed. "Once a process has established itself in your mind, you see, it may act in either direction. When a madman says 'I'm afraid Smith will do me an injury,' it means, 'I will do an injury to Smith.'" And he repeated with finality, "That's it."

The explanations were not very satisfactory, the illustration even tactless, but then the problem had not been stated quite fully. Neither to the oculist nor to the other had *all* the facts been given. The same shyness had been a restraining influence in both cases; a detail had been omitted, and this detail was that he connected the occurrences somehow with his brother whom the war had taken.

The phenomenon made one more appearance—the last—before its character, its field of action rather, altered. He was reading a book when the print became now large, now small; it blurred, grew remote

and tiny, then so huge that a single word, a letter even, filled the whole page. He felt as if some one were playing optical tricks with the mechanism of his eyes, trying first one, then another focus. The meaning of the words themselves, too, became uncertain; he did not understand them any more; the sentences lost their meaning, as though he read a strange language, or a language little known. The flash came then—some one was using his eyes—some one else was looking through them.

No, it was not his brother. The idea was preposterous in any case. Yet he shivered again, as when he heard the walking wind, for an uncanny conviction came over him that it was some one who did not understand eyes, but was manipulating their mechanism experimentally. With the conviction came also this: that, while not his brother, it was some one connected with his brother.

Here, moreover, was an explanation of sorts, for if the supernatural existed—he had never troubled his head about it—he could accept this odd business as a manifestation, and leave it at that. He did so, and his mind was eased. This was his attitude: "The supernatural *may* exist. Why not? We cannot know. But we can watch." His eyes and brain, at any rate, were proved in good condition.

He watched. No change of focus, no magnifying or diminishing, came again. For some weeks he noticed nothing unusual of any kind, except that his mind often filled now with Eastern pictures. Their sudden irruption caught his attention, but no more than that; they were sometimes blurred and sometimes vivid; he had never been in the East; he attributed them to his constant thinking of his brother,



missing in Mesopotamia these six months. Photographs in magazines and newspapers explained the rest. Yet the persistence of the pictures puzzled him: tents beneath hot cloudless skies, palms, a stretch of desert, dry water-courses, camels, a mosque, a minaret—typical snatches of this kind flashed into his mind with a sense of faint familiarity often. He knew, again, the return of a fugitive memory he could not seize. . . . He kept a note of the dates, all of them subsequent to the day he read his brother's fate in the official Roll of Honour: "Believed missing; now killed." Only when the original phenomenon returned, but in its altered form, did he stop the practice. The change then affected his life too fundamentally to trouble about mere dates and pictures.

For the phenomenon, shifting its field of action, now abruptly became mental, and the singular change of focus took place now in his mind. Events magnified or contracted themselves out of all relation with their intrinsic values, sense of proportion went hopelessly astray. Love, hate and fear experienced sudden intensification, or abrupt dwindling into nothing; the familiar everyday emotions, commonplace daily acts, suffered exaggerated enlargement, or reduction into insignificance, that threatened the stability of his personality. Fortunately, as stated, they were of brief duration; to examine them in detail were to touch the painful absurdities of incipient mania almost; that a lost collar stud could block his exasperated mind for hours, filling an entire day with emotion, while a deep affection of long standing could ebb towards complete collapse suddenly without apparent cause . . . !

It was the unexpected suddenness of Turkey's spectacular defeat that closed the painful symptoms.

The Armistice saw them go. He knew a quick relief he was unable to explain. The telegram that his brother was alive and safe came *after* his recovery of mental balance. It was a shock. But the phenomena had ceased before the shock.

It was in the light of his brother's story that he reviewed the puzzling phenomena described. The story was not more curious than many another, perhaps, yet the details were queer enough. That a wounded Turk to whom he gave water should have remembered gratitude was likely enough, for all travellers know that these men are kindly gentlemen at times; but that this Mohammedan peasant should have been later a member of a prisoners' escort and have provided the means of escape and concealment—weeks in a dry watercourse and months in a hut outside the town—seemed an incredible stroke of good fortune. "He brought me food and water three times a week. I had no money to give him, so I gave him my Zeiss glasses. I taught him a bit of English too. But he liked the glasses best. He was never tired of playing with 'em—making big and little, as he called it. He learned precious little English. . . ."

"My old pair, weren't they?" interrupted his brother. "My old climbing glasses."

"Your present to me when I went out, yes. So really you helped to save my life. I told the old Turk that. I was always thinking about you."

"And the Turk?"

"No doubt. . . . Through *my* mind, that is. At any rate he asked a lot of questions about you. I showed him your photo. He died poor chap—at least they told me so. Probably they shot him."

ALGERNON BLACKWOOD.



## LAZARUS.

THOU wakest, Mary?—Martha sleepeth sound,  
Weary with grief and labour of her love  
For me who die—who die a second time.  
Let us have speech, then, with the moon for lamp;  
This roof is cool, and I have no more pain.  
Nay, hope not! for I think my body lieth  
Already dead—but all the life it held  
Quickeneth now, for this one hour, my mind.  
Raise me yet higher, Mary. . . .

It is well.

*O town—O little town of Bethany,  
He walked thy streets, and thou art very fair!  
Was this the thought thou hadst, then, even as I  
Who bid it now farewell?—Thou seest I know.  
Thou—thou and I—were ever very kin,  
As He knew well that was our Friend.*

And now

On this last night it is as though the moon  
Shone through thee, so well do I read thy soul.  
Thou thinkest, “Night—and death—and Lazarus;  
All, all as thrice ten years ago; and yet  
How other, save in outward circumstance?  
Then we were young, and youth had still its wings;  
Then hope died not till death, for Jesus lived;  
And then we saw the day of miracle.  
Now we grow old, and Lazarus’ time is come—  
Not out of season but with weight of years—  
And now no voice of Him we loved shall raise  
A second time my brother from the grave.”

Is it not thus thou communest ?—I know !  
 And, Mary, there is more. Within thy heart  
 Through all these years thou hast kept hid a doubt :  
 “ Doth Lazarus, then, in truth remember nought  
 Concerning those four days when he lay dead ?  
 Or doth he but walk circumspectly, lest  
 The anger of the priests break forth anew,  
 As when he testified in days long past  
 That Jesus verily raised him from the dead ? ”  
 (Nay, Mary, have no shame ; I know full well  
 Thou dost impute to me no cowardice,  
 But only care for Martha and for thee,  
 Who, loving me, if I had come to hurt,  
 Must most have suffered in my suffering.)  
 And even now thou prayest : “ Let him speak,  
 Before it be too late, of that which he  
 Alone among the sons of men hath known  
 For any length of days—*the life beyond !*  
 Then could I bear the silence of the tomb,  
 Then could I wait to see my Lord and him,  
 Having the comfort of that testimony ! ”

Hearken, then, Mary, seeing I know thy thought  
 That peradventure through the years I guard  
 Some secret of the grave.

It is not so.

Many have thought as thou—neighbours and friends,  
 Questioning me in secret ; elders, scribes  
 Who, at the High Priest's bidding, sought to catch  
 Me in some blasphemy, that I might die ;  
 Wise men who came from far to learn of me  
 In matters much beyond their wisdom's reach—  
 All thought I lied because I answered : “ Sirs,  
 I have forgotten ; not a memory



Remaineth to me of those days and nights  
When I lay dead."

I spake the truth : and yet—  
How could I speak it? Mary, thou art right ;  
And there is somewhat . . . .

Yea, I tell it thee !

Words, empty words . . . .

Mary, hast thou not known  
A dream at times, clear as the noonday sun  
To thee who dreamt it, yet, when thou hast sought  
To give it utterance, a very babble  
And blur of nothingness to them that heard ?—  
So, ever so, when I have thought to speak,  
Even to thee, of that which was—no dream,  
But truth too bare for any words to clothe,  
I could not ; I was fain to hold my peace,  
Fearing that shameful beggary of speech.  
I who returned from death to life . . . .

Death ?—see,

Already in that word all words have failed !  
For that which thou accountest death, to me  
Was health and joy—abundant, uttermost life !  
So much I know : and know nought else beside.  
I cannot tell thee, " Thus and thus was heaven ;  
This thing I saw, and that I understood ; "  
For all is left from me.

I know but this :  
That death is life—is life. . . .

Words—words to thee !

Mary, dost thou remember how I reeled  
In that first instant when He cried " Come forth ! "  
And would have spoken, but the napkin bound  
My face and held me dumb ?

Thou didst suppose

I wept and staggered like a palsied man  
For joy. . . .

I tell thee, woman, I returned

To darkness and an agony of loss !  
My body's life was blackest death to me,  
The sun put out and earth a wilderness :  
Therefore I shook—sick unto death with living !  
And for that moment, too, I knew in full  
The thing that I had lost in losing death.  
My eyes saw only Jesus, and I strove  
To tell Him of my anguish ; I perceived  
That He had knowledge of the things I knew.  
Yea, had He suffered it, I then had told  
That which had rent the Veil for thee—for all. . . .  
But as I struggled with the grave-clothes, and  
Ye stood in awe, the eyes of Jesus laid  
A spell upon me—deep, still, very strong ;  
And, as the sun draws sweetness from the flower,  
So He withdrew that knowledge from my mind,  
And emptied all my soul of ecstasy.  
From spacelessness He drew me down to space,  
From freedom into thrall ; mortality  
Like to a curtain blotted out my sight. . . .  
He gave command ; one standing near me loosed  
Death from my grasp in loosing of my bonds. . . .  
I heard thy voice. . . . Martha gave me to drink. . . .

Later I questioned Him.

With eyes that smiled

And understood and pitied and were lone  
(Mary, how lone !—thou dost remember ?).

“ Wouldst

Thou blind a child with looking on the sun,”



He said, "because the sun is beautiful?"  
 No more: but therein I was made aware  
 That what I once (and no man else so long  
 As I) had known, were best unknown again.  
 No more . . . no more.

Mary, I tell thee truth;  
 Lo, I have spoken empty words and vain.  
 I know—and need no word to lighten me;  
 Thou hast not known—and art in darkness still.  
 I would thou knewest, Mary!—Martha's grief  
 Shall be assuaged in her much doing; but thou  
 And I had ever need of quietness—  
 Yea, and together: thou wilt not forget. . . .

Mary, I can no more.

The years roll back,  
 And I stand, young as Jesus, at the grave.  
 Martha is there, a comely woman—then  
 As now half mother to us both; and thou—  
 O thou, the youngest, flower of the flock,  
 Slim as a palm-tree, graceful as a hart—  
 Mary, my soul, my sister, fare thee well!  
 It may be it shall comfort thee to think  
 That once I spake of what transcendeth speech.  
 I pass. . . .

With joy and utmost certainty  
 I pass to that which I remember not,  
 Yet know, remembering a memory!  
 O town . . . O little town . . . thy streets . . .  
 fair—fair . . .  
 Mary, *remember!*—death is life—*is life*.

V. H. FRIEDLAENDER.

## INVOLUTION.

### A PARABLE OF LIFE.

AND I watched as the tide of light went flowing around  
the world,  
And I watched till above my head Night's starry  
pavilion unfurled  
Seemed as a grateful shade, and again the morning  
rose,  
And his kiss was a kiss of peace that a guardian angel  
blows.  
And before me sparkled the sea, as it were a jewelled  
mine  
Of mirth and joy, and the sun, as it bent o'er the  
glittering brine,  
Patted the head of each laughing wave as it passed  
and said,  
"Innocence, go thy way, though it be but the road to  
the dead!"

But dark clouds rose in the West—with their sinister  
bars of rain,  
And a trembling seemed to strike the heart of the  
quivering main,  
And the sunlight fled o'er the verge and there came a  
colder mood,  
And the face of the deep grew dark as the face of a  
man that doth brood  
O'er a deed already done in his heart. And the North  
wind came,



And sudden the waves leapt up, as sudden as leaps  
the flame  
Of a fire long hid, and they tossed their manes like a  
field of grain  
That hisses and bites at the wind as it passes. But  
all in vain  
Their fear and their fury! They never could shatter  
the iron yoke  
Of the storm, whose chariot wheels the livid lightnings  
spoke  
And the thunders rim. So on they drave to the rock-  
bound coast,  
Lashed by the wind and scourged by the rain, host  
after host!

And I heard the voice of the Wind cry unto the voice  
of the Rain,  
As they gazed their fill on the toil of the sorely  
troubled main,  
As gods that a nation vex for their pleasure. "Behold,"  
he saith,  
"The waves of Life beating helpless upon the reefs of  
Death!"

And then stole out the Moon, as a sorceress comes to  
gloat  
O'er the ruins her charms have raised, and her sallow  
smile did dote  
O'er the upturned faces of billows, bloodlessly pale,  
that rolled  
Line after line to the pitiless reef where their death  
cry tolled.

But the Moon went under at last, though on went the  
murderous war,

Till the very winds grew weary and through the cloud's  
    rent broke a Star,  
Whose light like a flower fell on the breast of the  
    quivering deep,  
Soft as the hand of an infant that stroketh a tiger  
    asleep;  
And wave after wave sank lower, as coming he bowed  
    his head,  
And fell back into the arms of his dying brethren dead.  
Ever lower they sank, till they seemed to possess no  
    existence apart,  
But gathered like tired babes to their Mother Ocean's  
    heart,  
Becoming once more at one with the Power that gave  
    them birth,  
While through the hushed silence, the Star spake thus  
    to the listening Earth :  
" Courage, ye sons of Ocean, form is but a phase to try  
That which in the form indwelleth. Ye change but ye  
    cannot die."

CLOUDESLEY BRERETON.



## THE WONDERFUL SONG.

[After I had studied under my master, the Abbot of the Temple of the Transcending Mind, near Kyoto, Japan, he gave me some notebooks of an old Buddhist mystic. I have paraphrased some of their contents in *vers libres*. The following is one of the pieces.<sup>1</sup>]

THE world is a dusty road ; the sunbeams so hot beat  
upon it,  
Raising the dust of confusion, making it sordid and  
dull ;  
The people are querulous children, who live by the  
side of the road,  
Babbling and playing at games with glittering pieces  
of metal.  
How they hate, how they love, despise, and envy each  
other !  
. . . But the song that I sing . . . ah the  
wonderful song that I sing !

A vagabond pilgrim am I, tired and dusty withal,  
Walking along this road, arrayed in the ruest of  
robes,  
. . . Thrilled by the song that I sing.  
Observing the sordid sights, ever on, ever on do I  
wander,  
Failing to note their very sordidness,  
. . . Rapt with the song that I sing.  
Day after day I make a little progress.

<sup>1</sup> For another, entitled 'Immortality,' see the July number.—ED.

Some pilgrims make more, and some like the  
idling children

Prefer to abide by the roadside, whiling the time  
with their games.

Sometimes I too want to stay and to chatter.

. . . But my song leads me on . . . the  
wonderful song that I sing.

I come I know not whence, and I go I know not whither;

But, though in my pilgrimage to the unknown goal

This body of mine is often so pained and fatigued,

My spirit is ever refreshed and bubbles with pleasure

. . . Drunk with the song that I sing . . . ah  
the song that I sing!

The children often wonder at this song of mine.

A few like it, by many it is not even heard.

Many pity my song as my madness . . . as I  
pity them.

Some ask what it means; they say that they can't  
understand it.

But neither do I . . . Perhaps they know better  
than I.

But I am intoxicated with the very unknowableness  
of this wonderful song of mine.

I learned this, my song, from a minstrel I found in the  
gutter

Sodden with drink . . . unable to follow the song.

Then he died as he lived, leaving his song as a gift.

A birth, tumultuous years of conflict . . . then death,

And now a few bones . . . and a song, a wonderful  
song.

I treasure the song as a jewel too dear to be bought



. . . The undying part of a man, his essence,  
his soul.

A wonderful song it is, for it has no words.

It cannot be bound in little letters or phrases ;  
Its melody cannot be penned with technical dots  
or dashes.

This wonderful song that I sing is the song of the  
heart.

WILLIAM MONTGOMERY MCGOVERN, Ph.D.

## 'TWIXT EGYPT AND SINAI.

MOONLESS the night, and vague with white mist :  
Nought but the dimmed stars' light  
And the pale halo from a search-light far off  
Revealing Earth's identity.  
The Canal, indistinguishable from its grey banks,  
Breaks on them into the low sound of ripples.  
In the grey darkness yonder lies Sinai, silent . . .  
Ancient witness of History.

Sudden there comes a song, softened over the water,  
With full, swinging rhythm from young men's throats,  
But burdened with longings unappeased, hopes  
    unspoken :  
'Old Killarney's Lakes and Fells.'  
The song subsides into the heavy stillness ;  
Yet trembling echoes thrill my soul.

Australians—men from the aegis of the Southern  
    Cross—  
On reverend Sinai,  
Singing of Ireland's beauty,  
Hinting Australia's !

What is the heart of this mystery  
Evanescent, imminent, haunting the atmosphere—  
Troubling the shadowy pool of Memory,  
Conjuring the ghosts of old desires, of still-born  
    thought ?

R. L. MÉGROZ.



## REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

### PROBLEMS OF THE SELF.

By John Laird, M.A. London (Macmillan); pp. 370; 12s. net.

THE main thread of Prof. Laird's argument, throughout his scholarly work, is concerned with the unity and continuity of experiences in the self. In considering, in the first place (chap. ii.), "what experiences are, and their relation to, or union in, the self," he adopts Kant's tripartite division into cognition, feeling and endeavour in their reference to objects. Then follows an interesting chapter on the relation of the soul to the body, concluding against Professor James that the body is not part of the self; thereafter he resumes the thread of his argument in a discussion of the question as to the primacy of will, feeling or intellect, which occupies the next five chapters. On the whole, he must be allowed to have proved his point that no such primacy exists, but all three are interdependent.

But though there is no primacy in this sense, there are degrees of antecedence, or rather of intimacy, and his failure to give due prominence to this question or to distinguish it from the other is a serious defect in his analysis. There is a procession or scale of intimacy in feelings and sentiments; and, similarly, will has its roots in the feeling of desire and becomes universalised through the stages of choice, purpose and action. Cognition likewise passes from the implicit to the explicit, till, in its developed form, it becomes the interpreter of will and feeling to its own and other minds. In the primary stages of the process, in animals and young children, feeling is not self-conscious, and the final stage itself passes through degrees of development till it reaches its culminating point in the psychologist and metaphysician. Again, feeling is the necessary antecedent of will or cognition in that it supplies the material on which these work and is objectified by them in action and speech. Even so, the interpretation of one mind by another is necessarily very imperfect, because it so largely depends on inference, though it is possible, and even probable, that

certain minds, attuned together, can communicate more directly (pp. 24ff.). Yet, for ordinary dealings, for the whole range of common life, of philosophy and of science, the *lingua franca* of the intellect is the only one that can be trusted, however imperfect the instrument, because it is the only one subject to the objective check of the phenomenal world and of many minds. It is in space that spirits meet and seek a common understanding, and, so far as science is concerned, the greater the abstraction from sentiment and personal feeling, the closer the approximation to objectivity. Hence mathematics represents the scientific ideal.

This serves to emphasise the corresponding truth that individuality, personality, selfhood, are at the very opposite pole, that these projections of reality are not reality itself, which is something deeper and more spiritual. It shows that intellect is impersonal and subordinate to the reality of the self. Likewise the experiences which come under the head of feeling and endeavour, though closer to the life of the soul, are not the soul itself. The author is careful to distinguish between the subjective and objective sides of experiences, and even goes too far in limiting the psychical to purely mental acts. The true relation between subject and object is still one of the unsolved puzzles of philosophy, in spite of all the good work that has been done on those lines and the brilliant suggestions which have been made; but the author's theory, far from solving the dualism, introduces a third element which is neither mind, nor matter. Allowance must of course be made for the difficulties involved in isolating a single philosophical problem, especially this central problem of the self. Prof. Laird appears to have an inkling of these difficulties (p. 14), but he hardly seems to have grasped them sufficiently, if one may judge by his remarks (pp. 223-228) on the relativity of knowledge.

His main argument, however, insists on the inseparability of the mind from its experiences, and rejects the opposite abstractions of the pure and empirical ego. So carefully indeed does he weigh the balance that he fails to give its immense and preponderating value to the subjective side of experience. Owing to this, together with his neglect to take into account the graduated intimacy of the mental powers, he has missed the very kernel of his subject, which consists in the uniqueness of the individual self, and the incommunicable nature of its experiences, and, more especially, of that central and principal experience, whereby the self is conscious, not only of its identity through all change, but of its eternal and unalterable distinction from every other self.



This defect in Prof. Laird's painstaking and lucid exposition comes out very strongly in the chapter on 'Multiple Personality.' He is indeed well aware that the exceptional facts which fall under this head, cannot alter the conclusions derivable from normal introspection. But he gives them undue weight and fails to place them in their proper perspective. He argues throughout as if the closer the union of continuous experiences, the higher the proof of the independence of the self. Thus on p. 361 he writes: "The unity of the self from the cradle to the tomb is less than the unity of many particular strands of its experiences. One of the classical objections to the doctrine of immortality is the simple question: 'What self is to be immortal?' Is it the self of old age, dotting perhaps and trembling with decay, or the mature self of middle age, or the hopeful self of youth? But the difficulties are not insoluble."

He then proceeds to answer these 'difficulties.' But they are really non-existent. The whole matter depends upon the relative value and importance of the different experiences, between which he fails to distinguish.

The central experience, which links together all periods from childhood to age, is but thrown into greater prominence by contrast with the disunities which it connects. The greater their variety and heterogeneity, the more remarkable the unvarying nature of that experience, partly feeling, partly self-cognition, of personal identity which runs through all, and from which the mind derives and supports that category of permanence, which is the correlate to the varying flux of all other experiences. On the other hand, breaches in the self-conscious continuity of personal identity, with their different and appropriate strands of consciousness, which constitute multiple personality, have nothing in common with those changes, even the most radical, in which the sense of personal identity remains constant. They are certainly puzzling and interesting phenomena, but whatever explanation is offered, no hypothesis can be admissible that renders nugatory those normal facts of introspection which are the foundations of all our knowledge and assurance of reality.

Doubtless this central experience must rest upon other lesser continuities, from which, however, it distinguishes itself. There must, as the author maintains, be a minimum of memory or, as he prefers to call it, 'retentiveness,' by which events of the past come back to the mind after they have apparently been sunk in oblivion. But the important point is not whether a man's



memory of his past is detailed or blurred, but that what he does remember of his thoughts, words and actions should have that indescribable and incommunicable 'home' feeling, which absolutely precludes the doubt that those thoughts, words and deeds were his own.

On page 94 Prof. Laird asks the question: "Are the men whose lives radiate out towards other things and other persons less really selves than those who try to shrink into some unapproachable crevice of private being?" To which, of course, the answer must be: "No." But it is equally true that the stunted and atrophied self is not less real than the other. And the misleading implication, contained in the question, is made evident, not only by the general tenor of the book, but by the words immediately succeeding the above-quoted sentence: "Surely the facts are otherwise. To understand the self it is best to go outside it, and consider its influence and the range of things which it contemplates." This external test is inevitable in judging of the selves of others, and, as already indicated, it often fails. But self-knowledge is very different from external cognition or inference. No man can know another's soul so well as his own, and the deeper he can descend beneath the outward manifestations of his own being, the more central his standpoint and the more complete his self-knowledge. This is not to deny that the ordinary man's self-knowledge is superficial, so that an outsider can often know him in some respects better than he knows himself. It may be only the philosopher who approximates to the ideal of self-knowledge. All that is maintained is that each self has opportunities, if he can learn to use them, which are available to no other being. Nor is it to deny that the self can be enriched by experience and more especially by intercourse with other minds. It is possible to imagine a self with all its mental powers indefinitely increased, through a long course of post-mortem development or a succession of 're-incarnations,' and yet retaining, in a measure, its sense of personal identity from the lower to the higher stages. And it is equally possible, on the other hand, to imagine the same self, through degradation instead of progress, having reached a state in which those powers have sunk to the veriest minimum, with sufficient consciousness left to compare certain features of its past with its present. In either case the sense of personal identity would be the same, the remainder of the experience quite different.

In the concluding chapter the same lack of the central stand-



point is even more evident than in the rest of the work, though it takes a different form. The thesis which the author maintains throughout the volume is generally true, subject to the criticisms which have already been passed upon his method, that is to say, the unity and continuity of self-consciousness, together with the sense of freedom, form the basis of the belief in the independent existence of the soul. Nothing, however, is added to this argument by considering the self under the category of 'substance.' Prof. Laird is evidently conscious that his premisses require strengthening in order to reach the conclusion towards which they point. And the reason for this is, as already intimated, that he has not made the most of them, but has approached the subject too much from the outside. It has been noted, for instance, how he attached too much weight to the 'difficulties' of multiple personality, and though he states Hume's sophistries on p. 329 only to expose them, he is evidently affected by them, for he forthwith comes to the halting conclusion on the next page: "I do not think it possible to deny, though it is equally impossible to prove, that there is a thread of permanent experience in the self." That depends upon what is meant by proof; but, if that 'thread' has no existence, it is certainly useless to discuss this question or any other, since no permanent foundation for argument will remain.

But the certainty which he thinks it impossible to reach through introspection, he seeks to attain through the category of 'substance.' He rejects the old scholastic idea of substance and the arguments founded upon it. But his re-dressing of it in a new guise does nothing to alter its empty and formal character or free it from the outworn associations and implications in which it is involved. In fact, the course of his argument tends only to show these implications to be unavoidable. For he takes it as a category common to the inorganic, the organic and the psychical, educing its meaning from the former and applying it to the latter. But self-consciousness is something *sui generis*, as he himself acknowledges (p. 212). It is that upon which all phenomena depend, and which imposes its own categories upon them. Granted that certain of these categories have an objectivity which seems to impose itself on the mind from without, thus arguing their independence of it, yet the ground of objectivity thus implied is interpreted solely by the mind, and any conjectures as to its ultimate nature can emanate only from the same source. Therefore the method of Prof. Laird is wrong; we must begin from the

other end, from the central standpoint. The summary of Fichte's cardinal principle, given on p. 166, expresses a general truth, apart from any particular conclusions which may be drawn from it: "A philosophy which does not begin with the self can never reach it. A philosophy which begins with it can reach everything else."

On the whole then the author's argument cannot bear the weight of the general conclusions contained in the latter part of this last chapter. But those conclusions themselves are moderate and reasonable enough when the subjective element in experience is taken at its true value. His remarks in reference to the relations of Personal Identity with Idealistic Monism, where he is careful to point out that the two are not inconsistent except in certain systems (such as that of Mr. Bradley), together with his observations on the importance of Personal Identity in philosophy and on the truth that no future life can be anything for us without the persistence of personality, are excellent and very timely.

H. C. C.

#### PLOTINUS: COMPLETE WORKS.

In Chronological Order, Grouped in Four Periods. With Biography by Porphyry, Eunapius and Suidas, Commentary by Porphyry, Illustrations by Iamblichus and Ammonius; Studies in Sources, Development, Influence; Index of Subjects, Thoughts and Words. By Kenneth Sylvan Guthrie, A.M., Ph.D., M.D. New York City, U.S.A. (Platonist Press, 292, Henry Street); 4 vols., pp. 1838+lxxiv; £2 8s.

BUT a short time ago we were congratulating ourselves on possessing the first of the four projected volumes of Mr. Stephen Mackenna's translation of the *Enneads* of Plotinus; it was a good beginning and we looked forward to the speedy completion of what promised to be the first published complete English translation of the works of one of the greatest master-minds of classical antiquity. We say the 'first published'; for we knew that Dr. Guthrie's translation had existed already for years in MS., but were unaware that our friend had at last succeeded in overcoming the very great difficulties which stood in the way of his making his devoted labours known to the public. It is therefore not inappropriate that, after all, his prior translation should appear first in the field in its complete form. The version is doubtless the main thing, and on that we shall have a word to



say later ; but it is by no means all that Dr. Guthrie gives us in these four volumes. It is not even the elaborate Concordance of seventy-four pages which he appends to vol. iv., though this alone is an instrument of the greatest utility for which all students will owe him a deep debt of gratitude. The most striking feature is the arrangement of the material which constitutes a new departure in make-up. Every student of Plotinus knows that it was Porphyry who edited the imperfectly written MSS. that came from the stylus of the philosopher ; not only so but he broke up the material and classified it in a somewhat arbitrary fashion under headings and groups, squeezing it into the frame-work of six sets of nines (the for ever famous *Enneads*). Fortunately Porphyry himself, in the *Life* of his master, has preserved a more or less chronological list of the documents. Dr. Guthrie contends, and makes out a very good case for his contention, that Porphyry has by his arbitrary classification brought much unnecessary confusion into all subsequent studies of Plotinus. Plotinus, like every other philosopher, including Plato himself, was not a mechanically consistent thinker ; he naturally changed as he grew. The only way to relieve ourselves from what appear to be inexplicable contradictions in the *Enneads* is to revert to the chronological order and follow the thought of Plotinus in its natural development. In this development there are three main periods. The first covers the years when Amelius was most closely connected with Plotinus and was his chief questioner and secretary. This was before Porphyry appeared on the scene ; and here it must be remembered that Amelius was a devoted admirer of Numenius of Apamea and knew all his works by heart. Incidentally, Dr. Guthrie, who has collected and edited all the fragments and written a monograph on this distinguished philosopher, who may be said to have been also the first student of comparative religion in antiquity, is persuaded that through Amelius Plotinus was influenced somewhat by the thought of Numenius in the twenty-one treatises he wrote during the Amelian period, and that this is the excuse underlying an accusation of the time that Plotinus was a plagiarist of Numenius. The second period (which Dr. Guthrie sub-divides but on no very clear grounds) is the six years when Porphyry was the chief pupil of Plotinus and brought out many points by his eager and pertinent questions. This Porphyrian period produced twenty-four treatises. Subsequently when Porphyry was absent in Sicily and the physician Eustochius was attending the aged and dying Plotinus nine more documents



were sent him. Porphyry considered that the thought of the Amelian books is somewhat immature and that the Eustochian were written by an ailing man; it is the twenty-four written when he was himself with Plotinus that represent the mind of the philosopher in its full vigour. Dr. Inge considers this a somewhat self-conceited estimate of Porphyry's and says he cannot agree with his judgment. Dr. Guthrie on the contrary discovers so many immaturities in the nine books of the Eustochian period that he advances the theory that they were not newly written but old MSS. that Plotinus had long put aside, but was finally persuaded to send in so that Porphyry might have the whole of his writings to select from and edit. So thoroughly is Dr. Guthrie persuaded of the importance of distinguishing the Amelian and Porphyrian periods that he has abandoned the traditional re-arrangement of the treatises by Porphyry according to subjects, and reverted to the chronological order which Porphyry himself fortunately recorded in full in the *Life*. Dr. Guthrie's only inconsistency is that he prints the Eustochian books last, whereas they should come first according to his estimate of their contents. In any case we have now got the three periods brought prominently before us and can test the arrangement at leisure. If all works out as satisfactorily as Dr. Guthrie shows in straightening out by the development theory the confusing subject of 'Matter' as it is presented to us in Porphyry's *Enneads*, then we shall have much to be thankful for in the return to the natural order of development of thought in Plotinus. It should however be remembered that Mr. Whittaker also followed this order of reading in his excellent survey of the philosopher.

Plotinus is often a difficult author to translate; even his contemporaries found his style difficult and doubted whether the copies of his writings were correct. Thought and expression are frequently highly condensed. It will therefore always be possible to disagree with the rendering of a number of difficult passages owing to the obscurity of the text. In general, it may be said that Dr. Guthrie has given us a freely rendered version economic of periphrasis. His effort throughout has been to bring out clearly the gist of the thought and points of the argument rather than to provide a literal rendering of words and phrases. We could, however, have forgiven him if he had let himself go a little more in some of the famous grand passages where Plotinus becomes impassioned of the greatness of his theme. One of the greatest difficulties is the translation of the frequently recurring technical



terms. Dr. Guthrie, like Mr. Mackenna, keeps to the more intellectual forms of expression; and accordingly there is much, for instance, about the intelligible world. For ourselves we prefer the terms used by Dr. Inge, who speaks of spirit, the spiritual world, and so forth. It helps to make the thought of Plotinus frequently more vivid and vital and always less abstract. Others will doubtless disagree on this point; but in any case Dr. Guthrie has performed a very difficult task with courage and insight.

#### SHAKTI AND SHAKTA.

Essays and Addresses on the Shākta Tantra-shāstra. By Sir John Woodroffe. London (Luzac); pp. 191; 4d. 6d. net.

FOR the sake of those who are unknowing in the matter it may be stated that *shakti* means 'power,' and in particular the Great Power, or Creative Reality, conceived of as the Divine Source of the universe, the Goddess *par excellence*, Mother of the gods. *Shākta* is the adjective relating to this form of Hindu religion, and *Tantra-shāstra* is the body of scriptures setting forth the doctrines, rites, ceremonies and practices of the cult. We have already from time to time reviewed the most important works on the subject by 'Arthur Avalon,' who has devoted many years of patient study, in collaboration with Indian pandits, to this extensive but hitherto almost entirely neglected mine of information, the systematic exploitation of which should yield results of great interest to the history and comparative study of religion and its psychology. Those who were not previously in the secret will be glad to know that this courageous pioneer in the exploration of what has been an entirely unmapped region of research, even for the vast majority of native scholars, is Sir John Woodroffe, Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court. It is well known that the whole body of Tantra-literature has so far been indiscriminately condemned and treated as an object of scorn and derision by all Western Orientalists; and indeed in general in India itself among the learned the whole subject has a very unsavoury reputation. Sir John argues that this indiscriminate judgment is largely based on ignorance of the literature; it is founded directly on certain reprehensible practices of ignorant and vicious fanatics and indirectly on the aversion of the modern mind from what it regards as sheer superstition, especially if it be intermingled with psychical or mystical elements. Only the most disreputable and



degraded witnesses, he contends, have been called into court,—evil-minded perverters of the doctrine who, as a matter of fact, are more severely and understandingly condemned by the high teaching of the most approved Tantra-scriptures than by any outsider. Without unduly stressing the parallel, for history never repeats itself except for superficial observers, we cannot fail to recall a similar phenomenon in the manner of treatment of the Gnosis by its opponents in the early centuries of Christianity. The Gnostics were indiscriminately accused by the Church Fathers of the foulest practices. If we had nothing but the accusations of their theological opponents to go upon, we should have no means of escape from the overpoweringly suggestive influence of such confident assertions. Fortunately some of these Gnostic writings have survived, and we learn from them that the very horrors of which the Gnostics as a body were indiscriminately accused, are categorically condemned with a vigour, intensity and solemnity that make the denunciations of their antagonists appear quite anæmic in comparison. The apologist of the necessity of drawing a veil of secrecy over the inner rites and practices of religion and the mysteries of the soul will here contend that the corruption of the best is naturally the worst, that in proportion as man strives to attain to what is beyond his normal powers of achievement, he can fall to an abnormal level of degradation. Sir John Woodroffe admits that some of the forms of Shāktism are prone to corruption and have as a matter of fact frequently fallen into corruption. But proper use should not be confounded with the abuse of the doctrines, methods and practices. It must be confessed that the student of comparative religion, of the psychology of religious experience and of psychical phenomena in general is overwhelmed by the flood of problems the Tantra-literature unlooses upon him. The contention of the faithful is that the Shakti-religion is not simply belief in a creed or in the dogmas of a philosophy, but an experience of fact. Religion is immediate knowledge of life, of the life of the Great Mother, and every form of existence is a form of that life, nay of the Mother herself. Whatever be her many names, she is the one reality. If she be called Mahā-māyā, Supreme Māyā, she is not to be considered as the Great Illusion, as the abstract mentalism of schoolmen would assert. Mahā-māyā is no illusion, but the very ground of reality, and all her forms, even the most insignificant, are real. The Shāktas are thus radical realists of the most pronounced type; the material sensible world is the very stuff of reality, the whole of it in all its parts may actually



here and now be known as the immediate reality of the Mother. Thus with regard to the use of meats and drinks and other objects of pleasure which would not be permissible according to Vedic rules,—ceremonies and rites of purification are held to consecrate them and render them not only innocuous but immediate means of communion with the Mother. They are believed to be thus transubstantiated, and that too in the sense not of the declaration 'this is my body,' but of the still more absolute assertion 'this is myself.' It goes without saying that such an extreme pantheistic view lends itself most readily to antinomianism and all its abuses. Nevertheless in some of the books we find a profound philosophical theory set forth in its defence. Intermingled with this is a perplexing tangle of theurgic, magical or occult rites and practices, an elaborate use of chanting and incantation and mysterious diagrams and symbolic images, and forms of bodily and mental discipline and yoga. With regard to the last it is asserted that the greatest of all mysteries is hidden in the physical body. It is no less than the divine power of the Mother herself, asleep or potential in all men, but capable of being roused into activity by the competent, and made the means of actual self-divinising here and now. This is the source of all bliss and knowledge. Such are some of the main characteristics of Tāntric subject-matter. If a study of classical references in the West to the cult of the Magna Mater and of the chaos of the Greek magical papyri, for instance, in spite of its enormous difficulties, is not thought to be a waste of time by the few patient scholars who have the equipment and courage to tackle it, then the allied study of Shāktism should be worth the while of some of our Orientalists. Indeed it is far more worth while, for in India and also in Northern Buddhist lands Tantra has an unbroken tradition of centuries behind it and most important of all is still a living thing. Its patient study therefore should be able to throw light on much which our fragmentary data from the imperfect records of the past in the West must necessarily leave in obscurity, no matter how carefully they are analysed and scrutinized. Sir John Woodroffe therefore deserves the thanks of all students of comparative religion for opening up so rich a field of research and insisting on its importance.

If psychoanalysis will bestow infinite pains on the most insignificant dreams, here is something worthy of its mettle; if anthropologists fill page after page with discussing the beliefs, customs and rites of the black men of Australia, so that one is

fairly sick of hearing of the Arunta and all their doings, they might give the Tantra-folk a turn; whatever they made of them they would at any rate have an immensely more interesting state of affairs to discuss.

#### THE WORKS OF THOMAS VAUGHAN.

Eugenius Philalethes. Edited, Annotated and Introduced by Arthur Edward Waite. London (The Theosophical Publishing House); pp. 498; 21s. net.

No one in this country is more competent than our colleague Arthur Edward Waite to edit and appraise the works of an 'alchemical philosopher.' In this stout volume, which contains for the first time the collected works of Thomas Vaughan, Mr. Waite has dealt fairly and faithfully with his subject. His judgment on alchemical literature, even the best of it, is the same as our own. No writer with the 'philosopher's stone' hung round his neck has ever succeeded in keeping his head above the waters of the psychical flood in the free air of the genuinely mystical and spiritual life, and most have sunk to the bottom and buried themselves in the mud and murk of the gold-making madness. Thomas Vaughan is one of the best of the lot and, if he had not tangled himself up in the alchemical labyrinth, would probably have become a sincere mystic. As Mr. Waite says, he caught sight of the goal, but never reached it. He professes to correct the manifold gross errors of his predecessors; he rails against their artificial secrecy and their ineradicable passion for 'camouflage.' He would make all clear. Yet when he comes to the point, he invariably slips back into the old bad way of enigma, and declares that he has said more than he ought to say. It is not thus that truth is pursued or found; the habit of mind that rejoices in concealment, unfits the seeker for success in the genuinely spiritual quest. Vaughan, it is true, is sincerely religious; he also would seem often to know that the true art is not accomplished in the domain of physical research, but is an inner psychical matter. Yet more frequently he compels us to think that after all he was persuaded that the mysterious 'prime matter' is a material entity. He avers he has touched it and handled it a thousand times. Now as long ago as 1888 Mr. Waite had the good fortune to discover a precious private note-book of Vaughan's. It is this which gives us the deepest insight into his mind. It is filled with recipes of physical experiments, and there is no doubt



that to the last Vaughan was experimenting physically and in a very *amateur* and unmethodical fashion. But this is not all. The book contains also a number of dreams or visions. Vaughan was very happily married in later life; his wife helped him greatly, indeed seems to have revived his at one time lagging interest, especially in the way of allegorical interpretation of scripture, which he held to be verbally inspired in plenary fashion. His wife's death was a great blow to him, and his one prayer was to meet her again in heaven. In dreams he has comforting visions of her. This seems to have been almost the highest satisfaction of his life. Doubtless he had also had at times some psychical experiences tinged with alchemical symbolism, and this gave him a confidence in his writings that falls little short of boastfulness. But when all is said, it cannot be fairly held that he was really an illuminate in any markedly high sense. When then Mr. Waite tells us that "in theosophical circles Thomas Vaughan is now regarded as a Master," and continues "but that is a denomination which each of us must be permitted to understand after his own manner," we might add that if Eugenius Philalethes is to be so classed, we have in his works a measuring-rod for such claims, and it is of very modest dimensions. Vaughan's two earliest and most pretentious anonymous works were bitterly assailed by Henry More, the Cambridge Platonist. There followed an interchange of scurrilous polemics which do neither of the protagonists any credit. Vaughan comes out an easy victor in the art of gutter language, but in little else.

His ire was invariably raised in and out of season by any reference to Aristotle, of whose real works and principles he betrays great ignorance. He was right to oppose the mechanical logic of the schools and to seek to recall them to the first-hand study of nature, but his way of going about the business was the reverse of ingratiating, and his reading of nature when he comes to deal with external facts was little calculated to give confidence in his judgment. Mrs. Atwood, in her *Suggestive Inquiry*, makes great use of the works of Eugenius Philalethes, and evidently considers him one of her most important authorities. As for ourselves we are left asking: What did Thomas Vaughan really know? And the answer seems to be: He was, for the most part, content with what will in no way satisfy a serious modern student of comparative psychism and mysticism. Nevertheless he stands for a comparatively independent view at a time when most men were the slaves of tradition in well-nigh every branch of research.

## THE PROOFS OF THE TRUTHS OF SPIRITUALISM.

By the Rev. Prof. G. Henslow, M.A., F.L.S., F.G.S., F.R.H.S.,  
 Author of 'Spirit Psychometry,' etc. With Fifty-one  
 Illustrations. London (Kegan Paul, etc.); pp. 255; 7s. 6d.  
 net.

THE veteran Professor Henslow is a botanist by profession and a convinced spiritualist of upwards of a score of years first hand experience. His present volume deals mainly with the physical phenomena of mediumship and especially with 'spirit-photography,' of which many remarkable cases are recorded, mainly the work of the Crewe and Birmingham 'groups' through the mediumship respectively of Mr. W. Hope and Dr. T. d'Aute Hooper. A number of them are reproduced, most of them being taken without a camera, simply by holding the unopened parcel of plates in the hand.

There is also much of interest concerning the remarkable mediumship of the late Rev. Dr. F. D. Monck. But the main object seems to be a justification of the life-work of the late Archdeacon Colley, who strenuously championed the cause of spiritism for some forty years. Prof. Henslow may be in a sense regarded as the literary executor of the late Archdeacon, and vigorously defends his memory and that of his life-long friend Dr. Monck. No theories are advanced, save of course that the phenomena are produced by spirit-agency; the 'proofs' consist in the description of what took place and the accompanying circumstances. Both the late Archdeacon and Professor Henslow may have been at times deceived, but the mediums through whom the most striking manifestations occurred were not paid. They were personal friends in whose *bona fides* the two investigators had every confidence, and their own good faith is beyond question. Both men held positions that place them beyond the facile accusations of fraud made by vulgar prejudice. We cannot, however, but think that the abundant material might have at times been treated somewhat more critically. It is doubtless the main thing to record that under sufficiently reasonable conditions of precaution such and such phenomena occurred. But there is no little in some of the 'messages' and in the themes of some of the writers quoted that calls for a criticism which has not been accorded it in this volume. Some quite unusual phenomena even for researchers



are recorded, and perhaps the most striking of them is the 'materialisation' of a second and quite different figure from one that had already been 'materialised' from the psychoplasm of the medium (Dr. Monck) as recorded by Archdeacon Colley. It is greatly to be regretted that the marked eccentricity of Colley handicapped his presentation of the subject for sober enquirers; for he had indubitably a wide knowledge of the phenomena and the good fortune to have seen some things that are very rarely met with.

SO SAITH THE SPIRIT.

By a King's Counsel, Author of 'I Heard a Voice.' London (Kegan Paul, etc.); pp. 201; 10s. 6d. net.

IN the April number, 1918, we reviewed at some length *I Heard a Voice*. There is little in the present continuation to change our general impression of the material written automatically by K. C.'s two young daughters or of his own attitude towards it. Most of the communicators are now referred to by K. C., or refer to themselves, as 'high spirits,' and many names famous in history are introduced. It appears that the girls are specially interested in history and biography. Some explanation was felt necessary even by such 'high spirits' to account for such a plethora of distinguished visitants; and here it is as recorded on p. 161: "You have had this large number of famous personages come to you *because* you question not, but believe. It is not possible for them to thrive in an atmosphere of suspicion and materialism: it presents an iron front to all their kindly efforts. So many unwisely do this: hence a restricted number of recipients to a large—nay, enormous number of famous communicants [? communicators]." Our own experience is that after friendly relations have been established with pretentious communicators, and where there is no materialistic prejudice on the part of the investigators, but on the contrary reasonable dissatisfaction with the low grade of what is claimed to be 'spiritual,' the 'communicators' may frequently be led to tell a very different story from the confident assertions with which they started. Now in this script there are some very high claims. One of the most constant communicators, for instance, purports to be not only the president of a celestial 'peace congress' called to settle the affairs of the nations, but also no less than one of the spiritual judges who have to examine and

sentence the souls of distinguished personalities to purgatorial periods—among them so tough a case and so complex an entity as ‘le Petit Caporal.’ K. C. does not seem to be aware that Napoleon is a well-known stage-figure in French spiritistic circles and that there is a large psychical ‘complex’ known as the Napoleon group or band. If it is not possible to contact intimately the complex psychical mixtures of the hither hereafter without an open-minded sympathy, it is equally impossible to disentangle them without a penetrating discrimination clarified by a wide acquaintance with and comparative study of the literature. If it is a radical error to start by setting down all to fraud and deliberate deception, it is equally a handicap to truth to think that kindly discarnate folk are incapable of being deceived themselves and so misleading others. What the denizens in the precincts of the hither hereafter all seem to be deficient in is the healthy discipline of comparative study. But above all it is evident to one well schooled in the records of the loftier heights of spiritual religious experience, in West or East, that not only the purgatorial phases but also the lower paradisaical states with which spiritistic communications exclusively deal, are shut-off realms. The dwellers in them are still shut into the memory of earthly experiences and opinions. The communications under notice invariably depict a state of affairs that is very little to be distinguished from earthly conditions. To quote from K. C. himself, summarizing the contents of the script: “In the spirit world there are streets and roads and shops; and it is a mistake, moreover, to suppose that spirits—even those on very high planes—do not eat, drink, and sleep. Nor is the food always of the unsubstantial character (*e.g.*, milk and grapes), generally supposed to be the sole diet of the spirit-world. It is to be noticed, however, that the food although solid, and appearing to them, as say, meat, game, or fish, is obtained without any ‘killing’” (p. 12). In brief the setting of the scenes is of such a nature that we may very well apply to it the phrase with which Harnack dubbed the nature of the ‘chiliasm’ of the early Jewish Church—*viz.*, ‘a sensuous endæmonistic eschatology.’ We do not by any means disbelieve there are such states, but what we do contend is that they are not ‘high’ states in any truly spiritual scale, and therefore we are compelled to discount largely much else that is set down in these communications as out of drawing and short weighted in the balance of true values. ‘Try the spirits’ and they will almost invariably tell a different story from that with which they set out.



But it is of course necessary first of all to have some acquaintance with the deeper problems of the spiritual life as set forth in the great scriptures of the world and the works of the philosophers of religion. There are some copies of verse in the script that are quite good, whether by Byron or not, and somewhat of interest about the war. But the higher the claims the less favourable must necessarily be the estimate of the performance. We prefer, for instance, on the whole Mr. Machin's own account of the genesis of the 'Angels of Mons' legend to the highly coloured report of the rumours thereon as set forth in the script of K. C.'s automatists.

#### THE SĀṂKHYA SYSTEM.

A History of the Sāṁkhya Philosophy. By A. Berriedale Keith, Regius Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology at the University of Edinburgh. London (Oxford University Press); pp. 107; 1s. 6d. net.

THIS is one of the small volumes of the useful series, *The Heritage of India*, edited by Bishop V. S. Azariah and Dr. J. N. Farquhar. It is a remarkable example of enlightened missionary enterprise—a pleasant specimen of the new and better way of sympathetic appreciation.

The first two side branches of the ancient tree of India's religious and philosophic life—the trunk of which is the mystical speculation of the Upanishads—are on the one side the Sāṁkhya and on the other the Yoga. The former is what is called an atheistic and the latter a theistic system, while the sap of the main growth is dominantly a spiritual monism. The great problems were the nature of the self, the relation of the individual to the universal spirit and of nature to spirit. The monistic view asserted the fundamental identity of the individual spirit with the supreme spirit; the end was to remove the ignorance which prevented the realisation of the truth of their aboriginal identity. The Yoga posited the fact of union, but not of identity; while the Sāṁkhya was content with assuming a plurality of spirits, which were eternally distinct. Professor Berriedale Keith has grappled manfully with the obscurities of the origins of this earliest attempt in India of systematic exposition and with its developments, and his book will be of great service to the scholar and student. It is, however, unfortunately, too difficult for the

general reader. Without an elementary knowledge of Sanskrit some passages are impossible to follow. And this is a pity in a series intended for the lay man. The Sāṃkhya should be of interest to many, for it endeavours to arrive at its conclusions by an objective analysis of nature and to avoid all mystical speculations,—a point of view that is in keeping with the dominant attitude of thought in the modern West, where also pluralism has of late come into favour in certain quarters. We have paid especial attention to what Prof. Keith has to say on the most fertile notion of this ancient system—the doctrine of the three fundamental qualities, modes, constituents or principles of nature, in all its evolutive, evolving and evolved phases. The difficulty is to find adequate terms in Western language for these three *guṇas*, as they are called, and here our exponent does not help us any more than so many before who have made the attempt. We admit that the linguistic difficulty is very great; but until it is overcome the basic nature of the driving power of the main Sāṃkhyan conception and the details of its development will remain unclear.

In these days of inflated prices it is quite extraordinary to find a book of this class selling at 1s. 6d. The reason is that it is printed and bound in India, and the Wesleyan Mission Press, Mysore, has done its work admirably, and deserves to be congratulated.

#### THE BEGINNINGS OF BUDDHIST ART.

And Other Essays in Indian and Central Asian Archæology. By A. Foucher, of the University of Paris. Revised by the Author and Translated by L. A. Thomas and F. W. Thomas, with a Preface by the Latter. London (Humphrey Milford); pp. 316; 31s. 6d. net.

THE title-page omits the most important information, that there are fifty photographic plates, some of them the best of certain subjects which have so far been produced. M. Foucher is deservedly recognized as one of our highest authorities on the history of Indian art and as the leading specialist in Buddhist iconography. It is a great advantage to have these scattered papers revised and brought together into one volume. They reinforce one another and strengthen the student's confidence in the method of this painstaking guide amid much that has hitherto



been veiled in obscurity and erroneously interpreted. Dr. Thomas, the learned Librarian of the India Office, and Miss Thomas provide us with a scholarly translation, in which the pleasing style of the original is well brought out. It is one of the great merits of M. Foucher that he knows how to interest his readers and hearers and to make the monuments speak. His treatment of the influence of Hellenistic art on Buddhist iconography is masterly and for the most part convincing, and the parallel between the general development of Græco-Buddhist and Græco-Christian religious art which he traces is exceedingly instructive. M. Foucher sums this up as follows (p. 291):

"If for a moment we disregard the intrusion of Musalman Arabs, the history of *religious* art in the ancient world, from the beginning of our era, may—when reduced to its essential features and excluding numerous local variations—be summed up somewhat in this manner: on the decadent trunk of Hellenistic art were grafted in nearer Asia two vigorous young shoots, of which one has been called Græco-Buddhist, and the other might just as well be called Græco-Christian. It is not for us to ignore the fact that the latter has through Italy and Byzantium conquered the whole of Europe; but we must realize also that the former, growing and multiplying like the Indian fig-tree, has likewise gradually won over the whole of Eastern Asia."

Defenders of the complete independence of Indian art will doubtless resist this conclusion; but as far as Buddhist art is concerned, and especially with respect to the portrayal of the Buddha figure, it will be found very difficult to escape a conclusion so objectively based as M. Foucher's labours show it to be.

#### TOWARDS NEW HORIZONS.

By M. P. Willcocks. London (Lane); pp. 213; 5s. net.

THIS is an ably written but very provocative book. Miss Willcocks takes an exceedingly wide and optimistic view of the future, remorselessly condemns the past and sympathises with every form of thought and endeavour which is in revolt against the old order of the world's going. The new world is to be ruled by the Worker. The life of the world so mediated, she holds, is brimming over with promises of betterment impossible of realisation under any hitherto existing form of political, economic or social life. The old forms must go, the wine of the new life

cannot be contained in such antique receptacles. We must trust human nature first and foremost and all the time, and especially human nature in revolt against the ancient order, for that revolt is bred of the horror of slavery to the mechanical tyranny under which the life of the workers has so long groaned and sweated. There is much in the indictment of the past that is only too true; but the indiscriminate praise of the rule of the proletariat, and especially of the intellectual theories that would place in its hands the empery of the world, is difficult to understand in a writer who not only speaks of spiritual values but gives indication of a wide acquaintance with modern movements of thought in quest of spiritual reality. Surely the economy of the invisible order of things and especially of spiritual reality is not so based. Some of these anarchic intellectual theories have been put to the test and the outcome is plain for all to see in Bolshevism. Yet Miss Willcocks ignores this practical test and remains fascinated with the 'idealism' of these theories. For her, Bolshevik theory has praiseworthy intentions and that apparently condones all. At any rate there is not a word of censure on these devastating beliefs; Miss Willcocks seems to hold that in that they break up the old order they are good. But what if the old order is not to be indiscriminately scrapped and an entirely new start made—if such a thing were possible in a continuing life? To fly to the opposite extreme is a sign of blind passion and not of reasonable amendment. The old order contains some elements in it so precious that if they are scrapped we are faced with irretrievable ruin. In a great birth, a critical world-event, the mother does not die in giving birth to her child. She becomes regenerate in her offspring, the offspring is her own life transformed and not a brand-new life miraculously created to settle down upon the ruins of the past.

#### LETTERS FROM THE OTHER SIDE.

Prefaced and edited by Henry Thibault, with a Foreword by W. F. Cobb, D.D. London (Watkins); pp. 154; 5s. net.

THESE communications purport to come from a Church dignitary recently deceased. The name is not given; but it is easy to guess from many allusions for whom it is intended, at any rate by those acquainted with the work and writings of one so well-



known among us while on earth. There was at first no intention of making the matter public; it was an entirely private and intimate experiment made by two ladies. One of them was an old friend of the deceased who asked questions and pressed them home. The other knew the name of the departed only; she had never heard him speak nor read a word of his writings. She was the sensitive, and we are told that "the messages were received while she was in a state of normal consciousness, her mind passive and receptive, consciously registering the ideas which flashed with extraordinary vividness and rapidity through her brain, one part of which seemed to receive the thought, while the other almost automatically furnished the word-clothing, and this word-clothing more often than not was in form curiously similar to that used . . . when on earth" by the one from whom the messages purported to come.

The questions cover a wide field of interest, but are mainly directed to eliciting replies as to the conditions of the life of the hither hereafter, as experienced by the deceased, and the fortunes of the War as envisaged by one whose strong desire to help and comfort its many victims passing unprepared into the after-life, we are told, kept him in touch with conditions from which he might otherwise have been free. As an example of probable rumours of the hither hereafter these messages and replies are to be reckoned as containing material worthy of comparative study by those who are persuaded that contact can be established between discarnate and incarnate minds. The communications are free from personal dogmatism and the replies are kept well to the point by the questioner who is by no means willing to accept vague generalities in reply. It is not, however, suggested that the messages contain anything 'evidential' from the strict psychical research point of view.

#### SELF AND NEIGHBOUR.

An Ethical Study. By Edward W. Hirst, M.A. (Lond.), B.Sc. (Oxon.). London (Macmillan); pp. 286; 10s. net.

THE theory here set forth rests on the view taken of Ethics as a form of life rather than on an intellectual interest in the subject. From this starting-point the relation of the 'ego' to the 'alter' in typical ethical systems is examined, with the result that both those called Hedonistic and those that posit a moral sense are

shown to arrive at a conclusion which is fundamentally individualistic, since even in the latter the happiness of the 'alter' still appears as a means of furthering that of the 'ego,' and thus gives the predominance simply to an enlightened form of egoism. The author goes on to show that none of these systems allow an ethical status to the 'alter.' He maintains that the separation between one life and another is artificial and contrary to the instincts, *e.g.* to the parental instinct, in which 'ego' and 'alter' operate as a unity. Moral good, he asserts, is common good; and good is common, not merely because it is a form of the will, but because the will is communal in its nature. We are not impervious monads, but only through consciousness of other selves are we selves at all. The principle of interaction is that which obtains in human society, which is not organic, but is a whole consisting of wholes, of which each is unique and personal.

The chapters on the 'Metaphysic of Community' are less convincing, the point of view of the writer being confessedly not the intellectual one. A union of wholes, as he has already admitted (p. 120), cannot be completely explained by any intellectual category. He finds that by Absolute Idealism the existence and integrity of finite selves are gravely compromised; while by the Pluralistic theory each soul would have to be regarded as independent and absolute, which does not accord with the experience of any known soul.

The conclusion drawn from a standpoint that interprets community in terms of vital categories is inevitable. No belief can be entertained in the existence of a social 'mind' or 'soul,' except metaphorically. No 'system' can account for a 'self.' The explanation must be found in the existence of a Personal Unity, logically prior to the individuals. The Supreme Self through whom the finite selves exist must be regarded as having created them. Through its power of interpenetration the will of the divine Creator makes him one with his creatures. Human parenthood is a copy of divine Fatherhood, and universal Brotherhood is an extension of the parental instinct. The existence of other wills no longer presents the problem found in it by the intellect. The fundamental unity in which men subsist is accordingly realised by religion.

S. E. H.



## MYSELF AND DREAMS.

By Frank C. Constable, M.A., Author of 'Personality and Telepathy,' etc. London (Kegan Paul, etc.); pp. 858; 6s. 6d. net.

THIS is a psychological and philosophical study. Mr. Constable is a convinced Kantian and applies the main principles of the Kantian critical method to the treatment of psychology and the problems of psychical research. With regard to the latter he seems to us to be somewhat of a subjective idealist at times in his treatment of the psychical material, though he by no means neglects the physical. One thing is clear, namely that Mr. Constable does not shirk responsibility for the various positions and propositions he lays down and in his definitions of terms. He tries manfully to be consistent and clear even at the expense of innumerable repetitions. It is a thoughtful book, enthusiastically written, with a lively sense of human interest, and in spite of its predominantly Kantian tincture the work of an independent thinker. This is especially evident in his treatment of dreams, in which he keeps free from the prevailing Freudian epidemic, and makes a useful contribution to this puzzling subject, which we regret sincerely we have not space to notice at greater length.

## THE BOOK OF THE CAVE.

Gaurīsaṅkaraguhā. By Śrī Ānanda Āchārya. London (Macmillan); pp. 148; 5s. net.

THIS is an allegorical mystical phantasy dealing with certain states of supernormal consciousness. It is of interest as the construct of an imagination well furnished with Vedāntic material; the work of transformation, however, as a whole produces the impression of the conceit being somewhat strained and artificial and not an immediate psychical deliverance. It is presented in a western setting and described as "being the authentic account of a pilgrimage to the Gaurisankar Cave narrated by the late Professor Truedream of the University of Sighbridge, to his friends, the Rt. Hon. Lord Reason of Fancydale, now in voluntary exile, and the Keeper of the Soham Garden, and made known to the world according to Prof. Truedream's last will and testament."

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### 'PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES.'

IN your review of Professor Ward's great book you state : " But no, having been asked by many to banish the idea of soul from our minds if we would have a psychology that can be called a science, we are now invited by some to have done entirely with the notion of consciousness and take in its place 'givenness' or 'awareness.' Professor Ward is of this way of thinking."

I cannot agree that Professor Ward is of this way of thinking : I do not think he ever denies that we *must* "recognise the fact of the self-conscious subject."

His position would appear to be this : Psychology treated as a science is not called on to transcend the fact of presentation. But presentation infers the fact of 'attention' or awareness of what is given or presented,—or as Professor Ward puts it 'the duality of subject and object.' To recognise *only* givenness or presentation is a position that has its advocates but it is one to which Professor Ward is strenuously opposed. Psychology treated as a science *must begin* with attention or awareness of what is given or presented.

Darwin was misunderstood in much the same way. Because he did not take into consideration the soul of man he and his followers in the sixties were termed atheists. Darwin did not consider the soul of man simply because it did not come within the purview of the subject he concentrated his attention on.

F. C. CONSTABLE.



# THE QUEST



## THE ESSENTIALS OF MYSTICISM.

EVELYN UNDERHILL.

WHAT are the true essentials of mysticism? When we have stripped off those features which some mystics accept and some reject—all that is merely due to tradition, temperament or unconscious allegorism—what do we find as the necessary character of all true mystical experience?

This question is really worth asking. For some time much attention has been given to the historical side of mysticism, and some—much less—to its practice. But there has been no very clear understanding of the difference between its substance and its accidents: between traditional forms and methods, and the eternal experience which they have mediated. The strong need for re-statement which is being felt by institutional religion, the necessity of re-translating its truths into symbolism which modern men can understand and accept, applies with at least equal force to mysticism. It has become important to disentangle the facts from ancient formulæ used to express them. These formulæ have value, because

they are genuine attempts to express truth; but they are not themselves that truth, and failure to recognize this distinction has caused a good deal of misunderstanding. Thus, on its philosophic and theological side, the mysticism of Western Europe is tightly entwined with the patristic and mediæval presentation of Christianity; and this presentation, though full of noble poetry, is now difficult if not impossible to adjust to our conceptions of the Universe. Again, on its personal side, mysticism is a department of psychology. Now psychology is changing under our eyes; already we see our mental life in a new perspective, tend to describe it under new forms. Our ways of describing and interpreting spiritual experience must change with the rest, if we are to keep in touch with reality; though the experience itself be unchanged.

So we are forced to ask ourselves: What is the essential experience? Which of the many states and revelations described by the mystics are integral parts of it? And what do these states and degrees come to, when we describe them in the current phraseology and strip off the monastic robes in which they are usually dressed? What elements are due to the suggestions of tradition, to conscious or unconscious symbolism, to the misinterpretation of emotion, to the invasion of cravings from the lower centres, or the disguised fulfilment of an unconscious wish? And when all these channels of illusion have been blocked, what is left? This will be a difficult and often a painful enquiry. But it is an enquiry which ought to be faced by all who believe in the validity of man's spiritual experience, in order that their faith may be established on a firm basis and disentangled from those unreal and impermanent elements which are certainly destined to



destruction, and with which it is at present too often confused. I am sure that at the present moment we serve best the highest interests of the soul by subjecting the whole mass of material which is called 'mysticism' to an inexorable criticism.

We will begin, then, with the central fact of the mystic's experience. This central fact, it seems to me, is an overwhelming consciousness of God and of his own soul—a consciousness which absorbs or eclipses all other centres of interest. St. Francis of Assisi, praying in the house of Bernard of Quintavalle, was heard to say again and again: "My God! my God! what art Thou? and what am I?" It was the only question which he thought worth asking, and it is the question which every mystic asks at the beginning and sometimes answers at the end of his quest. So we must put first among our essentials the clear conviction of a living God as the primary interest of consciousness, and of a personal self capable of communion with Him. Having said this, however, we may allow that the widest latitude is possible in the mystic's conception of his Deity. At best this conception will be symbolic; his experience, if genuine, will far transcend the symbols he employs. Credal forms are for the mystic a scaffold by which he ascends. We are even bound, I think, to confess that the overt recognition of that which orthodox Christians generally mean by a personal God is not essential. On the contrary, where it takes a crudely anthropomorphic form, the personal idea may be a disadvantage, opening the way for the intrusion of disguised emotions and desires. In the highest experiences of the greatest mystics the personal category appears to be transcended. The all-inclusive One is beyond these partial

apprehensions, though all the true values which those apprehensions represent are conserved in it. However pantheistic the mystic may be on the one hand, however absolutist on the other, his communion with God is always personal in this sense: that it is communion with a living Reality, an object of love, capable of response, which demands and receives from him a total self-donation. This sense of a double movement, a self-giving on the divine side answering to the self-giving on the human side, is present in all great mysticism. It has of course lent itself to emotional exaggeration, but in its pure form seems an integral part of man's apprehension of Reality. Even where it conflicts with the mystic's philosophy—as in Hinduism and Neoplatonism—it is still present. It is curious to note, for instance, how Plotinus, after safeguarding his Absolute One from every qualification, excluding it from all categories, defining it only by the icy method of negation, suddenly breaks away into the language of ardent feeling when he comes to describe that ecstasy in which he touched the truth. Then he speaks of "the veritable love, the sharp desire" which possessed him, appealing to the experience of those fellow mystics who have "caught fire, and found the splendour there." These, he says, have "felt burning within themselves the flame of love for what is there to know—the passion of the lover resting on the bosom of his love."

So we may say that the particular mental image which the mystic forms of his objective, the traditional theology he accepts, is not essential. Since it is never adequate, the degree of its inadequacy is of secondary importance. Though some creeds have proved more helpful to the mystic than others, he is found fully



developed in every great religion. We cannot honestly say that there is any wide difference between the Brahman, Sufi or Christian mystic at their best. They are far more like each other than they are like the average believer in their several creeds. What is essential is the way the mystic feels about his Deity, and about his own relation with it; for this all-possessing consciousness of the rich and complete divine life over against the self's life, and of the possible achievement of a level of being, a sublimation of the self, wherein we are perfectly united with it, may fairly be written down as a necessary element of all mystical life. This is the common factor which unites those apparently incompatible views of the Universe which have been claimed at one time or another as mystical. Their mystical quality abides wholly in the temper of the self who adopts them. He may be a unanimist; but if he is, it is because he finds in other men—more, in the whole web of life—that mysterious living essence which is a mode of God's existence, and which he loves, seeks and recognizes everywhere. He may be—often is—a sacramentalist; but if so, only because the symbol or the sacrament help him to touch God. The moment he suspects that these things are obstacles instead of means, he rejects them, to the scandal of those who habitually confuse the image with the reality. So we get the temperamental symbolist, quietist, nature-mystic, or transcendentalist. We get Plotinus rapt to the "bare pure One"; Augustine's impassioned communion with Perfect Beauty; Jacopone da Todi prostrate in adoration before the "Love that gives all things form"; Jacob Boehme gazing into the fire-world and there finding the living heart of the Universe; Kabir listening to the

rhythmic music of Reality, and seeing the worlds told like beads within the Being of God : and at the opposite pole Mechthild of Magdeburg's amorous conversations with her "heavenly Bridegroom," the many mystical experiences connected with the Eucharist, the narrow intensity and emotional raptures of contemplatives of the type of Richard Rolle. We cannot refuse the title of mystic to any of these, because in every case their aim is union between God and the soul. This is the fundamental essential of mysticism, and there are as many ways from one term to the other as there are variations in the spirit of man. But, on the other hand, when anybody speaking of mysticism proposes an object that is less than God—increase of knowledge, of health, of happiness, occultism, intercourse with spirits, supernormal experience in general—then we may begin to suspect that we are off the track.

Now we come to the next group of essentials : the necessary acts and dispositions of the mystic himself—the development which takes place in him—the psychological facts, that is to say, which are represented by the so-called 'mystic way.' The mystic way is best understood as a process of sublimation, which carries the correspondences of the self with the Universe up to higher levels than those on which our normal consciousness works. Just as the normal consciousness stands over against the unconscious, which, with its buried impulses and its primitive and infantile cravings, represents a cruder reaction of the organism to the external world ; so does the developed mystical life stand over against normal consciousness, with its preoccupations and its web of illusions encouraging the animal will-to-dominate and animal will-to-live. Normal consciousness sorts out some elements from



the mass of experiences beating at our doors and constructs from them a certain order; but this order lacks any deep meaning or true cohesion, because normal consciousness is incapable of apprehending the underlying reality from which these scattered experiences proceed. The claim of the mystical consciousness is to a closer reading of truth; to an apprehension of the divine unifying principle behind appearance. "The One," says Plotinus, "is present everywhere and absent only from those unable to perceive it"; and when we *do* perceive it we "have another life . . . attaining the aim of our existence, and our rest." To know this at first hand—not to guess, believe or accept, but to be certain—is the highest achievement of human consciousness and the ultimate object of mysticism. How is it done?

There are two ways of attacking this problem which may conceivably help us. The first consists in a comparison of the declarations of different mystics and a sorting out of those elements which they have in common—a careful watch being kept, of course, for the results of conscious or unconscious imitation, of tradition and of theological preconceptions. In this way we get some first-hand evidence of factors which are at any rate usually present, and may possibly be essential. The second line of enquiry consists in a re-translation into psychological terms of these mystical declarations; when many will reveal the relation in which they stand to the psychic life of man.

Reviewing the first-hand declarations of the mystics, we inevitably notice one prominent feature: the frequency with which they break up their experience into three phases. Sometimes they regard

these objectively, and speak of three worlds or three aspects of God of which they become successively aware. Sometimes they regard them subjectively and speak of three stages of growth through which they pass, such as those of Beginner, Proficient, and Perfect; or of phases of spiritual progress in which we meditate upon reality, contemplate reality, and at last are united with reality. But among the most widely separated mystics of the East and West this threefold experience can nearly always be traced. There are of course obvious dangers in attaching absolute value to number-schemes of this kind. Numbers have an uncanny power over the human mind; once let a symbolic character be attributed to them, and the temptation to make them fit the facts at all costs becomes overwhelming. We all know that the number 'three' has a long religious history, and are therefore inclined to look with suspicion on its claim to interpret the mystic life. At the same time there are other significant numbers—such as 'seven' and 'ten'—which have never gained equal currency as the bases of mystical formulæ. We may agree that the mediæval mystics found the threefold division of spiritual experience in Neoplatonism. But we must also agree that a formula of this kind is not likely to survive for nearly 2,000 years unless it agrees with the facts. Those who use it with the greatest conviction are not theorists. They are the practical mystics, who are intent on making maps of the regions into which they have penetrated.

Moreover this is no mere question of handing on one single tradition. The mystics describe their movement from appearance to reality in many different ways, and use many incompatible religious symbols.



The one constant factor is the discrimination of three phases of consciousness, no more no less, in which we can recognize certain common characteristics. Thus Plotinus speaks of three descending phases or principles of Divine Reality: the Godhead, or Absolute and Unconditioned One; its manifestation as *Nous*, the Divine Mind or Spirit which inspires the 'intelligible' and eternal world; and *Psyche*, the Life or Soul of the physical Universe. Man, normally in correspondence with this physical world of succession and change, may by spiritual intuition achieve first consciousness of the eternal world of spiritual values, in which indeed the apex of his soul already dwells, and in brief moments of ecstatic vision may rise above this to communion with its source, the Absolute One. There you have the mystic's vision of the Universe, and the mystic's way of purification, enlightenment and ecstasy, bringing new and deeper knowledge of reality as the self's interest, urged by its loving desire of the Ultimate, is shifted from sense to soul, from soul to spirit. There is here no harsh dualism, no turning from a bad material world to a good spiritual world. We are invited to one gradual undivided process of sublimation, penetrating ever more deeply into the reality of the Universe, to find at last "that One who is present everywhere and absent only from those who do not perceive Him." An almost identical doctrine is preached by the Hindu mystic Kabir, when he says: "From beyond the Infinite the Infinite comes, and from the Infinite the finite extends." Here we have the finite world of becoming, the infinite world of being, and Brahma, the Unconditioned Absolute, exceeding and including all. Yet, as Kabir distinctly declares again and again, there are no fences between

these aspects of the Universe. When we come to the root of reality we find that "Conditioned and Unconditioned are but one word"; the difference is in our own degree of awareness.

Again, take three among the greatest of the mediæval Catholic mystics—that acute psychologist Richard of St. Victor, the ardent poet and contemplative Jacopone da Todi, and the profound Ruysbroeck. Richard of St. Victor says that there are three phases in the contemplative consciousness. The first is called dilation of mind, enlarging and deepening our vision of the world. The next is elevation of mind, in which we behold realities above ourselves. The third is ecstasy, in which the mind is carried up to contact with truth in its pure simplicity. This is really the universe of Plotinus translated into subjective terms. Jacopone da Todi says in the symbolism of his day that three heavens are open to man. He must climb from one to the other; it is hard work, but love and longing press him on. First, when the mind has achieved self-conquest, the 'starry heaven' is revealed to it. Its darkness is lit by scattered lights; points of reality pierce the sky. Next, it achieves the 'crystalline heaven' of lucid contemplation, where the soul is conformed to the rhythm of the divine life, and by its loving intuition apprehends God under veils. Lastly, in ecstasy it may be lifted to that ineffable state which he calls the 'hidden heaven,' where it enjoys a vision of imageless reality and "enters into possession of all that is God." Ruysbroeck says that he has experienced three orders of reality: the natural world; theatre of our moral struggle; the essential world, where God and Eternity are indeed known, but by intermediaries; and the superessential world, where without inter-



mediary, and beyond all separation, the soul is united to "the glorious and absolute One."

Take, again, a totally different mystic, Jacob Boehme. He says that he saw in the Divine Essence three principles or aspects. The first he calls "the deepest Deity, without and beyond Nature," and the next its manifestation in the Eternal Light-world. The third is that outer world in which we dwell according to the body, which is a manifestation, image or similitude of the Eternal. "And we are thus," he says, "to understand Reality as a threefold being, or three worlds *in one another*." We observe again the absence of water-tight compartments. The whole of reality is present in every part of it; and the power of correspondence with all these aspects of it is latent in man. "If one sees a right man," says Boehme again, "he may say, I see here three worlds standing."

We have now to distinguish the essential element in all this. How does it correspond with psychological facts? Some mystics, like Richard of St. Victor, have frankly exhibited its subjective side and so helped us to translate the statements of their fellows. Thus Dionysius the Areopagite says in a celebrated passage: "Threefold is the way to God. The first is the way of purification, in which the mind is inclined to learn true wisdom. The second is the way of illumination, in which the mind by contemplation is kindled to the burning of love. The third is the way of union, in which the mind by understanding, reason and spirit is led up by God alone."

This formula restates the Plotinian law; for the 'contemplation' of Dionysius is the 'spiritual intuition' of Plotinus, which inducts man into the intelligible world; his union is the Plotinian ecstatic vision of the

One. It profoundly impressed the later Christian mystics, and has long been accepted as the classic description of spiritual growth, because it has been found again and again to answer to experience. It is therefore worth our while to examine it with some care.

First we notice how gentle, gradual and natural is the process of sublimation that Dionysius demands of us. According to him, the mystic life is a life centred on reality: the life that first seeks reality without flinching, then loves and adores the reality perceived, and at last, wholly surrendered to it, is "led by God alone." First, the self is "inclined to learn *true* wisdom." It awakes to new needs, is cured of its belief in sham values, and distinguishes between real and unreal objects of desire. That craving for more life and more love which lies at the very heart of our self-hood, here slips from the charmed circle of the senses into a wider air. When this happens abruptly it is called 'conversion,' and may then be accompanied by various secondary psychological phenomena. But often it comes without observation. Here the essentials are a desire and a disillusionment sufficiently strong to overcome our natural sloth, our primitive horror of change. "The first beginning of all things is a craving," says Boehme; "we are creatures of will and desire." The divine discontent, the hunger for reality, the unwillingness to be satisfied with the purely animal or the purely social level of consciousness, is the first essential stage in the development of the mystical consciousness.

So the self is either suddenly or gradually inclined to 'true wisdom'; and this change of angle affects the whole character, not only or indeed specially the



intellectual outlook, but the ethical outlook too. This is the meaning of 'purgation.' False ways of feeling and thinking, established complexes which have acquired for us an almost sacred character, have got to be broken up. That mental and moral sloth which keeps us so comfortably wrapped up in unrealities has got to go. This phase in the mystic's growth has been specially emphasized and worked out by the Christian mystics, who have made considerable additions to the philosophy and natural history of the soul. The Christian sense of sin and conception of charity, the Christian refusal to tolerate any claim to spirituality which is not solidly based on moral values, or which is divorced from the spirit of tenderness and love—this has immensely enriched the mysticism of the West, and filled up some of the gaps left by Neoplatonism. It is characteristic of Christianity that, addressing itself to all men—not, as Neoplatonism tended to do, to the superior person—and offering to all men participation in Eternal Life, it takes human nature as it is and works from the bottom up, instead of beginning at a level which only a few of the race attain. Christianity perceived how deeply normal men are enslaved by the unconscious; how great a moral struggle is needed for their emancipation. Hence it concentrated on the first stage of purgation and gave it new meaning and depth. The monastic rule of poverty, chastity and obedience—and we must remember that the original aim of monasticism was to provide a setting in which the mystical life could be lived—aims at the removal of those self-centred desires and attachments which chain consciousness to a personal instead of a universal life. He who no longer craves for personal possessions, pleasures or powers is

very near to perfect freedom. Yet this positive moral purity which Christians declared necessary to the spiritual life was not centred on a lofty aloofness from human failings, but on a self-giving and disinterested love, the complete abolition of egotism. This alone, it declared, could get rid of that inward disharmony which Boehme called the 'powerful contrarium' warring with the soul.

Now this "perfect charity in life surrendered," however attained, is an *essential character* of the true mystic; without it contemplation is an impossibility or a sham. But when we come to the means by which it is to be attained, we re-enter the region of controversy; for here we are at once confronted by the problem of asceticism, and its connection with mysticism—perhaps the largest and most difficult of the questions now facing those who are concerned with the re-statement of the laws of the spiritual life. For the true mystic, asceticism is never more than a means to an end, and is often thrown aside when that end is attained. Its necessity is therefore a purely practical question. Fasting and watching may help one to a sharper and purer concentration on God, and make another so hungry and sleepy that he can think of nothing else. Jacopone da Todi said of his own early austerities that they resulted chiefly in indigestion, insomnia and colds in the head. Some ascetic practices again are almost certainly disguised indulgences of those very cravings they are supposed to kill. Others—such as hair shirts, chains, and so forth—depended for their meaning on a mediæval view of the body which is practically extinct, and now seems to most of us utterly artificial. No one will deny that austerity is better than luxury for the spiritual life; but perfect



detachment of the will and senses *can* be achieved by those living normally in the world; and this is the essential thing. The embryo contemplative, if his spiritual vision is indeed to be enlarged, and his mind kindled, as Dionysius says, to 'the burning of love,' must acquire and keep a special state of inward poise, which is best described as 'the state of prayer'; that same condition which George Fox called 'keeping in the Universal Spirit.' The readjustments which shall make this natural and habitual are a phase in man's inward conflict for the redemption of consciousness from its lower and partial attachments. It is no dream. It means hard work, mental and moral discipline of the sternest kind. The downward drag is incessant and can be combated only by those clearly aware of it. Unless the self's 'inclination to true wisdom' is strong enough to inspire these costing and heroic efforts, its spiritual cravings do not deserve the name of mysticism.

These then seem essential factors in the readjustment which the mystics call purgation. We go on to their next stage, the so-called 'way of illumination.' Here, says Dionysius, the mind is kindled by contemplation to the burning of love. There is a mental and an emotional enhancement, whereby the self apprehends the Reality it has sought, whether under the veils of religion, philosophy or nature-mysticism. Many mystics have made clear statements about this phase in human transcendence. Thus Plotinus says that by spiritual intuition man, "wrought into harmony with the Supreme," enters into communion with the 'intelligible world' of eternal realities. Ruysbroeck declares this world "is not God, but it is the light in which we see Him." Jacopone da Todi says that the self, achieving

this crystalline heaven, "feels itself to be a part of all things," because it has annihilated its separate will and is conformed to the movement of the Divine Life. Boehme calls it the "light-world proceeding from the fire-world"; and says it is the origin of that outward world in which we dwell. "This light," he says, "shines through and through all, but is only apprehended by that which unites itself thereto." It seems to me fairly clear that these, and many other descriptions I cannot now quote, refer to an identical state of consciousness, which might be called an experience of Eternity but not of the Eternal One. I say 'an experience,' not merely a mental perception. Contemplation, which is the traditional name for that concentrated attention in which this phase of reality is revealed, is an activity of all our powers—the heart, the will, the mind. Dionysius emphasizes the ardent love which this revelation of Reality calls forth, and which is indeed a condition of our apprehension of it; for the cold gaze of the metaphysician cannot attain it, unless he be a lover and a mystic too. "By love He may be gotten and holden—by thought never," says the author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*. It is only by the mood of humble and loving receptivity in which the artist perceives beauty, that the human spirit can apprehend a reality which is greater than itself. The many declarations about noughting, poverty and 'holy nothingness' refer to this. The meek and poor of spirit really are the inheritors of Eternity.

So we may place the attitude of selfless adoration, the single-hearted passion of the soul, among the essentials of the mystic in the illuminated way. A very wide range of mystical experiences must be attributed to this second stage in man's spiritual



growth. We shall probably be right in assuming that the enormous majority of mystics never get beyond it. Certainly a large number of religious writers on mysticism attribute to its higher and more personal manifestations the names of 'divine union' and 'unitive life'; thereby adding to the difficulty of classifying spiritual states, and showing themselves unaware of the great distinction which such full-grown mystics as Plotinus, Jacopone da Todi or Ruysbroeck describe as existing between this 'middle heaven' and the ecstatic vision of the One which alone really satisfies their thirst for truth. Thus Jacopone at first uses the strongest unitive language to describe that rapturous and emotional intercourse with Divine Love which characterised his middle period; but when he at last achieves the vision of the Absolute he confesses that he was in error in supposing that it was indeed the Truth Whom he thus saw and worshipped under veils. All the personal raptures of devotional mysticism, all the nature-mystic's joyous consciousness of God in creation, Blake's 'world of imagination and vision,' the 'coloured land' of A. E., the Sufi's 'tavern on the way' where he is refreshed by a draught of supersensual wine, belong to the way of illumination. Here the reality behind appearance is still mediated to the mystic under symbols and forms. The variation of these symbols is great; his adoring gaze now finds new life and significance in the appearances of nature, the imagery of religion and philosophy. But absolute value cannot be attributed to any of them, even the most sacred: they change, yet the experience remains. Thus an identical consciousness of close communion with God is obtained by the non-sacramental Quaker in his silence and by the sacramental Catholic in the

Eucharist; by the Sufi or Hindu under his own religious conceptions; by the Neoplatonist rapt in contemplation of the intelligible world; by Brother Lawrence doing his cooking in the presence of God. This consciousness is the essential; the symbols under which the self apprehends it are not.

Among these symbols we must reckon a large number of the secondary phenomena of mysticism: divine visions and voices, and other dramatizations of the self's apprehensions and desires. The best mystics have always recognized the doubtful nature of these so-called divine revelations and favours, and have tried again and again to set up tests for discerning those which really 'come from God'—*i.e.* mediate a valid spiritual experience. Personally I think very few of these phenomena are mystical in the true sense. Just as our normal consciousness is more or less at the mercy of invasions from the unconscious region, of impulses which we fail to trace to their true origin, so too the mystical consciousness is perpetually open to invasion from the lower centres. These invasions are not always understood by the mystic. Obvious examples are the emotional and even erotic relations in which many ascetics believe themselves to stand to Christ or Our Lady: the Holy Ghost saying to Angela of Foligno, "I love you better than any other woman in the vale of Spoleto"; the human raptures of Mechthild of Magdeburg with her Bridegroom; St. Bernard's attitude to the Virgin; the passionate love-songs of Jacopone da Todi. So too the infantile craving for a sheltering and protective love finds expression over and over again in mystical literature, and satisfaction in the states of consciousness which it has induced. The innate longing of the self for more life, more love,



an ever greater and fuller experience, attains a complete realization in the lofty mystical state called union with God. But failing this full achievement, the self is capable of offering itself many disguised satisfactions; and among these disguised satisfactions we must reckon at least the majority of 'divine favours' enjoyed by contemplatives of an emotional type. Whatever the essence of mysticism may turn out to be, it is well to recognize these lapses to lower levels as among the least fortunate of its accidents.

We come to the third stage, the true goal of mystic experience: the intuitive contact with that ultimate Reality which theologians mean by the Godhead and philosophers by the Absolute, a contact in which, as Richard of St. Victor says, "the soul gazes upon Truth without any veils of creatures—not in a mirror darkly, but in its pure simplicity." The claim to this is the loftiest claim which can be made by human consciousness. There is little we can say of it, because there is little we know; save that the vision is always the vision of a Unity which reconciles all opposites, and fulfils all man's highest intuitions of Reality. Some recent theologians have tried to separate the conceptions of God and of the Absolute: but mystics never do this, though some of the most clear-sighted, such as Meister Eckhart, have separated that unconditioned Godhead known in ecstasy from the personal God who is the object of devotional religion, and who represents a humanization of reality. When the great mystic achieves the "still, glorious, and absolute Oneness" which finally satisfies his thirst for truth—the point where all lines meet and show their meaning—he generally confesses how symbolic was the object of his earlier devotion, how partial his sup-

posed communion with the Divine. Thus Jacopone da Todi—exact and orthodox Catholic though he was—when he reached ‘the hidden heaven,’ discovered and boldly declared the approximate character of all his previous conceptions of and communion with God, the great extent to which subjective elements had entered into his experience. In the great ode which celebrates his ecstatic vision of Truth, when “ineffable love, imageless goodness, measureless light” at last shone in his heart, he says: “I thought I knew Thee, tasted Thee, saw Thee under image: believing I held Thee in Thy completeness I was filled with delight and measureless love. But *now* I see I was mistaken—Thou art not as I thought and firmly held.” So Tauler says that compared with the warm colour and multiplicity of devotional experience, the very Godhead is a “rich nought,” a “bare, pure ground”; and Ruysbroeck that it is “an unwall’d world,” “neither this nor that.” “This consciousness of the One,” says Plotinus, “comes not by knowledge, but by an actual Presence superior to any knowing. To have it, the soul must rise above knowledge, above all its wandering from its unity.” He goes on to explain that all partial objects of love and contemplation, even Beauty and Goodness themselves, are lower than this, springing from the One as light from the sun. To see the disc, we must put on smoked glasses, shut off the rays, and submit to the “radiant darkness” which enters so frequently into mystical descriptions of the Absolute.

It is an interesting question whether this consummation of the mystic way need involve that suppression of the surface-consciousness which is called ecstasy. The mystics think so, and probably it



is almost inevitable that so great a concentration and so lofty an intuition should for the time it lasts drive all other forms of awareness from the field. Even simple contemplation cannot be achieved without some deliberate stilling of the senses, and abolishes self-consciousness while it lasts. This is the way our machinery works; but this should not make us regard trance-states as any part of the essence of mysticism. The ecstatic condition is no guarantee of mystic vision. It is frequently pathological, and is often found in emotional visionaries whose revelations have no ultimate characteristics. It is, however, just as uncritical to assume that ecstasy is necessarily a pathological symptom as it is to assume that it is necessarily a mystic state. We have a test which we can apply to the ecstatic, and which separates the results of nervous disorder from those of spiritual transcendence. "What fruit dost thou bring back from this thy vision?" is the final question which Jacopone da Todi addresses to the mystic's soul. And the answer is: "An ordered life in every state." The mystic has seen, however obscurely, the key of the Universe—"the form of the complex" as Dante says—he has a clue by which to live. Reality has become real to him; and there are no others of whom we can fully say that. So, ordered correspondence with each level of existence, physical and spiritual, successive and eternal—a practical realization of the proportions of life—is the guarantee of the genuine character of that sublimation of consciousness which is called the mystic way; and this distinguishes it from the fantasies of psychic illness or the disguised self-indulgences of the dream-world. The real mystic grows in vigour as he draws nearer and nearer the

sources of true life. "Then is our life a *whole*," says Ruysbroeck, "when contemplation and work dwell in us side by side, and we are perfectly in both of them at once."

Plotinus speaks in the same sense in one of his most celebrated passages: "We always move round the One, but we do not always fix our gaze upon It. We are like a choir of singers standing round the conductor, who do not always sing in time, because their attention is diverted to some external object. When they look at the conductor, they sing well and are really with him. So we always move round the One. If we did not, we should dissolve and cease to exist. But we do not always look towards the One. When we *do*, we attain the end of our existence and our rest; and we no longer sing out of tune, but form in truth a divine choir about the One."

There you have the indestructible essence of mysticism.

EVELYN UNDERHILL.



## THE PHILOSOPHY OF MY OLD AGE.

EDMOND HOLMES, M.A.

IF I had to give a name to the philosophy in which my soul has found refuge—the refuge, not of a safe harbour, but of the open sea—I would call it the philosophy of *wholeness*. When I made my choice between materialism and idealism, I committed myself to the assumption that what is ultimate in synthesis, not in analysis, is real. What is ultimate in synthesis is the Universe itself, the totality of things regarded as an organic whole. This is real—supremely real, absolutely real, alone real. The things that surround me are real in varying degrees; but they are real with, and in, and through, the reality of the all-embracing Whole. The unifying principle in things is life. Whenever we have the One in the Many, unity in complexity, we have either life, or—as in the case of man's handiwork, whether artistic or mechanical—the expression and embodiment of life. The greater the complexity the higher is the unity, and the higher the life to which it bears witness.

As life gains in complexity and unity it begins to transform itself into soul-life. It may indeed be contended that all life is soul-life, that even in the humblest beginnings of life the germs of soul-life are discernible. Perhaps they are. What is certain is that the higher the life the more worthy is the organism, the thing that lives, to bear the title of living soul. If this

is so, then the life of the Whole is soul-life, pure and simple. In other words, the Soul of the Universe (God, as we call it) is what is ultimately real in the Universe; real in a sense which it is difficult to define, but which is implicit in Emily Brontë's sublime apostrophe of the Eternal:

"Though earth and man were gone,  
And suns and universes ceased to be,  
And Thou wert left alone,  
Every existence would exist in Thee"—

real in the sense of being the fountain-head of reality, the ocean which is at once the source and the goal of all its own affluent and reflux streams, and which is also *in* each of these, from the trickling rivulet to the great river which is widening out into the sea.

In what relation do I, the individual, stand to the Universal Soul? The answer to this question is to be lived rather than spoken. My bias towards wholeness is practical as well as theoretical. In the very act of recognizing the supreme reality of wholeness, I recognize self-integration, or the achievement of wholeness, as the end and purpose of my life. The transition from the one position to the other is real rather than notional, vital rather than logical.

But what is self-integration, and how is it to be achieved? It is obviously the goal, the unattainable goal, of the process of self-realization or soul-growth. If I am to achieve wholeness, I must realize all my potentialities, I must grow to the fulness of my predestined stature. The law of growth is the master law of my being, and the essence of growth is the realization of the ideal which is at the heart of the actual. What is the ideal self which is at the heart



of my actual self? And in what relation does it stand to the ideal self or Soul of the Universe?

This is the question of questions. Can I integrate myself independently of the Supreme Integer, the living Whole? Surely not. If the Universe is a living whole, I live in its life, and apart from its life I am nothing. In a perfectly organized organism each part and each particle functions for the good of the whole, and finds its own *raison d'être* in doing so. When the part or the particle is itself a living being, it finds the well-spring of its own life in living for the whole. We, as conscious intelligent beings, are free within varying limits to make our choice between living for the Whole and living for self. We can, if we please, try to integrate self apart from the Supreme Integer. In other words, we can, if we please, try to achieve wholeness by living for self. But the attempt is foredoomed to ruinous failure. For either it takes the form of undue specialization, as when the artist lives for art, the fanatic for religion, the voluptuary for pleasure. Or it takes the more familiar form of accepting the actual self as adequate and final, of idealizing it, of ministering or trying to minister to all its desires and demands. Undue specialization is obviously the negation of self-realization. The specialist deliberately sacrifices the whole to the part; and his punishment is that the special end at which he aims eludes his pursuit owing to his failure to relate it to the meaning and purpose of the whole. The artist who lives for art and art only, misinterprets the function of art as surely and as profoundly as the fanatic misinterprets the function of religion, or the voluptuary the function of pleasure. It is the same with the man who idealizes his actual self and tries to live for it. He, too, is

doomed to stultify his own efforts, to 'baffle his own prayers.' For the more assiduously he ministers to the desires and demands of self, the more insatiable do these become; so that, instead of integrating self, he finds, sooner or later, that he has been working for its—and his—disintegration, contracting its range and lowering its level by his life of self-indulgence and self-absorption, till at last, with the ever-narrowing circles and ever accelerating velocity of a whirlpool, it begins to lose itself in, and draw him down into, its own deadly depths.

Selfishness is universally reprobated, and unselfishness is universally honoured. We realize, sub-consciously, if not consciously, that these are the left-hand and the right-hand paths respectively, between which each of us must make his choice. But we do not sufficiently realize that the choice between the two resolves itself in the last resort into the choice between the individual and the Universal Self, between bondage to the actual and the finite, and devotion to the Ideal and the Whole. In the sphere of conduct the choice between unself and self is the choice between right and wrong. There is no kind of right-doing which is not ultimately resolvable either into self-control or into self-surrender; no kind of wrong-doing which is not ultimately resolvable either into self-indulgence or into self-assertion.

But in neither case does our analysis go deep enough. We do not realize either the purpose or the scope of either of these ways of life. Hence the confusion, the demoralizing confusion, of our views about morality. Hence our inability to come to an understanding with ourselves as to the relation between morality and religion. Matthew Arnold defined religion



as morality touched with emotion. This definition is, I think, wholly inadequate. Would it not be nearer to truth to say that religion is morality transformed and even transfigured by 'the intuition of totality' and the consequent sense of obligation to the Whole? The essence of religion is disinterested devotion, devotion to an end so large that the service of it must needs exclude every thought of self. And it is the capacity for disinterested devotion which distinguishes the dwellers on the higher from those on the lower levels of morality,—the saint and the hero from the man who is content to do his duty to his neighbour and obey the law.

If the religious sense, the sense of obligation to the Whole, is the ideal basis of man's moral life, it is also, and in no less a degree, the ideal basis of his social life. The distinction between the moral and the social life is a more or less artificial one, and will not (one may safely predict) be permanently maintained. The social life is the life of obligation to one's neighbour as a fellow-citizen; the moral life, the life of obligation to him as a fellow-man. When the tribe was the only political unit, the two lives were one, or rather the moral life had not yet begun to disengage itself from the social. With the gradual supersession of tribalism, first by civicism (if there is such a word) and then by nationalism, the separation between the two lives began. This was a necessary stage in man's development, but it was also a misfortune for each of the diverging lives. While the two were still one their union was blest by religion, but it was a narrow religion, the cult of a tribal deity, a God whose hand was (or might be) against other Gods. When the two become one again, religion will again bless their union.

But it will be a religion as wide as the tribal religion was narrow. Christianity tried to fuse the two lives into one, but it failed disastrously because, in defiance of the teaching of its Founder, it worshipped a glorified tribal deity, a God who was supposed to be pan-cosmic, and who yet was jealous and had favourites and took sides. If the two lives are indeed to become one, their fusion will have to be effected through the worship of the All-Father, the living Whole.

The separation of the moral from the social life has thrown both lives into dire confusion. When the well-being of the tribe was the final end of moral action, the path of duty was direct and clear. To-day, in the labyrinthine maze of our complex life, the path is hard to find and easy to lose. Selfishness mistakes itself in all sincerity for unselfishness, and a hideous crime may even pose as a heroic act. That Germany should have sought to justify her treacherous invasion of Belgium, and prided herself on the sinking of the *Lusitania* and other atrocities, shows what urgent need there is for a paramount principle, for a High Court of Appeal, to adjust the respective claims of the two lives. Such a principle, such a Court of Appeal, is at our service if we will but invoke its aid. We have seen that the supreme choice for each of us, whether our outlook on life be wide or narrow, is that between selfishness and unselfishness. Let us take care then, when we devote ourselves to a community or a cause, that there are no dregs of selfishness in our seemingly disinterested devotion. Collective or corporate selfishness is as real and as immoral as individual selfishness, and has the advantage (from its own point of view) over the latter of wearing a mask of disinterestedness which hides its real nature even



from the conscience of those who indulge in it. The Great War has been followed by wide-spread social chaos; and one of the chief causes of this state of things is that corporate selfishness is everywhere masquerading as virtue. The worker prides himself on his loyalty to his union, and is animated by the spirit of comradeship when he goes on strike. But when his union threatens to strangle the economic life of the nation in order to secure material benefits for its members, he becomes a partner in its corporate selfishness, and his very virtue begins to savour of vice. And his case is typical of what is going on in all parts of the world and in all social grades.

There is one way and one way only in which this sinister tendency can be corrected and the disorder of our social life cured. Devotion to a community or a cause must always have at the heart of it devotion to a wider community or a larger cause, and the claims of the latter must, in the event of a conflict, take precedence of those of the former. This is the golden rule. Wherever it is recognized and obeyed, ethics, civics and economics lose themselves in religion and become one. For the wider community must have a still wider, the larger cause must have a still larger, at the heart of it, until we come at last to the widest and the largest of all. Some of us seem to think that pan-humanism is the cure for all our social ills. I doubt if it is. The failure of Positivism, the Religion of Humanity, to evangelize more than a handful of theorists and enthusiasts is significant. If the service of humanity were regarded as an end in itself, a too materialistic view of the needs and desires of humanity would almost certainly be taken; and this would react sooner or later on all our lesser loyalties and

humbler services. The universal diffusion of comfort and leisure would become the highest end of human endeavour; and one result of this would be that each nation, each class, each trade would claim for itself its share, or more than its share, of comfort and leisure, and the old jealousies and quarrels would re-appear. If we would serve humanity aright we must help it to realize its own perfection, to fulfil the end of its own being; and that perfection is unattainable, and that end lies beyond itself. Therefore, if pan-humanism is to give us order and peace in the place of chaos and strife, it too must have at the heart of it devotion to a wider community, to the widest of all communities, the Kingdom of God.

And the lesser loyalty will not suffer because the larger loyalty takes precedence of it in our hearts. On the contrary, being to that extent purged of selfishness, it will be purer and stronger than it would otherwise have been. The member of the sectional trade-union will serve it more effectively if he recognizes that the union as a whole has the prior claim to his allegiance. As a member of the larger union he will best prove his loyalty to it by being ready on occasion to subordinate its interests—its apparent interests—to the welfare of his country. The patriot will be the better patriot if he serves his country, not for its own sake only but also because it is a province in the Human Commonwealth. And the humanist will be the better humanist if he interprets the claims and needs of humanity through his vision of the Ideal and the Divine. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven and its righteousness, and then all these things will be added unto you."

Devotion to the Whole, then, is the only effectual



antidote to the selfishness of the individual and the separatism, or corporate selfishness, of the community. In other words, it and it alone can moralize and socialize our lives.

This is one aspect of the philosophy of wholeness. But it is not the only aspect. There are three ideal ends of man's being—Truth, Beauty and Love. And the reason why these ends are lodestars in our lives is that devotion to each of them, if it is pure and disinterested, readily and of inner necessity transforms itself into devotion to the Whole. Love indeed stands apart from the rest in that love of Love *is* love of the Whole; and that it is therefore the medium through which the quest of Truth and the quest of Beauty lose themselves in the quest of the Divine. But Truth and Beauty are of the same sublime brotherhood; and if Love is greater than they are, it is only 'first among its peers.'

The distinction between Truth and Beauty is inherent in the distinction between reason and intuition, between conscious thought and sub-conscious vision. It will hold good as long as that distinction holds good. It will be transcended when, if ever, that distinction is transcended. Truth is the objective side of knowledge, the subjective side of reality. Ideal truth is therefore the subjective side of ultimate reality. The pursuit of truth is the attempt to discover the real in the phenomenal, the One in the Many, the laws which are behind facts, the principles which are behind laws. When order, inward harmony, is discovered by reason we have truth. When it is discerned by intuition we have beauty. The greater the complexity, the higher is the underlying unity, and the nearer we are, if reason can discover that unity,

to ideal truth. In the Whole the complexity is infinite, and the underlying unity is infinite. In other words, the cosmic order, the inward harmony of the Whole, is perfect. In the unravelling by reason of the cosmic order we have the pursuit of ideal truth. In the revelation to reason of the inward harmony of the Universe we have the attainment of ideal truth. But the goal is unattainable. The pursuit of ideal truth is an adventure into the Infinite. As such it is its own reward. The dogmatic spirit, which seeks to find rest in a formula, is the negation of the scientific. Reason will never succeed in unravelling the order which underlies the complexity of things; but it will never weary of trying to do so.

For the adventurous mind then the Universe is ideal truth. For imaginative insight, for inward vision, the Universe is ideal beauty. The direct perception of wholeness is of the essence of the æsthetic sense. Where ordinary men see only a chaos of details, many of which are sordid and even repulsive, the artist sees a whole; and that whole is a thing of beauty. There is no need for him to unravel by force of reason the order which unifies the multiplicity of details. The One in the Many, the inward harmony of things, is for him the object, not of thought, but of vision. In other words, it is 'the intuition of totality' which distinguishes the artist from other men. It follows that the goal of artistic aspiration is the vision of the Universe, the immediate perception of the sum of things as an indivisible, unanalysable whole. This would be the revelation of absolute beauty, the beatific vision, the fulfilment of all dreams. But here too the goal is unattainable. The part can no more see the Whole than it can understand the Whole. Or, if it



can come nearer to vision than to understanding, it can never attain to it. There may be less of self, less of the desire for possession, in the thirst for beauty than in the thirst for truth. But there is enough, and more than enough.

What then? Will the part never understand, will it never see the Whole? Yes, it will; but not until it has lost itself in the Whole. Not until the desire to possess has been submerged by the desire to be possessed. Not until the thirst for truth and the thirst for beauty have slaked themselves at the fountain of love. For in love you become one with what is loved, and being one with it you understand it with an intimacy and a subtlety which transcend the range of reason; and you see it with a transfiguring vision which transcends the range of the artist's creative eye. This is so when the Beloved is a kindred soul, a man or a woman like oneself. How much more would it be so if the Beloved were the Divine Lover, the living Whole! The ideal end of love is the Whole and nothing less than the Whole. For the essence of love is complete self-loss. While the passion of love lasts the whole of self is wholly surrendered. But the passion is as a rule as transient as it is intense. If it is to endure for ever its object must be worthy of it. And what object is worthy of so great a passion but the Divine Lover, who is himself the Soul of Love? "My son, give me thy heart!" This is what the Soul of all things is ever saying to each of us, as it speaks to us through all the voices of earth and sky, of land and sea, of day and night, through the pageant of history, through the work of the artist, through the song of the poet, through the deeds of the hero, through the eyes and the lips of all who are near

and dear to us. "My son, give me thy heart!" If Truth, Beauty and Love are indeed the supreme ends of one's being, there can be but one response to this appeal. Give your heart to the Divine Lover; and you will become one with supreme reality and therefore with Ideal Truth. Give your heart to the Divine Lover; and you will become one with the inward harmony of the Universe and therefore with Ideal Beauty. Give your heart to the Divine Lover; and you will become one with Love.

I think I can now see what self-integration really means. It means that the Whole is realizing itself in each individual life. Self-integration apart from the Whole is spiritual suicide. Self-integration through oneness with the Whole is eternal life. This is the mystery of mysteries, that the Whole can hide itself, as it were, in each human heart, as a tree hides itself in each of the seeds which it bears, and can realize itself in each heart in all the infinitude of its wholeness.

They tell us that the mighty banyan-tree,  
Itself a forest, has a speck-like seed,  
In which it hides its life's totality,  
A spell-bound prisoner, waiting to be freed.  
So do you hide your Self—the One, the All—  
In this my heart, this seed which you have sown;  
Waiting to wake from slumber at my call,  
Waiting for me to claim you as my own.  
Patient you wait. Shall I with stubborn will  
Rest in myself, content with what is mine?  
Or, with high purpose, labour to fulfil,  
Dying to self, my fate and your design?  
Nay, but who dies to self doth self renew;  
For I am I only when one with you.

EDMOND HOLMES.



# THE SPIRIT OF SHAKESPEARE.

## AN HYPOTHESIS.

HUNTLY CARTER.

### I.

A YEAR or two before the War a definite attempt was made by certain enthusiasts throughout Europe to re-interpret Shakespeare. These Neo-Shakespeareans, as they were called, asserted that they had re-discovered the real Shakespeare. Then came the War, and the Neo-Shakespeareans fled. Now comes Peace to bring them back again, and there is much talk of a re-start at a re-interpretation of the great Poet. Doubtless this re-start will be made on the ground of the pre-War assertion, which therefore deserves to be examined.

Despite this strong assertion that the real Shakespeare has been re-discovered and is about to be developed for the good of the drama and the theatre in England, there are many proofs to the contrary. Moreover it is extremely doubtful whether the real Shakespeare has ever been even discovered in the theatre in this country. By the real Shakespeare I mean a Shakespeare who is a great spiritual force and not one who drips with blood, is a socialist or a sexual maniac, as the moment or the interpreter demands. I mean a Shakespeare occupied not with conscious but 'unconscious processes,—that is, the processes of a force existing in the Infinite World for Shakespeare the

spiritual playwright to externalize and individualize. Thus, to be quite plain, I do not speak of Shakespeare the magician of words and manufacturer of planetary stuff, but of a cosmical Shakespeare the interpreter of shadow-drama or soul-stuff, who lives beyond words, who is lit by the flame of the Eternal alone, and whose form of drama is founded in far visions of all times and existence, and constructed of facts and manifestations drawn from the spiritual archives which the eye of his soul has placed at his command. The first, the planetary Shakespeare, neglecting these archives, brought the conditioned,—the seed and flower of and for his own time. The second, the cosmical, searching among them brought the unconditioned seed, the eternally serviceable to mankind, ready to yield in large illumination the mysteries of the universe in due proportion as the creative sensibility of each age should demand a portion of divinity. But, as I said, the ages have not demanded their portions of divinity. There has been no steady development from age to age of the illuminative and unitive properties of the Shakespearean drama, to be of service to the theatre and the drama now that the newcomers in the theatre are beginning to seek the highest or mystic form of dramatic expression.

## II.

The explanation is that the seed of continuity—the unconscious element in Shakespeare's plays—has been overlooked or neglected altogether. If Shakespeare's interpreters, learned and simple alike, have at any time been aware of the frame-work for the unconscious essence, it is perfectly clear they have not been aware of the essence itself. For throughout they



have been pre-occupied with Shakespeare's conscious processes, and have always sought to represent his plays as comedies and tragedies of blood and words instead of transforming them into illuminations of the activities of the Spirit. This is the plain and obvious meaning of their amazing attempts to get near to Shakespeare in the theatre, to rescue him from a dim past and vast tradition and make him known physically. It accounts for the pertinacious research into the origin and locality of his play-house, the many and varied investigations into the structure and staging of his plays,<sup>1</sup> the close inquiries into dates and order, the feverish labours with the processes of adaptation and composition, the unceasing discussions as to the origin and nature of his plots, the ethical disputes over his characters, the endless arguments on the derivation and meaning of his words and phrases, the unwearying search for consistency, the cheerless views on his irregularities, his disregard of the unities, his learning, his irreligion and his identity. It indicates that the opinions on Shakespeare have been drawn entirely from appearances. It shows that every endeavour has been made and every piece of knowledge used to get near to the *man* Shakespeare and the age in which he lived. In short, Shakespeare the Man has been exalted where alone the Spirit in the man should be.

Among the various causes to which the continued misinterpretation of Shakespeare may be attributed, I think the most important is the vague impression, of which Shakespeare's interpreters have made so much, that Shakespeare belongs to the people (a term

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, the long and admirable letter which appears in the *Times Literary Supplement* for October 18. It analyses in much detail the stage-management of the sword-fight in *Hamlet*.

strictly applied to the industrial class now-a-days), and therefore should be handed over to the people in their own likeness, *i.e.* bodily as a representative of the flesh-and-blood school, or as a political and literary 'institution' to be handled with fulness and solidity. It does not matter that a soul lurks imperceptible to the many in the political Shakespeare, and that even plays which are said to reveal socialism (*Coriolanus*), anti-democracy and the tendency towards an established order and authority, may be set afloat in time and space as shadow-drama. It is of no account that spirits impalpable may be manœuvred out of the Shakespearean records of foreign affairs (*Henry V.*). Nor is it of importance that scattered throughout Shakespearean plays is abundant evidence that their author entered into the universe of the unseen and the unknown—evidence of saturation in psychic happenings and faith in them. The fact remains that there is a Shakespeare anchored to the local and ephemeral by social, economic and political creed. He looks solid, and for the sake of a planetary humanity which argues that if a body appears solid it must really be so, he must be translated as a solid body by the materialists, naturalists, rationalists and others, all supporters of the falsities of dramatic expression.

This enduring and unbroken intention to lay heavy hands on Shakespeare as a corporal entity and to fashion him anew after the conception of the planetarian, instead of laying hands on the planetarian and forming him anew after the spiritual image of Shakespeare, has given birth, roughly, to two assumptions and two artificial forms of representation. These forms are the popular and cultural, or the 'fat' and 'thin.' The one is centred in 'real life' (in the sense of



actuality), the other in culture. The popular grew out of the assumption that Shakespeare wrote his plays for popular audiences (*i.e.* the Mob), and that they reveal the standardised moods and sentiments of such audiences. He did not write because of the endless urge of inner necessity, because he felt tremendous eternal facts thrilling through him, demanding intense interpretation, but in response to an unprecedented demand for 'real life' refreshments. He was in fact the foremost purveyor of amusement at a time when the Drama competed with the bear-pit and other side-shows for public favour, and the London play-houses (or whatever served as such) were patronised by a rabble which demanded and got its own brand of solid food-stuffs. It gluttonized on hot and strong portions of blood and clowning. The assumption has survived the many vicissitudes of time and place, and not till to-day has the silly attempt to convert the spiritual Shakespeare into the planetary Shakespeare, instead of the reverse, shown signs of weakening.

The cultural form of representation was also founded on an assumption—namely, that Shakespeare was in the myth-making stage. In consequence he helped himself pretty freely to whatever myths were lying about, and took the greatest pains to conceal in these myths all possible scientific truths, metaphysics, religions, philosophies and so on. In other words, Shakespeare's plays form a vast patchwork of myths which on analysis falls to pieces into potential doctrines, ideas, theories, concepts, messages and what not. The assumption is ingenious; and it is not surprising that one inference from it should be that Shakespeare designed his plays to appeal to the taste of the cultured and educated class; and another and

perhaps more solid inference should be that the special activities of a long line of learned and expert archæologists and philologists and students were required to give effect to the said appeal. And this too by the queer device of rescuing the 'thin' or verbal Shakespeare from his own mountain of language and burying him anew beneath their own.

Hence has arisen the present idolatrous attitude towards Shakespeare's 'science' and speech which have become for a certain class of Shakespearean translators,—scholars, critics and producers,—his principal mode of expression. Hence has emerged a Shakespearean speech-craft which is said to express Shakespeare himself. How far Shakespeare is represented by this speech-craft, or words alone, is not difficult to determine. Searching through works by playwrights who are on Shakespeare's spiritual level, one finds that such writers are in the habit of using, in addition to terms accepted by planetarians, an inner language of their own that is unspoken. The dominant 'metaphor,' if one may say so, in their expression of dramatic mysticism is silence. Shakespeare lives in this soul-language though his flow of words appears to deny it. This silence implies that words accepted by planetarians and applied by them on the human plane are no use to writers who work in soul- or reality-stuff. It may be that the language of the soul is motion of which we have no adequate alphabet as yet. In any case we may assume that the writers in question, like Shakespeare, felt something as spiritual. But when they postulated divine facts they were compelled to express them in human metaphor in order to transmit them to their fellow creatures and thus secure the continuity which they demanded. In consequence, in



their hands, words became the secret receptacle of mobile, *i.e.* spiritual, essence. Actually they imprisoned soul in tangible things for the purpose of making it more readily accessible to planetarians. But, in so concealing soul in a wonderfully coloured opaque jar that required to be broken before its content could be actualised, they ran the risk of having it overlooked by the planetarian, to whom the jar itself is of most value. The planetarian obstinately refuses to rescue the spiritual Shakespeare from his shroud of words. He will not accept the theory that Shakespeare was a seer who had a dream-world of his own, whose figures had been seen in dreams, as Blake's have been. He dreamt the soul-stuff, as it were, but he could not dream the body-stuff to harmonise with the dream-state of things. His ghosts, for instance, were dreamt by the dreamer as ghosts, dream-men, perpetual shadows on water, to be reflected on the stage as a reflection of ghost-land and not as solid bodily forms that ghosts would never take. But how was this essence or soul-stuff to be represented on the stage? What is the ghostly identity or double,—that which leaves the body at death and asks for adequate representation in life? Perhaps the cosmical Shakespeare found it easier to leave the answer to the planetary Shakespeare. And planetary producers who came after Shakespeare were satisfied with this answer and sought nothing else. For there is no evidence of a producer of Shakespearean ghosts ever trying to produce something really ghostly and breath-like. All that has been done so far is to produce a form in the strict resemblance of a human being. Words alone then do not represent Shakespeare. There is an unspeakable element representing both the dream-

man and his dream-land. This element is silence in motion.

The relation between the dream-world Shakespeare and the inhabitants of his dream-world was expressed in the language of human relationship, and this language has been taken literally instead of in a figurative sense. Besides conspiring in this way to leave Shakespeare's spirit without a witness of itself, the learned and intellectuals seek to bury it in a bygone age beneath the soil of bygone speech. Living as such speech may appear to scholars, no one who knows anything about the vital qualities of speech will fail to understand that Shakespeare's uttered and actual word was a thing of the moment and was potent only during a period in which it was a living instrument of expression, and in which everybody was peculiarly adapted to receive and understand it. Indeed many of the words found in Shakespeare's plays are said to have been improvised by the players who uttered them. But whether or not Shakespeare's uttered words had a *Commedia del'Arte* origin, they spoke in the theatre to Elizabethans, and they cannot be expected to speak in the theatre to Georgians. There is only one way to make them dramatically potent to-day and that is to find the link of continuity in them. By discovering the two realities in Shakespeare's words this continuity may be attained. By revealing the reality which Shakespeare wanted to express, his natural conception of the spiritual as a mighty power underlying and breaking through the order of Nature, and the reality which he sought to use as a means of expression, we may open an avenue for the active qualities of Shakespeare's soul to find their own correspondence in the soul of the spectator to-day, or at



any period. The first is the dream-movement which the natural mystic detects underlying Nature and demanding interpretative response in action, in picture, in speech; the second is the particular action, picture, speech which Shakespeare used to interpret the spiritual, and which forms a bridge from the physical to the spiritual world, for any and every spectator to cross. The bridge is suggestion and symbolic fantasy. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* these two realities are fully apparent, and Shakespeare is plainly seen seeking to bring the vision of the nature-mystic to the door of the potentially mystic spectator. It is true that words are there in abundance, singularly beautiful words; but squeeze them ever so little and they overflow with the joy of fantasy. Continuity in joyous life-force, vitality, psychic breath or whatever we like to call it, is there in abundance ready to saturate the appropriate production when the true Shakespearean translator shall arrive.

In a world the impressions of which are drawn from solidity, it is difficult to convince planetarians that mysticism is the raw material of which plays by writers on Shakespeare's level are made, and that the mystic essence which their words contain is the only really significant thing about them. Such persons have never ceased to assert, not only that Shakespeare's speech is his immortal part, but that it has exercised a considerable influence for good on the Drama, especially in a poetic way. But results do not bear this out. If we turn to history we shall find that the sixteenth century Shakespearean secular form of drama, which formed an important part of the literature of England, has wrought certain play-making changes (that is, changes of form) in a number of countries.

We shall find that Shakespeare has gradually won to universal suffrage, and in the process has served as a source of inspiration and model to pioneers of new eras of play-making activity. Looking back we shall find too there have been more or less regular periods of re-discovery and re-interpretation. And each period has been marked by regular cycles of growth, maturity and decay. Thus Shakespeare enters upon and moves along a certain line of interpretation when he is suddenly faced by a new tendency that demands of him instant rebirth, regrowth and readjustment. He responds to the demand; but always under old conditions. So each rebirth has come with the spring of the naturalists, slipped into an expiring summer with the romanticists and gone out with the winter of the classicists. For instance, we see the young Germans of the eighteenth century *Sturm und Drang* period headed by the youthful Goethe going forth with an outburst of lyrics as the worshippers of the newly-found Nature's dramatic poet. We see them diligently seeking the generalisation underlying Shakespeare's work,—that lyrical forms of drama are alone vital, and arise from a return to Nature. After the naturalists come the romanticists also seeking a generalisation, namely,—that genius should be set free to fulfil its intent and purpose. Then came the classicists demanding in turn their fettering generalisation,—that genius works and is judged according to a definite code of principles. Then came the pseudo-classicists with their chains of tradition. Then a revolt against their dead formulæ. And then a fresh outburst of lyricism. So the straight line repeats itself instead of making one deep curve that shall bring it within contact with the spring and source of real vitality.



The inference is that Shakespeare has played an important part in stimulating naturalistic perception by an infusion of literary ideas. Each change wrought by him has affected literature, not drama. Those playwrights who have come under his influence, while adhering to dramatic form, have in addition sought an intellectual development of the power or charm of language. Each new movement has been towards a greater freedom of literature itself, and not towards the liberation of the spiritual essence of which vital literature is the shell. The purely literary element has prevailed throughout, and nothing has been done to revivify Shakespeare by the force of his own spirit. Actually the naturalists, occupied at one end of the line with the re-expression of naturalistic emotion as influenced by Shakespeare, were not so far removed from the classicists, busy at the other end rejecting all living communion with the universal Spirit. The return to Nature contacted the rejection of it. The first was not a movement springing like a spontaneous fountain from the Poet's inner self. It was not Nature working directly through him and touching the newcomer's primitive instincts, and provoking vision, ecstasy, inner necessity and the great flight. It was simply intellect protesting against the servile state into which intellect had fallen through worshipping itself alone.

Through popular and cultural approaches, then, comes the Shakespeare of blood and words. He brings with him corresponding forms of representation, the 'fat' and the 'thin,' the elaborate and the simple. Both believe they are designed to do good work in each generation. The work consists in the very elaborate production turning its back on the very simple one, and the reverse. It is planetary action and reaction.

## III.

If we admit that in the words of Shakespeare there is evidence of the existence in his mind of an element of healthy reaction to stimuli which may be translated into a highly refined form of experience termed spiritual, and endowed with great mystical value, and if that spiritual element has never been represented in the theatre, it follows there is a third method of representation to be considered. It must be the business of the new men of the theatre to consider this method and to employ all their powers of critical and constructive interpretation in order to express Shakespeare's two realities, — his mystical vision and his real method of expressing it. It has already been pointed out that the relation between the dream-world Shakespeare and its inhabitants was expressed in the language of human relationship, and this language has been taken literally, as that of the Bible has by many persons, instead of figuratively. If ghosts or elementals were spoken of by Shakespeare as though they had human attributes, they were given these attributes and made up on the stage to look like human beings and not represented as dream-stuff, that is shadow, reflection, motion, breath, etc. For instance, the ghost of Hamlet's father has been represented invariably as a human being who retains all the signs of physical actuality. Yet a ghost is supposed to leave the body in a form that transcends the physical form and its stage-limitations. It may be urged that Shakespeare himself was at fault in this respect. If so, it is well to remember that he lived at a time when scientific scepticism had produced a material world in



its own likeness which appeared simple and unquestionable, and which demanded to be expressed in the theatre accordingly. But if apparently he did put this world on as it appeared, there is nothing to prove that scientific scepticism was the kind of unity he put in his plays, and that he thus designed the latter to take part in a materialistic movement which during the succeeding three centuries was to lead intellectual Europe step by step towards the widest acceptance of scientific positivism. On the contrary, there is much to prove that the seed of unity which he planted was the spiritual Shakespeare, and the flower and fruit thereof would be the reward of an ever-increasing power of abstraction in the theatre. In a word, he clearly left it to abstraction and symbolism to rebuild his dramatic dream-world. The appropriate building materials are everywhere apparent in his works. In the Sonnets we discover the soul of the poet facing the Infinite and receiving and transmitting such universal rhythms as harmonise with its own flow. In his tragedies, especially *The Tempest*, the facts and phenomena of psychic forces clearly manifest themselves; while proofs of a highly refined sensibility responding to the touches of a new and supremely joyous world are forthcoming from his light-hearted fantasies (*A Midsummer Night's Dream* type), sunny comedies (*As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night* type) and his idyllic romances (*The Winter's Tale* type). Indisputably the foundations are there and, though it would be a delicate feat to attempt, there is the possibility of laying the whole of these foundations bare and building thereon the kind of universe, exalted, ethereal or mystical, in which Shakespeare the spiritual man lived and had his being. This is the structure

promised by the seed of continuity, which has never been realised owing to the belief that the man-in-the-street and in-the-library should be permitted to look upon Shakespeare as one of themselves, rather than as a nature-mystic representing the mystic in each of them. Looking spiritually at Shakespeare then, we may posit that such and such a spiritual universe can be found in him. And when one posits this universe, one may ask: Suppose the foundations of this universe of Shakespeare had been laid by the first interpreters, those who broke away from the spiritual ties and sought the actual. Suppose the *rôle* of each succeeding age had been to take its imagination in its hands and strive to realise Shakespeare's universe bit by bit, not by knocking it down and building it anew according to some freakish conception of each age, but by steadily building it up under the urge of spiritual harmony and continuity, under the impulse of creative advance. Suppose, that is, each age had taken the spiritual Shakespeare, and each had done something according to its spiritual insight to develop him, using only such words as are necessary to secure continuity and expansion in the theatre. What position would Shakespeare now be in to contribute towards the spiritualisation of the drama, the theatre and the spectator?

#### IV.

First, what is the tendency that may be said to be springing out of the very foundations upon which Shakespeare built his dream-world? Anyone who examined the work of certain reformers in the theatre just before the War must have noticed one thing at least. The work appeared to be based on a philosophic



conception arising out of a very significant modern discovery—namely, that the immortal part of man is the pre- or unconscious, that it is common to all human beings, and it is possible to increase the power of pre- or unconscious reaction to appropriate stimuli. Springing from this discovery was the argument that the unconscious is the link which bridges the Past with the Future and makes man continuous and one with all creation. This unconscious element is neither rational nor irrational; it is simply non-rational. It proceeds from a world of spirit, not from a world of intellectual forms, and is therefore beyond reason. By most persons it is felt, not seen; by others it is apprehended by intuition. Therefore we must place greater reliance on the power of sensibility to open the door of real life for us, and having found the sense-scheme of this life we may proceed in order to the higher levels of meaning and recognition. Reason alone has not brought man any nearer to positive revelation; it has simply burdened him with the increased offices of a thinking creature. Such was the argument. Whether it was known to the said pre-War reformers is uncertain. But it is certain that the reform of dramatic representation was placed on the first step of the ladder, namely the sense-scheme. This was seen in what might be called the new drama-craft of Professor Max Reinhardt. Implicit in this craft—that is, the business of extracting the greatest amount of drama-stuff or pure feeling-stuff from existing masterpieces and new plays—was the contention that the unconscious element in drama is incalculably greater in its effect on the spectator than the power of the intellect. It projects unity from out itself in ever widening circles so that all the separate elements in the theatre

become one for the time being. Under its influence the spectator assumes the *rôle* of actor, and unfolds in harmony with the particular unfolding that is taking place before him. The conclusion was that the theatre and all its objects and agents of representation and interpretation are part and parcel of a big sense-scheme and should be treated accordingly. Along with this apparent contention of Professor Reinhardt and influencing it went that of Mr. Gordon Craig, to whom the modern theatre owes the endowment of an inspired theatre-craft. Implicit in this craft (the business of which is to add the greatest amount of intensity and refinement to the environment of the drama, commonly called the 'setting') was an argument of intimacy, similar to that expressed by Professor Reinhardt. "Drama," Mr. Craig appeared to say, "is an unconscious element; it is continuous and unending; it is potential in each spectator and is capable of responding fully to appropriate dramatic expression." From this we may assume that to Mr. Craig drama expressed sense-activities or spiritual activities which are capable of communicating themselves to all capable of receiving them, unconsciously, and in a medium of supremely rich and varied emotions beyond the reach of words. The inference is that a new language is required to express these activities of the sense-world, or at least a symbolic language that was used to translate them at a very early period of the world's history when language represented actions not objects. Indeed we find Mr. Craig demanding a new language of gesture, looks and motion intuitively and spontaneously chosen. If we remember that motion was a highly specialised form of dramatic expression before the spoken word became a systematised mode of



expression, it becomes clear that Mr. Craig's contention, as revealed in his experiments, embodies a plea for a return to the original position of the spectator being his own author and making his own plays, and thereby forming in himself the interpretative triad—playwright, actor and spectator—before man lost his individual power of being provoked into action through transferring it to deputies. Very interesting work was being projected on both the above lines when the War stopped it.

Let me join these two positions: first, that Drama is an element of the sense-world acting and actuating through human sensibility; second, that motion is the means by which alone Drama effectively externalises itself;—then we may understand that motion proceeding from the sense-world is the cause or principle of continuity in the drama and the theatre and its objects and agents, and it may be used to rebuild Shakespeare's dream-world so as to be of utmost service to the illuminative and unitive stage upon which the theatre and the drama are now entering. These two, the unconscious element of a dream- or sense-world, and the motion by which it is expressed, are the two realities in Shakespeare's plays; and motion is the means of translating the plays from an apparent planetary form to a real spiritual one. By motion in the dramatic sense I mean a conversional experience—that is, a fluid experience—which proceeds from the sense-world, touches a human being, initiates him into the truth of real life, and leads him to spiritual recognition and consequent transfiguration. The best example of this transfiguring motion in action is the life of Christ. All that proceeds from the spiritual world, touches us and moves us to the height of joyous

liberation or passionate renunciation in the sensible world; whatever sets up unresistent unfolding, that conducts to spiritual illumination; in short, whatever touches the human soul and causes it, or something which is as it were itself, to unfold and rid itself of planetary accretion, is dramatic action. This is the dramatic climax reached in some of Ibsen's plays, notably *A Doll's House*. It is the highest point of experience expressed by the Drama as yet. Perhaps, some day, it will be possible to express the next stage—namely, the expansion of the human soul in the Infinite. I think the idea that Drama is the Infinite 'spiralling' through human beings is bound to replace the conventional one that Drama is conflict; and the notion that tragedy is Drama wrapped up in gloom will yield to the notion that Drama, in whatever form it is expressed, is the embodiment of high spirits or ecstasy. High spirits is the mark of Shakespeare's plays.

If then action is the way to the spiritual foundations of Shakespeare's plays, obviously it is necessary to make a verbal analysis of each play, extract the action and make a spiritual synthesis from that. Thus the action is to be sought everywhere in the dialogue, dynamic words liberated, action set free from words, subtle suggestions of motion dug out of words and distilled from speeches. Shakespeare himself will provide the keynote. Here it is in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: "Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth." The spirit of mirth is the dominating motive of the play. The spirit of sun and light and air, the conductors of eternal influences that fill the reservoir of human sensibility—all that actuates the nerves and organs of motion—this is what has to be liberated and



set flowing towards the widest expansion. This is the unity which the play projects from itself, and which proceeds through the audience in ever widening circles till it merges in the unity from which it issued as the antecedent unity. Likewise Shakespeare affords a clue to the high-spirited passions in his tragedies. His soul's experiences are everywhere in *The Tempest* and may be translated into illuminating action.

One may conclude that if Shakespeare's interpreters had worked along these lines, if they had consistently developed the seed of spiritual unity in his plays, so that as the mystic life ascended, the trunk and branches (acting and setting) emerged in harmony as conductors of the current of Drama, they would have attained that mystical synthesis in the theatre which is necessary to promote the spiritual uplift now taking place in our midst. Thus the Shakespearean theatre would now be in a position to offer spiritual food to those reformers already on a higher level than the planetary ones.

HUNTLY CARTER.

## THE SPIRITUAL WORLD OF PLOTINUS.

THE EDITOR.

HERE and there in his writings Plotinus endeavours to portray graphically the impression left on his mind by a transcendental experience which he seems not infrequently to have enjoyed.

It was not the incommunicable rapture of supreme union, which was vouchsafed him very rarely indeed,—perhaps on four occasions only,—but the participation in a deeper, fuller life or mode of existence, which I think cannot have failed to tincture profoundly much of his philosophic thinking and orient his outlook over the higher problems on which his attention was concentrated as the absorbing interest of his life.

Contact with this deeper life awakened in him a power of insight, or rather it was itself a vital understanding. This supersensible perception, he was convinced, had disclosed to him the nature of the spiritual world, or of authentic reality, more intimately than any methodical thinking about it was capable of setting forth. Nevertheless he held that something of this immediacy might be indirectly made accessible; somewhat of this vital apprehension of reality might be suggested to sympathetic minds. . Otherwise he would never have attempted to describe the impression his experience left with him. There were more of such minds apparently than might commonly be supposed. Indeed one might almost say that he appeals to what he believed to be already subconsciously



present or innate in all rational souls; for he speaks of his experience as due to a power that all possess though few use.

He frequently refers to this wider life as 'yonder' or 'there' in contrast with our narrow normal life 'here.' But the whole of his teaching insists that this 'yonder' has nothing whatever to do with being anywhere in any region of the sensible universe, were it even the summit of the starry heavens. Spiritual life is free of all spatial and temporal limitations; it transcends our consciousness of bodily existence where all things are mutually external to each other and so in a place, one here one there in material extension.

'Yonder' and 'here' are thus for Plotinus symbolic expressions for different orders of existence. The former is independent and inward, indeed wholly remaining in itself; the other is doubly dependent and wholly external. For body depends on soul and soul on spirit. The soul, which is the vital link between the real world of spirit and the phenomenal world of corporeal forms, owes all the reality of its being to spirit, and by contemplating it extends its powers to the enformation of all things in the world-body. Soul depends on spirit, but in its turn remains in itself and is not subject to the spatial and temporal limitations it creates. Body alone can be spoken of as subject to such conditions, and therefore as being in a place. If then we would seek to speak correctly of the connection or relation of soul with body, we cannot even say that the body is *in* the soul, much less that the soul is *in* the body; we can speak only of the soul being compresent with the body. Spirit transcends even this compresence; it is in reality neither 'yonder' nor 'here,' but the most immediate of all things.

No one is better aware of this than Plotinus ; he frequently warns us that any attempt at describing spiritual things must necessarily fall short of all adequate expression ; for no descriptive language can escape the hampering of the physically sensible conditions in which and mainly for which our speech has been developed. Nevertheless he is persuaded that the attempt is worth making ; and though he has perforce to resort to the use of imagery, he keeps free of the devices of mythology. In a famous passage (V. viii. 4) our philosopher essays this difficult task as follows :

In the spiritual world "life is free from care. They have truth for mother and nurse, yea for their very being and subsistence. There they are everything—not in the process of becoming, but as things really are. Indeed they see themselves in others. For all things are transparent ; the dark and impenetrable does not exist for them. But each is manifest to each inwardly, and all things are so—light manifest to light. There everyone has all things in himself, and again sees all of them in every other. So that all are everywhere, and each is all, and all is each, and their glory boundless. Each of them is great, for even the small is great. There the sun is all the stars, and each and all are the sun. Though each has its own proper distinction, it shows forth all as well. There too is pure and free activity ; for the cause of motion in that state, in that it is no other than itself, does not confuse the order of its going. Rest too is there, rest ever undisturbed, for there is no immixture of anything that could be thought the contrary of rest."

Plotinus goes on to tell us that in the spiritual world beauty is true beauty ; for there is no material



imperfection to dim it. The here and there of things embodied has vanished, for that in which each is, is that which is itself. Each whole is from the whole and is the whole. The contemplation of that blessed state can never weary; for there is no satiety to dull the vision. Nay, the more one sees the better does he see into all things and so into the depths of his own being. In all things purity proclaims itself. There too is wisdom—the wise life, that is—not wisdom derived from arguments. There is no longer need to search for it; for the life of spirit is the truth itself. The very being of the spirit is being wise, and perfect science is brought forth to light together with it.

This statement is obviously partly descriptive of the experience and partly interpretative. The main object seems to be to convince us that the world of reality is to be apprehended in a mode different from that by which things here are known; it must be spiritually discerned. This spiritual perception is vital and immediate. To know is to be, and to be is to know. If I do not misunderstand Plotinus, he seems at times to suggest that the spirit which is known is as knowing as the spirit which knows; subject and object are here indiscerptible, yet somehow interchangeable. There is suggested throughout a mutuality of life and a reciprocity of consciousness which are quite bewildering if we try to think them 'out.' For the world of spirit is ever within the power of the spirit, and the spirit does not think as the soul thinks in the mode of discursive reason. This is in keeping with what Plotinus elsewhere declares—that the forthgoing, the path of the procession of things, has not been shown us, but only the path of return. Spiritual perception reveals the way of return, and

therefore the chief characteristic of the world of spirit *for us* is its inwardness or profundity. For the spirit there is nothing external to itself, so that it should be outwardly constrained. Directly therefore we fall back into the process of reasoning about it, which is the proper function of the human soul endeavouring to interpret its experience of a spatial and temporal order of things, this true inwardness of spirit escapes us, and we have at best an imperfect and elusive image of it; the one-many appears as the one *and* many.

Now Plotinus was a man of penetrating intelligence, high moral character and fine æsthetic appreciation. He was also a severe critic and demanded the fullest exercise of reason in every way in which it could legitimately be used. This is amply testified to by his writings and his life.

If then his mystic or transcendental experience so satisfied his lofty, intellectual, moral and æsthetic aspiration, that he was convinced he had come into immediate touch with that reality in which truth and beauty and goodness had their home and reigned in sovereign majesty, we have reasonable ground for treating his estimate with all due respect, and cannot without prejudice or presumption dismiss it as the dream of a fanatic or the illusion of a morbid visionary. He would never have told us of it, had he not believed that it fully worked in with the whole of the case for truth he labours so strenuously by argument to bring before the bar of reason.

But though he insists that the discipline of reason is indispensable for all right thinking, he is also equally insistent that its proper end is to bring about its own conversion to the spiritual source whence it



derives all its virtue. He would thus have us elevate our souls beyond the domain of discursive thought. Even the lofty method of the dialectic which purifies the reason and fits it to seek out and philosophize about first principles and the nature of reality, is not enough, for it does not enable us to know them directly as they should be really known. For this another power must energize in us—a power, he avers as we have already seen, which all possess though few use. However else it may be described, it is fundamentally this turning of the soul wholly to its source in spirit. It is this inmost attention of the soul to what it truly is that alone can free us, not only from the tyranny of bodily sense, but also from that bondage of the mind which this life of separation and isolation in the phenomenal world imposes on us.

Plotinus would share his spiritual experience with us as far as he can, make us free of whatever he can remember, if such a term can be used of a state where memory does not obtain, for all is present in it. Things need no future there to complete them as they do here in the process of becoming, and what is never out of mind stands in no need of recollection.

It is no monotonous sameness of existence which he would have us contemplate; the impression that it leaves with him is far other than an abstract state of unity. On the contrary, it is fulness of life, infinitely rich in quality and power and virtue and all the good things we fall short of here. It is, however, a reality that cannot be quantitatively estimated. The apparent infinities of magnitude and multitude fall short of the true infinity of power. And though Plotinus speaks of all being great there, and even the small being great, he would be the first to say that this is metaphor, and

that the greatness he is thinking of is not of size but of meaning and value.

And if spiritual reality is not a monotony of existence, equally is it no inert static state. For there, if anywhere, is free activity in fullest actuality,—not movement as we know movement imposed from without by one body or force on another, but inwardly caused or self-originated. It is thus life unrestrained or free of all impediment—secure, not as the fabled life of the gods of the popular pantheon, each living for himself, but each for others and the whole. Plotinus transmutes the gods of mythology into the powers and attributes of the Divine Mind, into the hierarchical order of the Divine Life.

In the spirit the ideal and the real are one. Ideas are not the abstract notions they must necessarily be for the intellect here, but the eternal truths of the creative life, modes of its being and norms of its thought; for thought and being, that is reality, are one and the same in spirit. They are the spiritual causative truths which become in the soul of the universe the formative principles which regulate every order of generation in the world of becoming. Thus in many degrees are reflected as it were in the mirror of matter somewhat of the realities of the eternal world.

Plotinus would have it that all things 'yonder' are also somehow here below; that is, all natural objects in proportion as they show forth the beauty of their creative forms represent or reflect some thought in the Divine Mind. So also, contrariwise, the sun and the stars and all that is good and beautiful in nature and in man, are to be found 'there' in the perfection of their true being; for thence is their origin



and thither their end and there they live as they truly are—not in separate forms of existence, but in blended being.

What Plotinus seems to intend is that life in separation and the limitations of time and space—the two fundamental forms which condition our consciousness of sensible experience—are over-passed, but that the virtue gained from so living is not lost; on the contrary, it is in spirit that the meaning and value of all things in the generative process so conditioned are gathered up and fully realized.

In its essence or true being every typical mode of existence in the phenomenal world, and every life which manifests its nature therein, not only potentially contains but actually embraces every other. This he endeavours to bring home to us by the startling statement: "The sun 'there' is all the stars and each and all are the sun." But here we must remember that for Plotinus the sun and stars were living entities, creatures manifesting souls of an exalted order in the scales both of existence and of value. He is indignant that any could believe otherwise if they believed in soul at all. For him life was everywhere present in the universe of form, in some degree even where we could not sensibly distinguish it; for it was the world-soul that bestowed its form on everything by contemplating the creative ideas in the Divine Mind and the world-soul was life essentially. No, the sun and stars are not inanimate masses, but the bodies of souls, images of inner realities.

Plotinus brings in here as a help to the imagination the idea of transparency, of light interpenetrating light. To spiritual sight the whole galaxy of heaven is in every member of it; to see one spiritually is to see

all. And not only sun and stars, but every typical form of life has all other forms compresent with it. There is as it were a manifold compenetration of life in a unity of being; yet none is deprived of its own proper spiritual identity. They do not lose the distinction that is the reason of their being and manifests the divine purpose which is shown forth in each and all.

In the fulness of this life the spiritual man participates and is thus united with all the potencies of his true being. He too is sun and stars and all things that show forth the glories of the spirit of the soul of things in all the marvellous profusion and variety of the ever-changing world of sensible objects.

However difficult it may be for us to envisage such a stupendous vista of the possibilities of man's true being, this intuition of Plotinus seems to me exceedingly suggestive for those who are seeking to sublimate the idea of personality to a genuinely spiritual status. Moreover, it removes the difficulties with which we find ourselves confronted when we are asked to conceive of God solely as a personal being, or indeed as personal in any sense we use the term of creatures in this state of existence. Plotinus gives us a vision of spiritual reality that already for man takes up the ideas of personal and impersonal into the higher synthesis of a compenetrating community of life. This mediating notion carries us on to a reasonable ground of reconciliation for the otherwise contradictory conceptions of God in nature as impersonal and God in man as personal. At the same time our philosopher safeguards the transcendency of the Divine Perfection from the inadequacy of even this spiritual reconciliation. The over-mastering reality of the Godhead is for him beyond being in all its modes; for it is the



supreme cause and end of all being and as such transcends spirit itself and even the Good. For though he calls the Godhead the Good, he says that even this highest designation is not adequate.

Much less are such terms as personal and impersonal wide of the mark, for the ground of their reconciliation is already to be found in the nature of the spiritual life which the Godhead transcends. But it is in this life and it alone that we can achieve the wholeness of our nature and live as wholes with wholes. In the life of separation here we are not spiritually integrated; the best of us only are nearing that consummation. If we call this spiritual whole-making personal, it is so in an entirely new sense, and overarches all that we know as personal and impersonal here. It is super-personal rather; but nothing of value is lost, for the super-personal means a state in which personal and impersonal complement and perfect one another. Distinction still obtains, but there is no longer separation. In the spirit, life is essentially social and corporate in their highest meanings and values, a life in which all share to the depths of their being. We are the spiritual society and the society is each and all of us. We are taken out of ourselves, but only to find our true being in the blessed company of those who are one of another in spirit and in truth.

Plotinus is of course by no means alone in testifying to this state of spiritual communion; it might almost be said to be in one way or another the common persuasion of all the great mystics; but he has his own way of setting it forth.

In the instance we have taken he is perhaps insisting more upon what might be called the æsthetic, than upon the intellectual and moral ways of approach

to this whole-making of man. But they all lead thither and all blend there; for the Beautiful, the True and the Good are one with another, and whichever path we may pursue, God is our guide and the final object of our quest.

Plotinus never ceased to wonder at the visible beauties of the world-order, and a little later in the same treatise from which we have been quoting (§ 9), he suggests what might perhaps be called a mode of meditation whereby the inner glories of this outer beauty might be more nearly approached. Was it, we may even ask, a method he practised himself? If so, it is of greater importance than has so far been ascribed to it. It begins with an act of thought, an effort of the imagination to shake itself free from the shackles of physical sense, and ends in an act of religion. It is as it were the converse of what he has been speaking of before.

It is difficult to make certain of one or two of the details and so far I have seen no version that is altogether satisfactory. The general idea is as follows:

Let us first try to form a mental image of the sensible world with all its parts remaining what they seem to be but interpenetrating one another, imagining them all together as much as we possibly can. So that whatever we take as the general form of this whole, say that of the great sphere, there immediately follows the sight of the sun and stars, and earth and sea, and all the creatures, as though in a transparent sphere,—in fine, as though all things could be seen in it interpenetrating one another.

Let there then be in the soul this inner semblance of a sphere of light with all things in it, moving or still, or some in motion and others at rest.



We must then endeavour to banish from our mind all ideas of mass and size and space, and every material notion.

Then invoking God, who is the creator of the real sphere, of which this world of the senses is a phantom, and of which we are now striving to make a more adequate image in the mind, we must pray that he may come.

“And may he come with his own world, with all the gods therein,—he being one and all, and each one all, united into one, different indeed in their powers, yet all one in that one-many power. Nay rather is he one-all. For he falleth not short in himself though all of them are from him.

“They are all altogether, yet each has its own distinction in a state not subject to extension, in that they have no form perceptible to sense. For otherwise one would be onewhere and another somehow otherwhere, and not each all in himself.

“Nor does each have parts other than the others and other than himself. Nor even is each whole a power divided up or proportioned according to a measurement of parts. But each whole is all power, reaching to infinitude and infinitely powerful.”

Such to one who had enjoyed the vision was the impression left in his soul of the potencies and excellencies of the spiritual world reflected in the natural beauties of the sensible world. But those who failed to reach the vision by contemplation of the beauties of nature, could draw nearer by contemplation of the beauties of thought and conduct which the inner discipline of the philosophic life showed forth. There was a scale of virtues to be climbed.

The foot of the ladder was planted in the civic or

social virtues, which make a man a good citizen, careful of all his duties to the state. This stage was preliminary, however, to the true work, for it aimed simply at the moderation of the passions and not at their extirpation.

To it succeeded the first degree of the philosophic virtues proper—the purgative or purifying discipline, in which the effort was to free the soul entirely from every disturbance of the irrational nature and cast off its bondage to things of sense. This constituted the philosophic separation of the soul from the body.

Plotinus, in arguing against suicide, which under certain circumstances was held to be permissible by the Stoics, says that there are two modes of conjunction—between soul and body and body and soul. He contends that nature alone can legitimately dissolve the outer union of the body with the soul. The philosopher should not do violence to nature and usurp her lawful functions; his right and proper task is internal and not external,—namely, the dissolution from within of the union of the soul with the body, by purging it from the contaminations of the passions.

The practice of the purificatory virtues is likened to the work of a sculptor. It is as it were a hewing out and bringing to perfection from the lower psychical material the ‘image of the spirit.’

Thus the life of the soul is purified, and the image of the spirit made quick and finally converted entirely to spirit itself. This is the stage of the contemplative virtues which illumine the soul with the light of the spirit.

The virtues are thus seen to be essentially spiritual powers; they are ultimately the true gods, for they are god-like activities which gradually come to birth in



man. And so we find that at a certain stage of the ascent there is said to supervene what is called the 'generation of the gods.' The passage which refers to it (VI. ix. 9) reads as follows in Dean Inge's rendering:<sup>1</sup>

"For we are not cut off from our source nor separated from it, even though the bodily nature intervenes and draws us towards itself, but we breathe and maintain our being in our source, which does not first give itself and then withdraw, but is always supplying us, as long as it is what it is. But we are more truly alive when we turn towards it, and in this lies our well-being. To be far from it is isolation and diminution. In it our soul rests, out of reach of evil; it has ascended to a region which is pure from all evil; there it has spiritual vision, and is exempt from passion and suffering; there it truly lives. For our present life, without God, is a mere shadow and mimicry of the true life. But life yonder is an activity of the spirit, and by its peaceful activity it engenders gods also, through its contact with the One, and Beauty, and Righteousness, and Virtue. For these are the offspring of a soul which is filled with God, and this is its beginning and end—its beginning because from this it had its origin, its end because the Good is there, and when it comes there it becomes what it was."

This doctrine of the soul filled with God giving birth to the true virtues is precisely the same as that of Philo, who dilates at length on the virgin-made soul conceiving and bringing forth the virtues by the grace of God.

The moral 'generation of the gods' in us is thus due to the peaceful activity of spiritual contemplation. It is the consummation of the virtuous life and

<sup>1</sup> *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, ii. 138

the realization of its highest values. The gods and the spiritual virtues are the excellent beauties of our true being.

But the highest possibility of achievement transcends even the glories of the blessed life of virtue revealed to spiritual perception. In that holy life itself there arises an overmastering impulse which Plotinus speaks of as the 'spirit in love.' Then nought but union with God alone suffices it. On such a soul, not only taken up into spirit but centred wholly in God, Plotinus avers (VI. ix. 11), a final grace is conferred whereby man is made like unto God. In this mode of supreme communion, he tells us :

"He is no longer being, but above being. If then one could have vision of himself becoming thus, he would have the likeness of God for himself. And if he should then pass out of himself, as image to original, he would reach the end of his journey."

But the embodied soul must needs fall back blinded by the superfluity of light. Nevertheless—

"When he falls out of the vision, by again awaking the virtue that is in him, and finding himself in every way rightly adorned, he will soar up again, through virtue to spirit, and through wisdom to God.

"Such is the life of gods and godlike and blessed men—decease from all other modes of life, a life that finds no pleasure in living them,—the flight of the one and only to the one and only One."

The consummation of supreme union is in the nature of things utterly ineffable; of it there can be not even spiritual vision. For the soul must not only strip itself naked of all that does not belong to the spirit, but also close its eyes to the plenitude of riches of the spiritual world.



Viewed from below the unitive way may thus seem to be a wholly negative way; but it is not really so. It is the most immediate path to God and is in itself the most positive of all states; the spirit is in love, untainted with the slightest thought of self but yearning to give itself wholly to God alone. The soul may be in love with the manifold beauties and riches of the spiritual world; but the spirit which already possesses these, must be in love with God alone, and that too, not because of the spiritual wealth he bestows, but with himself alone. We do not truly love the Good itself if we love it because of some benefit it can bestow upon us. Spiritual love gives itself wholly to the Beloved and asks for nothing in return.

But this paper is not attempting to follow Plotinus in his highest flights of exposition concerning the supreme object of spiritual worship. It is an endeavour to give the general reader some elementary notion of how the spiritual world appeared to him when immediate insight into it was no longer being enjoyed.

Nevertheless, he avers, he is in some measure imaging the reality; he is not purely imagining it. He who has seen the vision, he declares, will know what he says and that his testimony is not false—that the soul has its true life in spirit. There it dwells compresent with its fellows and in the most intimate communion of being with them. All of them are in the light of the Divine presence; but the Godhead transcends even the light of that presence.

G. R. S. MEAD.

## GOD THE CREATOR OF EVIL.

Rev. F. W. ORDE WARD, B.A.

GOD is distinctly called the Author of Evil by Deutero-Isaiah (xlv. 7): "I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create evil; I am the Lord that doeth all these things." There can be no reasonable doubt that He is the Author of Evil as well as the Author of Good. Whole libraries have been written by thinkers and theologians, who are by no means identical, to explain or explain away the mystery of the fact. In the present stage of knowledge and with the absurd prejudices we have inherited from our misguided ancestors and the old teachers, we can entertain no idea of the kind, for it seems to militate against all our most sacred notions. Dare we believe that God who is Love, can be also the Author of Evil? Yet assuredly if He be the Creator of the one, He must be the Creator of the other. It will then be found useless and unprofitable to deny the fact which stares us in the face through both the Old and the New Testaments. So it is simplest and safest to accept the indisputable truth, and to call God and realise God as Himself the Author of Evil. This, when we reflect, does not impair either His character, which always remains the same, or His conduct, which is always changing with changed conditions, but makes both more intelligible. God is Love, and therefore in Love and for Love's sake He must be the Creator of Evil. He could not be either Merciful or Just were He not. For Love includes the



two opposite and yet complementary factors of Mercy and Justice. Undoubtedly, on the other hand, God never was and never will be and never could be the Author of Sin—the only real evil. If this were possible, then our Lord would not have been ‘made sin’ (a sin-offering) for us and become a ‘curse’ for us. Poets have sung of the ‘supreme evil, God,’ but no poet has been so blasphemous as to call God the ‘supreme sin,’ or the ‘supreme sinner.’ Jesus sternly repudiated any imputation of the kind. Can anyone imagine the *Deus*, even on the cross and in the grips of apparent failure, out of His extremest agony crying ‘*Peccavi*’?

Evil is one thing and sin another and a very different thing, and with this at present we have nothing whatever to do. The difficulty that has troubled divines and philosophers for all these centuries appears on examination to be quite gratuitous, one erected by themselves, the construction of *docta ignorantia* or learned ignorance. It arises entirely from a false conception of evil, a reproach to its nature, an interpretation which possesses no justification; as if it were a monstrous excrescence of a moral disease, a spiritual cancer lying at the heart of things. If we look narrowly into the lineaments of what is usually termed evil, we find it to be something not ethically bad in itself but rather ethically indifferent, something we do not like that is painful or generally classified as bad. It really has no moral or spiritual colouring at all, though we can and do so often impose this complexion upon it. Physical pain conveys nothing moral or immoral in its meaning, in itself it is purely amoral. Sorrow and suffering are just what we choose to make them, innocent in themselves however trying or terrible. Accordingly we

stigmatise them as evils, whereas they may be and often are positively and opulently goods. Because, like disagreeable medicines or the surgeon's knife, they operate eventually as downright blessings. Evil then, with its present connotation or miscalculated meaning, proves to be the slanderous name we give wrongly to certain natural processes or sequences that inevitably follow in the wake of such a frail and imperfect creature as man, the defier of his original constitution, with a frail body and sensitive nervous system and an emotional mind. In itself, however hard to bear, it deserves no ruthless condemnation. It comes in the logical order of events and as a breach of law, and is disarmed at once if we accept it as a necessary reaction that obeys and conforms to a preceding stimulus. Exciting impression suggests some expression. As a cosmic factor, evil plays a most important part in our lives and thoughts. If we wisely refrained from calling natural and innocent things evil, and merely agreed to label them bad, it would be very much better for us. So much depends on the mere names. Had not pain and sorrow and suffering happened to have been denounced everywhere as unmitigated curses, we should have received them rationally as ordinary and necessary incidents in the day's round. We should have resisted them, whenever possible, or turned them into other channels and directions where we could, and always borne them as integral parts of a complete life. We should have discovered beautiful accommodations and compromises by a 'wise passiveness' coupled with a temperate activity, which would have transformed and transvaluated the worst things till man stood at last on a veritable Mount of Transfiguration.

Patience and a spirit of adaptability soon reverse,



not only the unpleasant opposition and clash, but also the intrinsic character of most troubles. Bacon, whom uneducated people persist in styling 'Lord' Bacon, with a true insight wrote these immortal words: "Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament, Adversity is the blessing of the New Testament, which carries with it the greater benediction and is the clearer evidence of God's favour." Besides, it seems certain that the so-called evil never was an unmixed evil, but contained or concealed in it some infusion of good. Everything in the world has probably no absolute singleness or simplicity, and everything proves when tested or analysed to be complex. Dalton imagined we should never be able to resolve or dissolve his 'indivisible' atoms. But we have already done so and passed beyond. And perhaps even the electron will be broken up into complementary elements before very long. It only awaits its conqueror. And as for the ether, if indeed it exists, some penetrating dissolver of doubts or resolver of riddles may be even now preparing for us a better and more satisfactory working hypothesis. Love not seldom includes a healthy admixture of hate. Hope never was or will be without the shadow of fear. Joy acquires its uttermost expressiveness by a touch of sorrow, and pleasure always has its accompanying pain. And, *vice versa*, hate may be brightened by love at one and the same time. Fear could not live a moment apart from the compensation of hope. Sorrow would be destitute of precise definition but for the sweet tincture of joy; and pain would commit suicide but for some associated pleasure. Prolonged tension in any one quarter appears impossible to human nature. The overstrained mind recoils presently to the opposite

and contradictory extreme. And the evil, when faced manfully and clearly and comprehensively, undergoes a marvellous metamorphosis and stands out when baptized by faith and love and sober endurance as another kind of good. Human nature, when provided with proper antidotes, will soon create these fruits itself with new and wider experience; just as Columbus, as it has been truly said, possessed sufficient faith to have created America, had it not existed.

In our estimation of the correct character or disposition of any particular event we must consider it carefully as part of a whole, related not merely to ourselves but also to others and our total environment. From one point of view it seems one thing, and from another another and very different, and so on indefinitely. We must not be betrayed or deceived by the appearance alone, *prima facie*, superficially at a certain time and in a certain place and by a certain manner. Take, for instance, the loss of physical health, which compels a man to revise and perhaps revolutionise his life. There is at once a sharp solution of continuity. In a short time numberless pleasant and profitable attachments are severed from the roots, and the sufferer finds himself deserted by the old friends and the old facts with which he has been on terms of the closest intimacy and accustomed to grapple. He feels at first stranded, shunted on to a forlorn siding, and more or less isolated. But, when he pulls himself together, fairly and fully confronts a new situation, he finds he can be master of it and his own undeveloped powers as well. The physical has failed, but the moral, the spiritual part of him remains. And the physical though good was always the least worthy of his possessions—of his stock in trade. He



knows he is a potentiality that is practically inexhaustible. Health was a splendid talent in which he had a fine investment. But it did not contribute everything. Other doors, other avenues of employment, other opportunities, soon open out to him and reveal riches which can be realised for himself and for society. He discerns how he can adjust his abilities to the different sphere in which circumstances oblige him to dwell. He can and will force the conditions which now surround him to a favourable aspect. Nor need he always or indeed often wait for the right occasions; with a little patience and foresight he proceeds to manufacture these. And presently his whole character begins to broaden and deepen and rise to loftier attitudes and altitudes. He is no longer the shallow commonplace man he was before. He becomes a living, masterful soul, lord of himself and his little world. Physical strength was good, but moral strength is far finer and far more robust. He has entered the spiritual universe, which according to the great Italian thinker Benedetto Croce is the sole true universe. Had he remained on the physical plane, he would never have known anything better or the real Good, never have realized himself to the uttermost extent, never have fulfilled his higher destiny and his *raison d'être*. At last the cross of Christ, which is the sceptre of empire everywhere, possesses a vital significance for him, and he gradually bows to the burdens and responsibilities which this imposes on him. And thus stooping he rises to the very stars. "*Servire est regnare.*" To serve God, to serve others, means, he perceives, in the end to serve himself best of all. He has proved that he is greater than he knew. The former vague and dim apprehension of the supposed

evil in his loss of health has been slowly but surely transmuted into a bigger and broader conception of lasting good. He embarks on an appropriation of Horace Bushnell's 'personal quantity,' 'personal volume,' and concludes by being in his new and nobler interpretation of life a much more efficient member of society. He once barely *occupied* a particular post, but now he proceeds to *fill* another post and to make this twice and thrice as productive in richer fruits. Unconsciously he has been absorbing and assimilating under the New Testament the blessing of Adversity, the Christ Spirit, and has taken Christ as his working conscience. The old Roman official, the *Flamen Dialis*, was not allowed to touch any leaven; so now in his emancipation from a pure physical environment the man who has been saved from a lower medium, in his fresh *milieu* will not soil his mind or heart by handling anything that does not ennoble and dignify his character and soul.

"My resting-place is found,  
The C Major of this life."

He is in tune with the infinite things, and he beats time with the pulse of the cosmos.

Enough perhaps has been said to show our fancied evils, when firmly fronted with a virile resolution, energise on the contrary as heavenly and helpful goods. God, who permits and of course cannot prevent the occurrence and recurrence of misfortune without stultifying Himself, as He reigns by law and not by the perpetual interposition of miracles, in the powers which He has given us, has provided a refuge and relief and sufficient remedy. Strong characters, the best possible men and women, do not complain



of the severe visitations which befall them from time to time. But they accept them gratefully as the raw materials out of which a broader and more beautiful existence can be constructed. They are builders.

“ They builded better than they knew,  
The conscious stone to beauty grew.”

“ No sound of hammer or of chisel rang,  
Like some tall palm the stately fabric sprang.”

The most unpromising materials at the outset in the long results often yield a glorious harvest. And they call nothing evil which they can turn into good. Misfortunes are the *inevitabile fatum* of all imperfect beings like men; and they must be expected, and we must leave for these a large margin of foresight, so as not to be taken altogether unawares. To be ready, even for the most sudden and violent catastrophes, is half the victory.

“ Twice armed is he who hath a quarrel just,  
But thrice armed he who gets his blow in fust.”

The prepared spirit, the armed soul, means a spirit, a soul, equipped at all points and equal to either fortune—*ad utrumque paratus*. Danger has been so far discounted, and the battle almost won before it has been really fought. So the less we cease to enlarge on the agonies of evil, and the sooner we proceed to disarm them where and when possible by ‘quantitative prevision,’ the better for us. “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.” “All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies.”

Jesus surely came to revise our judgments, to

reverse our standards, to make the first last and the last first, the small great and the great small. He abolished the reign of the Letter and brought in the rule of the Spirit. "Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter." He did away for ever with the empire of Appearance. His work was to give the true proportion and perspective, to reveal the true relations and fundamental attachments. He organised effectually the inwardness of the moral and spiritual worlds. It was he who first exposed the falsehood of mere phenomena, and laid bare the riches of reality. His advent meant a complete change of values and judgments. He showed the mistake of making the standard of an age, a passing age, the standard of eternity. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are my ways your ways, saith the Lord." "Grace and truth came by," were embodied in, "Jesus Christ." Unmasking the fallacy of the cast-iron formula, the inheritance of centuries and even millennia, he fixed, he focussed, the attention of humanity on the permanent, the invisible elements. He proclaimed directly or indirectly the good in the evil, the good of the evil, the truth in falsehood—for no falsehood could live a day but for some admixture of the truth, and therefore many falsehoods have endured for æons and æons and will yet endure. "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but One, that is God." This lets us into a secret. Here our Lord evidently suggests that it is the presence of the Spirit of God that has a hallowing power. It means that we shall discover some divinity in all that we prove to be good. This energising and vital constituent creates it and



this alone. Size, priority in time and place, rank and riches, what are they to reality? Kings may be and sometimes are clothed in rags, not in purple and fine linen. A glaring, staring lie, as the poets have always known, may be truer and more divine than any truth; while on the other hand a logically correct proposition may be absolutely incorrect and untrustworthy in the essentials. Just as a man with the most accurate manner may have a most inaccurate mind. There may be saving errors and even immoralities which stand justified and splendidly immortal on a far higher plane than mere conventional right or wrong. Christ was no casuist, though a mystic, but he anticipated whatever we can admire in casuistry. Nothing is finally and fundamentally evil except sin, which puts self on the throne of God. Now the Pharisees of the Gospel Age used diametrically opposite criteria—they judged by the outward semblance and not the internal fact. They judged as Jesse did. But “the Lord seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.” His followers, Jesus taught, were to go deeper, to study the intrinsic, so far as it betrayed itself, the sequences and consequences, the effects and results, the connexions and moral bearings, the effluence and influence, the ultimate fruits of all. Wealth and exterior importance did not count, did not matter in the long run and on the last analysis. Actors and actions were to be judged *sub specie aeternitatis*. The poorest individual, the most inconspicuous deed, might yet have some *semen aeternitatis* which completely altered their positions, and gave them rank among the greatest. Little children, even babes and sucklings, were the measure of real magnitude, the ideals at which his

disciples should aim. The servant and not the sovereign was his example. Nothing was more deceptive than the obvious, the superficial, or that which bulked big in the eyes of everybody. "For a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Thus our Lord's reference always was away from the material to the immaterial, from the physical to the moral, from the merely spacious to the spiritual, to the religious core of reality.

"Sweet are the uses of adversity,  
Which like the toad, ugly and venomous,  
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head;  
And this our life, exempt from public haunts,  
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,  
Sermons in stones and good in everything."

Who can doubt for a moment that the world-wide and terrible War will prove the new birth of every nation embroiled in it, not least of all savage and sanguinary Hunland?

But there is yet one more point, and this perhaps the most important to be considered. From the very beginning what we miscall 'evil' has been attributed to malignant powers invisible, that interfered from time to time with the course of the world and with the destiny of races and individuals. Gradually these hostile and aggressive deities became summarised and epitomised in a single being called by various opprobrious names, but now known as the Devil. It was the ancient opinion that the sufferers from misfortune had committed some outrage or sin against God. And these visitations were signs that the profane or sacrilegious conduct had to be penalised



and atoned for by suffering. If the particular insolence had not been perpetrated in this incarnation, then in a previous one, or the parents of the offender had been guilty. Jesus alluded to this poisonous belief in his reference to the Galilæans slain by Pilate and the Tower of Siloam. This belief was universal and hung like a dark shadow over the lives of men. "Deliver us from Evil," or "the Evil One," is in the Lord's Prayer. Any accident popularly styled evil grew to be associated invariably with the Devil and the Manichæan heresy. This superstitious idea made things inevitably much more serious and sombre. The poor victims were under the curse of God and left to the tender mercies of the Devil, and perhaps justly deserved their fate. For the Good God left his dirty work to the Devil, who delighted in the infliction of grief and pain. Now our Lord, in the full consciousness of this monstrous belief, deliberately marked his disapproval by what must have been thought the paradoxical acceptance of evil as good. He saw Satan falling from heaven and together with him the whole machinery of a false and fatal system. The disciples were bidden to rejoice in affliction, in ostracism and persecution and the hatred of men. "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." So at the present day enlightened modern notions and reformed faith have ceased to connect the Devil with the evil of the innumerable shapes in which misfortunes occur. In fact many people no more believe in a personal Devil. They think him superfluous and altogether unnecessary. Perhaps they water him down to an attenuated Principle of Evil. But the old nightmare creed, the incubus of which had oppressed the hearts and minds of multitudes for

thousands of years, was killed by Christ when he said, who was Light: "Let there be light." We are no longer haunted by the grim and grisly spectre, by the perpetual obsession of a merciless being for ever waiting and watching at men's doors, or going about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. It is only among the very uneducated, the narrow-minded and bigoted, without any open vision, that this anachronism still survives, though we must be well aware that too many of our friends and neighbours have never outgrown a mediæval atmosphere, and do not possess anything like the brain-capacity of neolithic men or of those giants in early art, their palæolithic ancestors. The blight engendered in incurious and unobservant religion, which forbade people to think out anything and starved their intellects for the supposed benefit of their souls, which shut them up in an iron round of mummeries and mechanical observances, has produced the natural paralysing effect. Nevertheless it is clear that Christ taught the very opposite of the vague creed which satisfies a few relics of the darkest ages.

In conclusion, how is God the Creator of Evil or what is erroneously called 'Evil'? The only answer seems simple and obvious. God persistently works by law. At the beginning of things He had to choose, so to speak, as to acting by incessant interference, or by a settled order and system, governing through principles laid down by Him. The fallacy and fatality of the first method presents itself at once as an utter impossibility. Then He could operate from without or from within. Evolution makes it clear that He chose the last method and is Himself the central mainspring of all. But, having instituted certain laws, certain actions and



reactions, and set going a million million processes, He thereby limited Himself to a machinery which moved along definite progresses. Health depended on obedience to particular rules, and happiness followed in the same way from a regard for the discoverable impacts of the environment and a proper conformity to its requirements. *Natura vincitur parendo*. Accordingly the so-called 'evil' of the cosmos inevitably resulted from the fact that God created these primordial laws and permitted them to work out their necessary consequences. "*Deus qui facit omnia per leges facit omnia per se.*" He created evil from the first, because He created various modes of energising, and allowed them to carry on and carry out their task without His intervention. But this 'evil,' as we have shown, means only natural misfortunes, the effects of our own or others' faults and folly, and the breaches of a system which refuses to be violated with impunity. In any transgressions of this kind, conscious or unconscious, voluntary or involuntary, we are practically fighting against God and opposing our will to His. We must take the world as we find it, and endeavour to ascertain its habits, its tricks and temper, if we may so say, and through obedience we shall prove the evil becomes less and is always good at the last.

F. W. ORDE WARD.

## MYSTERY SURVIVALS IN MEDIÆVAL ROMANCE.

JESSIE L. WESTON.

IN the course of many years' study of the Grail-romances I have become gradually and increasingly convinced of the existence in the general *corpus* of Mediæval romance of elements which, while they are popularly regarded as folk- or fairy-tale features, betray to the student of comparative religion distinct traces of their Mystery-origin.

It is of course very generally recognized that no small part of surviving folk-belief and practice represents the *detritus* of outworn and discredited faiths; the most materially-minded critic will admit so much. But it is not so generally realized that such survivals exist not merely in what we term folk-lore, but in the more elaborate monuments of Mediæval literature.

More than one example of such survival may be found in the Grail-romances; and this is not surprising, since, in my assured opinion, the whole of this important and famous body of literature finds its root-origin in a Ritual-Mystery-tradition. The question as a whole is too extensive for treatment within the limits of a short paper; the evidence will be found in my forthcoming volume *From Ritual to Romance*. Here I propose merely to select from the Grail and other Mediæval romances certain episodes for which, as I think, a Mystery-origin can be safely postulated.



Those of my readers who may be familiar with the published texts of the Grail-cycle may remember how, in the *Joseph of Arimathea*, Robert de Borron, the author, accounts for the origin of the title of 'Fisher,' which, in the general form of 'Fisher King,' is found attached to the ruler of the Grail-castle and Guardian of the Grail.

The tale is as follows. During the wanderings of Joseph and his companions in the desert certain of the company fall into sin and, as a punishment, are threatened with famine. In order to discover who are the guilty Joseph is commanded by Heaven to send his brother-in-law, Brons, to catch a Fish. Meanwhile Joseph is to prepare a table on which, in front of his own seat, he is to place the Grail covered with a cloth. Opposite he is to lay the Fish Brons shall catch. He obeys. As a result the righteous all find seats at the table and are conscious of a great bliss and 'fulfilment of their heart's desire'; their companions find no place at the board and are satisfied neither in body nor soul.

Now the origin of this story has been the subject of much discussion.

The late Mr. Alfred Nutt was convinced he had found the source in the Irish tale of the Salmon of Wisdom, caught and cooked by Finn. A drop of grease falling upon his thumb, on being sucked by him, induces the hero with all wisdom. But neither Brons nor Joseph derive wisdom from catching or eating the Fish in question; the severance between righteous and sinners comes about, not by their discernment, but automatically by the presence of the Fish and, we may infer, its juxtaposition with the Grail.

I would suggest that, so far from finding the source in Celtic story, it should be sought in Mystery-

tradition, and that Borron's Fish-meal is none other than the Messianic Fish-meal, described and discussed at length by Dr. Eisler in the pages of this Review. The parallels of incident and intention are too striking to be overlooked. The setting of the table and the restriction of participation to the righteous correspond closely to what Dr. Eisler tells us of the illustrative frescoes in the catacombs, and to the fact that the elect alone have a share in the Messianic Feast.

Another instance in which I detect the survival of the mystic conception of the Fish as a life-symbol is to be found in *The Voyage of Saint Brandan*, a text preserved in the Old English *Legendaries*. At an early stage in their voyage the saint and his companions come to what is apparently an island, upon which the monks, with the exception of Saint Brandan, land and light a fire to prepare their evening meal. Suddenly the island begins to move, and the monks terrified rush back to the boat, to be told by their leader that what they had taken for an island was the back of a huge Fish, 'the greatest of all fishes.' The wanderings of the monks last for over seven years, and on every Easter-eve they find themselves again close to the Fish, land and 'keep their Resurrection' (*i.e.* sing their Easter-mass) upon its back.

I do not think that here there can be any doubt of the presence of life-symbolism; the idea of life renewed and sustained is too clearly emphasized to be overlooked.

The most startling and, it may be presumed, the most dangerous stage of Mystery-initiation is that which Bousset, in a remarkable article in the *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* (vol. iv), terms the '*Himmelreise der Seele*.' This was the mysterious exercise whereby the soul was separated from the body during



life and, while the latter remained in a trance-condition, went on a journey through spiritual realms, visiting the abode of the Departed and finally, attaining to the Presence of God, received illumination. On the third day, if all went well, the soul, purified and enlightened, returned to and reanimated the body. This is the experience to which St. Paul refers in *II. Corinthians* xii., where he speaks of being caught up into the Third Heaven or Paradise, and hearing 'unspeakable words not lawful for a man to utter.'

Our natural inclination on reading such a passage is to regard the experience as one of mystical ecstasy, a privilege vouchsafed by Divine Grace and in no way dependent upon human effort. Yet Bousset assures us that this was what we may call a 'Mystery-exercise,' practised by the Rabbinical school to which Saul of Tarsus had belonged, and brought over by him as a relic of his Jewish past. Rabbinical records give most curious and interesting details as to the fate of those who aspired to this supreme revelation. It was, as we might well expect, a venture attended by the greatest danger alike to body and mind. Apparently one Rabbi alone came through the test unharmed; two at least became insane in consequence; and, judging from St. Paul's reference to 'a thorn in the flesh,' which was given him as a check to pride, 'lest I be exalted above measure,' the Saint retained, as a memory of his tremendous experience, a serious physical infirmity.

Bousset in his arresting study gives us details of the Otherworld as reported by these high adventurers; he tells us, for instance, of the bridge between Purgatory and Paradise, the passage of which is fraught with grievous danger.

Now, strange as it may seem, we possess, in

Mediaeval romance, the detailed record of precisely such an experience. *The Purgatory of Saint Patrick*, preserved to us in several of our Old English *Legendaries*, and its metrical equivalent, the poem of *Owain Miles*, in the famous Auchinleck MS., recount the adventure of the knight Owen who, in the days of King Stephen, descended into the Underworld (the entrance to which, in the precincts of an Irish monastery, had been revealed in vision to St. Patrick), passed through Purgatory, crossed the bridge into Paradise and finally, after three days, returned to earth a purified and reformed character.

“ Then with his monks the Prior, anon,  
 With Crosses and with Gonfanon,  
 Came to that hole forthright  
 Thro’ which knight Owain went below ;  
 There, as of burning fire the glow,  
 They saw a gleam of light.

“ And right amidst that beam of light  
 He came up, Owain, God’s own knight.  
 By this knew every man  
 That he in Paradise had been,  
 And Purgatory’s pains had seen,  
 And was a holy man.”

As a consequence of this experience the knight renounces his worldly life, goes on pilgrimage to the Holy Land and on his return becomes a monk in the Irish monastery, where, after seven years, he dies in the odour of sanctity.

One feature of Owain’s vision of Paradise is the joyful singing of birds who throng the branches of the celestial trees. So also in *The Voyage of Saint Brandan*, to which we have referred above, the monks come to



the 'Paradise of Birds,' an island, whereon is a tree covered with white birds, who sing the Church's Hours in their sequence, and explain to the saint that they are in truth angels who fell from Heaven with Lucifer but, having committed no sin, are allowed to remain here in bliss and act as guardians to men.

This feature of a tree covered with birds of specially sweet song is found in the *Ywain* of Chrétien de Troyes and its equivalents, the English *Ywain and Gawayne* and the Welsh *The Lady of the Fountain*. Professor A. C. L. Brown some years ago drew attention to the parallel with *Owain Miles* and claimed the incident, as one of his school would inevitably do, as a borrowing from Celtic fairy-tale. In view, however, of the undoubted Mystery-origin of *Owain* and the parallel adventure in *Saint Brandan* I think we may fairly presume the 'Tree of Birds' to have been a traditional Paradise Mystery-feature.

While *Owain Miles* is perhaps the most striking and most complete case of a Mystery-survival in romance, there is another extremely interesting and curious adventure which is not only preserved in romantic form, but also makes its appearance in quasi-historic texts, and is assigned to a definite locality—details unusual in romantic literature and which would seem to indicate a popular belief in the truth of the story. I refer to the adventure of the squire Chaus, as related in the opening books of the *Perlesvaus*.

At the *début* of the romance we hear that Arthur has fallen into slothful and '*fainéant*' ways; he cares no more for warlike deeds, his knights are forsaking him and Guenevere is sorely grieved at this lowering of her lord's prestige. She appeals to him to visit the Chapel of St. Austin—a perilous adventure, it is true,

but one which may restore to him his lost '*chevalrie et vertu*.' Arthur consents; but, in view of the danger of the expedition, he will take with him only one attendant, his squire Chaus, son of Yvain the Bastard. They will ride at dawn. The lad, eager for the adventure and fearing to over-sleep himself, arms betimes and lies down in the hall, ready for the morning. He sleeps; and it seems to him that it is already daybreak and that Arthur has risen and gone without him. He rises in haste, mounts his horse and follows, as he thinks, the track of the king. He comes to the Chapel, which he finds empty, save for a Dead Knight lying on a bier, tapers in golden candlesticks burning at head and foot. Chaus, not finding the king, takes one of the candlesticks as proof of his visit, thrusts it into his hose, mounts and starts on his return journey. In a narrow woodland path he meets a big black man armed with a two-edged knife, and asks him has he seen King Arthur. The man replies 'No,' but he has met him, Chaus; he is a thief and must give up the candlestick. Chaus refuses; whereon the man strikes him with his knife. With a loud cry the boy wakes, to find himself in the hall at Cardoil, wounded to death, the knife in his side and the candlestick in his hose. He lives long enough to confess and be absolved. After his death, Arthur, with his father's consent, gives the candlestick to the church of St. Paul, London, then newly founded, that prayers may be said for the soul of the squire and his tragic death kept in remembrance.

This is the version of the romance; a brief summary, closely agreeing in detail, is also found in the *Histoire de Fulk Fitz-Warin*, a 14th century prose-chronicle relating the deeds of that genuinely historical person-



age. The passage in question, however, is in verse, and is therefore probably taken over from the original metrical version, now lost; it is thus of older date than the rest of the text. In this passage the Chapel of St. Austin is definitely located in the Blaunche-Launde (now Blaunche-Vile), land belonging to the Fitz-Warins and situated in Shropshire on the Welsh border. We also find John of Glastonbury alluding to the tale and asserting that the tragedy occurred near the Abbey.

So far as these topographical indications are concerned, a careful study of the evidence has led me to the conclusion that the Chapel referred to was probably situated in the Northumbrian district known as Blanchland, which is closely connected alike with Arthurian tradition and the missionary activities of Saint Austin, contains numerous instances of dedication to that saint and is situated within a possible ride from Cardoil (Carlisle).

But how are we to account for a story, at first sight so wildly improbable, receiving this quasi-historical *imprimatur*, being recorded twice over in what are practically historical texts, for the deeds of Fulk Fitz-Warin are perfectly genuine? The conclusion at which I have arrived is that the story is the record of something that actually occurred. As noted above, a close study of the Grail-legend proves, beyond the possibility of doubt, that the origin of the story is to be sought in a special form of Fertility-ritual, which possessed a fully developed Mystery-side and of which the higher teaching was at one period identified with Christianity. We also learn, from the curious Gnostic text known as *The Naassene Document*, that the initiation was into the ultimate sources of Life, physical

and spiritual—the mysteries of generation and regeneration.

Scattered throughout the Grail-texts we find constant allusions to a Perilous Chapel or Perilous Cemetery, a visit to which is fraught with extreme danger; one text distinctly asserts that the adventure forms part of the 'Secret of the Grail.'

I believe that we have here allusions to the preparatory test for initiation in the lower grade, that into the mysteries of physical life, which test I assume to have consisted in contact, in one form or another, with physical death, this contact being fraught with peril to the life of the would-be initiate. In my opinion the *Perlesvaus* retains the record of such an initiatory test, carried out upon the psychic plane and re-acting with fatal consequences upon the physical. The aspirant was probably a youth of high social standing, and the event, which we may presume to have been one of unusual occurrence among the devotees of that particular cult, made a strong impression upon those cognizant of the actual circumstances. When, in the process of time, the Grail-initiation passed from Ritual actuality to Romantic legend, the tradition of the too greatly daring and ill-fated youth was carried with it into the magic circle of Arthurian story. Yet the knowledge that the incidents recorded were really fact and not fiction persisted and, thus understood, the tale found place also in historical texts.

All who are familiar with 'occult' phenomena will admit that such a tragedy is no impossible occurrence, and the explanation I have suggested would suffice to account for the emphasis laid upon the story and the attempt to attach it to a definite locality. I know no



other incident in the Grail-romances which has been treated in the same way.

The above instances are mainly those that have come under my notice in the course of my investigation into the sources of the Grail-literature, and in view of the fact that this literature can be proved to derive ultimately from a Mystery-source such surviving traces of its origin might be expected. But neither *The Voyage of Saint Brandan* nor *Owain Miles* is in any way connected with the Grail-cycle; the first retains Mystery-features; the second is from beginning to end the record of what we know to have been an actual Mystery-experience. Unfortunately the poem is not easily accessible; it exists only in the one MS., and has only once been published and then in a strictly limited edition of thirty-two copies. A study of the poem and comparison with Bousset's article above referred to will convince any reader, not simply of the *provenance* of *Owain*, but also of that of certain frequently recurring features in Mediæval romance.

Of late years there has arisen, principally in America, a school of critics whose tendency is to seek in Celtic, specifically Irish, tradition the source of most of the principal *motifs* of our surviving Folk-tale and Romance material. In particular the numerous instances of a visit to the Other-world are referred by them to a Celtic source. It seems to me that, in view of the evidence now at our disposal, we should ask ourselves whether certain of the tales we have been in the habit of regarding as fairy-tales, pure and simple, may not ultimately derive from another and more serious source; whether the incidents related were, not creations of pure fancy, but survivals of actual experience; whether our Other-world were not a

Mystery-tradition before it became Celtic folk- or fairy-tale. It seems to me that alike in surviving Mystery-documents, such as the curious Mithraic formula of initiation, edited by Dieterich from the great Magic Papyrus of the *Bibliothèque Nationale* (the contents of which have not yet been exhaustively studied), and the sources quoted by Bousset, we have already material for comparison with our existing *corpus* of Folk-tale and Romance. Such an enquiry, I believe, would be not only fascinating in itself, but also productive of valuable results. We might find a solid and hitherto unsuspected basis for much that we now deem purely imaginative literature.

JESSIE L. WESTON.



# SPIRITUALISM: ITS POSITION AND ITS PROSPECTS.

## A RECORD AND A SUMMARY.

DAVID GOW, Editor of 'Light.'

FROM being a social phenomenon Spiritualism has of late years passed to the position of a social portent, and in the general quest for a way of life great multitudes have begun to inquire into its meaning and consider its message. Many of these enquirers have been met at the outset of their investigation by the discovery that the new thing was not at all new to some of their friends and neighbours, who had hitherto maintained discreet silence on the matter. The neophyte, trembling on the brink of an enquiry which he feared he would have to pursue in solitude and secrecy, found himself suddenly in the midst of friends. I have witnessed the spectacle so many times that I imagine it is a frequent experience. I pause to record one of such episodes. I was visited some two years ago by a distinguished Judge (since deceased) who, having lost a son, had been moved to enquire into the reality of the proofs for human survival. After he had become convinced and we had established some degree of friendly relationship, he told me how he and his wife pursued in private their study of psychic literature, which they kept carefully concealed from their servants. But on arriving home late one night from the theatre, they discovered that their sleepy butler, who had waited

up for them, had in his hand a Spiritualist journal which he had evidently been studying. At first they feared he had been poaching on their own private literature, but a little tactful questioning by the Judge next day led to the discovery that the old retainer was a convinced Spiritualist, had been for years a reader of the same journal and, moreover, had propagated his opinions among his fellow servants. The upper and lower departments of this household had thus been pursuing the same line of study each unknown to the other and each apprehensive of being found out. Some time afterwards a gentleman who had been in his early days a practitioner at the Bar, but who had in the meantime resided in the colonies, paid me a visit with a view to enquiring into Spiritualism, an enquiry which *he* also designed to pursue privately. He soon discovered in the Judge an old fellow advocate, and was further surprised to find that other friends of his youth in the old country had in the meantime become ardent followers of Spiritualism.

Such examples are typical. In short, as with the proverbial iceberg, only a relatively small portion of the Spiritualist movement is visible above the surface of things, even in these days when it is more conspicuous than ever before. It ramifies everywhere in some form or another; for, since its inception in its modern form, it appears to have carried on a process of quiet, unsuspected permeation, and but for bearing a name soiled by much ignoble use its existence would have been more easily apparent. But even the name is now becoming slowly cleansed of its unsavoury associations. Use and wont are making it now-a-days affable and familiar. In a short time to be a Spiritualist will probably carry no more disrepute than



to be an archæologist or a Ruskinite. That it still carries something of a taint is due, in part at least, to the survival of some of the early school of Spiritualists who pursued the matter uncritically and to excessive lengths, so that it occupied a disproportionate part of their life and thought. However regrettable this tendency may have been, it was doubtless a necessary part of the process whereby a neglected idea is revived in the race-consciousness. Nature seems always to exaggerate that to which she desires to attract attention. Flaring, grotesque, ungainly, suspicious are the initial appearances of things designed afterwards to be shaped and assimilated in the general economy of life, and Spiritualism is pre-eminently one of these things.

Progress is cumulative. During the last five years the idea of human survival as a proven matter, instead of simply an article of faith, has recorded an advance vastly greater than in the fifty years immediately preceding it. To my own thinking this has been rather a matter of emergence than of propagation. To the majority of its new adherents the thing has come not as something entirely new, but rather as a new aspect of an old matter. Scepticism with these has been mainly a surface question, where it was not simple indifference. For utter disbelief in miracles, visions, omens and all such intimations of the existence of an unseen world is chiefly confined to small intellectual groups, who have cut themselves off from the old humanities and constructed logical systems that severely exclude anything which cannot be tested by the rationalistic touchstone. It was sufficient to say 'popular legend' or 'folklore' or 'atavistic survival,' and with a Podsnap gesture the illogical thing—whatever it might be—was waved out of existence. That

it came back again and again to disturb the complacency of the logicians was merely a proof of the tenacity of error. The witnesses for the 'supernatural' were dismissed much as Mr. Serjeant Buzfuz dismissed Sam Weller, with a scathing comment on their 'impenetrable stupidity.' The fact that a few of the deponents were men of intellectual distinction, whose testimony on all other matters was accepted without question, was a trifle disquieting, but the Court of Logic soon devised an explanation, gravely recording its opinion that a man of whatever eminence in any particular line of research was quite easily deluded when examining into matters outside his own special study. Moreover it was common knowledge that even the greatest intellects had a 'kink' somewhere. Having thus made clear their own exemption from the frailties and fallacies of the rest of mankind, the followers of Pure Logic went back to their own interests. It certainly seemed as though Rationalism could sleep soundly o' nights without fear of aërial raids from the Supernaturalists.

Let me outline the general position as it presented itself just before the outbreak of the war. To the general observer Spiritualism was little more than a matter of hearsay and vague rumour. Such publicity as it gained in the Press was mainly in connection with raids on fortune-tellers conducted by enterprising newspapers in association with the police. It is significant of the general ignorance of psychic matters that in these prosecutions genuine and reputable mediums were classed indiscriminately with the harpies and humbugs who trade on psychic gifts real or pretended. On these occasions a great deal of virtuous indignation was worked up against 'psychism' and 'psychists,' and newspapers of the baser sort vied with



each other in pouring invective on the cult of Spiritualism and its deluded followers. There was a peculiar venom in the attacks which did not seem altogether justified on the face of things. So drastic was the last campaign against 'fortune-telling' in pre-War days that a daily paper announced confidently that the degrading superstition of Spiritualism might be regarded as having received its final quietus. It was at any rate moribund. Public interest in it appeared to be almost dead. The older generation who had memories of the 'seventies, when a certain amount of attention was given in the Press to Spiritualistic activities, could speak of Sir William Crookes' experiments with the materialized Katie King, the prosecution of Slade the slate-writing medium, the visit of the Davenport Brothers, the law-suit in which D. D. Home, one of the most famous of mediums for physical phenomena, was defendant; a few even recollected that the 'trance-addresses' of Mr. J. J. Morse occasionally attracted the attention of the London Press. But these were old, far-off, forgotten things. The curious observer might have discovered that Spiritualism still existed in some subterranean fashion, that it had one or two struggling organs in the Press, that there was a Spiritualist Alliance, and that small groups of people in London and the provinces carried on Sunday meetings, addressed by 'trance-mediums' and occasionally enlivened by 'psychic demonstrations' in the way of clairvoyance and psychometry. But these exiguous activities would have impressed him but slightly, and he would probably class Spiritualists with the little communities of 'queer folk'—the followers of Joanna Southcott, the Shakers, the Jezreelites, the Peculiar People, and other

examples of what the serjeant at the military Church Parade described as 'fancy religions.'

It is true that our observer could hardly have failed to become aware of the existence of a Society for Psychical Research, with a roll of many distinguished names. But it would scarcely have impressed him as anything but an erudite body concerned with academic enquiries into obscure mental phenomena. He would have judged it to be eminently respectable, not only by reason of its cultured leaders, but also by observing that its attitude towards Spiritualism was of a tentative and non-committal kind. Its pronouncements he would have noted as being severely judicial. It is improbable that he would have discovered that the Society owed its existence to the energy and initiative of a little group of men who, being convinced of the reality of the various phenomena of Spiritualism, saw the need of bringing the matter into the arena of organized scientific enquiry. Neither would he be likely to have ascertained that the organization numbered in its ranks many people who, having gained what they regarded as positive assurance of the reality of the evidence for human survival, were beginning to be impatient of the conservative attitude of the Society.

Of one other movement the impartial onlooker could not fail to take some note—the Theosophical. He would have gained some passing acquaintance with it. Probing a little below the surface, he would have gathered that, although Theosophy and Spiritualism had some kind of bowing acquaintance, their relations were not as a rule entirely cordial. Theosophy claimed possession of certain illuminations that lifted its teaching out of the atmosphere of *séance*-room phenomena, which it regarded as rudimentary and



to some extent dubious. Indeed its philosophy, as including reincarnation, seemed rather to contradict the eschatology of the Spiritualist, which involved a continual ascent of the individual spirit through an unending series of supernal states.

In some such rough and ready fashion, I think, would the inquiring onlooker, after a casual survey, have summarized the various public forms of inquiry into supermundane possibilities. And from the surface-view he would have been fairly correct. The great mass of civilized people cared for none of these things. Their time and thought were occupied with more immediate and practical matters. Moreover there had been a great waning of faith in a future life, as the result of the attitude of Science, the growth of commercialism and other factors. Materialism was rampant in every department of life, and the general cheapness of all the comforts and most of the luxuries of physical existence, as compared with the conditions of half-a-century before, appeared to threaten a process of 'fatty degeneration' for all but the submerged tenth. The primal sanities and simplicities were rapidly being abandoned. Here and there some philosopher recorded a 'new attitude to death' as a note of the modern spirit, and spoke hopefully of the gradual abandonment of the gloomy and pompous funeral-trappings in which our forefathers made a luxury of woe. This was attributed to 'a more enlightened sentiment' towards death and the grave. But it was more probably the outcome of indifference—a symptom of the hurry of a generation busily occupied in making the most of the only world of which it could be sure. Whatever its position as an academic doctrine, Materialism had an immense vogue in practice.

The War came as a great explosion of spiritual forces, pent up by the growing sensuality of the race. There was a panic at the world's Banquet Table, from which the viands gradually vanished, leaving only the Death's Head grinning insistently. The mourners went about the streets, and the 'old question' was no longer to be put by. It was brought home to men's business and bosoms at every turn. Even the most frivolous and callous had uncomfortable twinges. It fell to the part of millions either to face the grisly thing in the field in their own persons or to suffer the loss of kinsfolk and friends. Although Spiritualism, as we have seen, had made no large utterance, no striking public proclamation, most persons had heard of the subject as something connected with ghosts and a life after death, and the beginnings of a general popular interest were soon reflected in the Press. There was a furtive resort to mediums, many of them doubtless of the bogus variety. Multitudes of women visited psychics, real or reputed—some with a view to consolation in bereavement, others seeking oracles concerning the fate of their men who had gone to the War. It was inevitable that scandals should arise. An ignorant and indiscriminate demand led to a kind of supply that was in many cases more than dubious, and the authorities in several countries, notably Germany, France and the United States, put into force some drastic regulations directed against the sooth-sayers. Little or no attempt was made to discriminate. The honest possessor of psychic gifts who employed them carefully and reverently was, as a 'medium,' classed with the ghouls to whom the War brought an unprecedented chance of battenning on the purses of people half-crazed with grief and anxiety. With the



many cases of real proof and well-founded assurance gained through mediumship I heard in my official capacity some almost incredible tales of the foolish credulity of enquirers and the audacious roguery of bogus psychics. Persons whose sole stock-in-trade was an unlimited supply of impudence and astuteness set up as mediums and made large incomes at the game. The police were kept busy in several countries, and in the second year of the War a special campaign against 'psychics' was set on foot in this country. It was a severe ordeal for those of us who had the direction of the Spiritualistic movement, especially as several genuine mediums came under the lash of the law. Once again psychic avocations of all kinds were denounced, and good and bad alike suffered under the wholesale bludgeoning. Amid the general clamour and confusion of counsels it was a hard matter to maintain an even mind. The appearance of Sir Oliver Lodge's *Raymond* about this time, while to a certain extent clearing the air on the matter of psychic evidences as scientific facts, gave a fresh and central impulse to the subject, which, as time went on, came back to its primary issues—the question of a future life and the possibility of its demonstration as a living fact. Rationalism was stirred to its depths, and books and pamphlets galore appeared as counterblasts to *Raymond*. To one who, like the present writer, had watched the career of Spiritualism and 'Occultism' in their various forms for more than a generation, the lucubrations of the Sadducees were extraordinarily significant. With one or two exceptions these showed the most astonishing ignorance of the subject attacked. Some of them were clearly the work of persons whose information was based entirely on hearsay, and that

the hearsay of thirty or forty years ago. Amongst these Rip Van Winkles were writers who seemed to be under the impression that Spiritualism was the invention of Sir Oliver Lodge, and that it was only necessary to discredit him for the whole subject to be brought to the ground. The criticism offered, in short, impressed me as being generally puerile, frivolous, ignorant and inconsequent. That this impression was not the outcome of any undue partiality for the cause I had espoused was soon apparent. Visits and letters from people of intellectual competence revealed the fact that some were beginning a serious investigation of psychic evidences chiefly because of the imbecility of the arguments directed against them. Such a spectacle of mental vacuity and intellectual incompetence on the part of the critics of Spiritualism was too much even for the uninitiated observer. This personal note may be forgiven as affording a typical illustration of some of the forces at work at the time. The Rationalist, Secularist, and Theological opponents of Spiritualism (for Theology, suspecting that its preserves were being trespassed upon, joined in the fray) were made uncomfortably conscious that the enemy they attacked was far stronger than they had suspected. Instead of an answering shower of arrows and javelins, they were met by the fire of powerful modern batteries, hitherto masked. That the protagonists of the psychic movement shewed a disconcerting superiority in gun-power was soon evident, and I recall the mortification of a distinguished Rationalist when he found his fulminations effectively answered by several writers of equal eminence with himself; he had never suspected their leanings towards the 'superstition' he attacked. In the Press the situation was much the same. Scurrilous



attacks on Spiritualists in leading newspapers resulted in the discovery that the journals had been unconsciously scarifying persons of position. It is not comforting to an editor to find that in the same issue of his paper he is lavishing encomiums on some leader of public thought and at the same time branding him by implication, and with a profusion of opprobrious terms, as the follower of a disreputable and debasing doctrine. "Ignorance, pure ignorance," as Dr. Johnson remarked when he was caught in the results of his own similar heedlessness. Doubtless as the result of private and indignant protests an attempt was made afterwards to correct this false step by drawing a line in patronizing fashion between the 'serious Spiritualists' and the 'charlatans'; and I noted with some amusement that the pressmen concerned relieved their lacerated feelings by importing additional rancour into their denunciations of the 'charlatans,' which of course included everybody who, with some pretensions to psychic powers, took payment for their services. It had become evident in the police prosecutions that the head of the offence lay in the taking of money for anything in the nature of a prediction of the future, and the whole efforts of the prosecuting counsel were directed towards bringing out this incriminating point. The prosecutions were always based on a small section of the Vagrancy Act (5 George IV. c. 85) clearly directed against gypsy fortune-tellers, but readily adapted to the purpose of suppressing any professional 'psychism' of which the taking of money for predictions of the future formed part. It is true that the Witchcraft Act (9 George II. c. 5) still remains on the Statute Book, but some able lawyers whom I consulted gave it as their opinion that its provisions were so obsolete

that it was unlikely to be revived. That Act made it an offence to practise necromantic arts, holding apparently that, communicating with the dead being impossible, those who pretended to do so were by the same fact rogues and impostors. A revival of this law could have suppressed all forms of psychic inquiry concerned with the proofs of a future life. As the Society for Psychical Research is under Parliamentary Charter and several Spiritualistic societies, making no secret of their objects, are incorporated under the provisions of the Companies' Acts, the resuscitation of the old Statute would certainly have created a farcical situation. It was abundantly clear that the lawyers (themselves adherents of Spiritualism) whom I consulted, were justified in their opinion that the Act would never be put into operation. It would remain among the obsolete enactments, such as those forbidding agricultural labourers to play cards except at Christmas and imposing a penalty of three years' imprisonment on the man who elopes with a nun. Oddly enough, as Dr. Ellis Powell has shewn, the Witchcraft Act, which treats witchcraft, sorcery and conjuration as bogus powers, and spirits as mythical beings, grew out of earlier legislation in which all were recognized as facts and forbidden under penalty. Materialism thus made a considerable gesture even so far back as 1736, when the Act first came into force. Serious and influential efforts to obtain a repeal of the offending statutes are now being made, but in the present state of Parliament one cannot be very hopeful of the results, even though the alteration of a few words in the Vagrancy Act would in effect give all the practical relief required.

I had long been of the opinion that Spiritualism



in most of its phases was living largely on sentiment and the records of objective phenomena which appeared for the most part to have died out. There were certainly a few physical mediums left, but such evidences as they afforded were the subject of fierce controversy (I may instance Eusapia Palladino). The astonishing results of the experiments of Professor Schrenck Notzing and Mme. Bisson, recorded in German and French, were known to comparatively few. We were condemned for the most part to pasture on the past. Some definite and trustworthy pronouncement from the scientific side in this country was urgently needed. When therefore, in the spring of 1915, Dr. J. W. Crawford of Belfast, the Mechanical Engineer to the Corporation, and holding a recognizable title to scientific distinction as an author and lecturer, told me of his now well-known experiments with the Goligher circle, I gratefully accepted his offer to record his results in a series of papers in the pages of *Light*. A year or so later I assisted in the publication of the papers in book-form. Something practical, concrete, tangible, had now been added to a mass of old material which had been growing moribund for lack of some such vitalizing agency. Sir William Barrett, to whom I had spoken of the experiments, visited the Belfast circle and gave a favourable verdict and, as I gathered later, several other scientists of standing displayed a keen interest in Dr. Crawford's work. Within a year the 'Crawford experiments' became something like a household word wherever psychic matters were discussed. By the courtesy of the Goligher family and Dr. Crawford many people had been allowed to witness the phenomena, and as some of these were persons of public standing their testimony strongly reinforced the

substantive record, which was a cold, clear, definite pronouncement that overlooked nothing and took nothing for granted. The area of interest widened, and it was not difficult to trace the impression produced. Dr. Crawford had clearly succeeded in reinforcing and vindicating the earlier experiments of Sir William Crookes. The matter became the theme of widespread interest in the Press of the world, and all but the dullest of the opponents of psychic research now found it necessary to take a new line of attack. Even the literary critic who aforetime, by reason of his prejudices, had rather smiled upon any anti-psychic book, acquired a habit of murmuring allusions to Dr. Crawford in the middle of his review, when he found his Sadducee author writing too positively.

The advent of Sir Oliver Lodge as a public figure on the side of Spiritualism, and the testimonies of Sir William Barrett and of Dr. Crawford as scientific witnesses of the reality of its objective manifestations, divorced from all appeal to sentiment, were followed by what to the public was the greatest phenomenon of all. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle entered the lists as a champion of the movement, making his appeal to the world at large. It was news to the public (though of course not to the inner circle of Spiritualists) that he had for many years been a student of psychic matters, was convinced of the validity of survival, and only needed the urge given by the agonies of bereavement which attended the War to make a public proclamation of his faith, and to offer to the mourners the consolations of the facts and philosophy of the 'new revelation.' Criticism, although not silenced, was considerably chilled; the most disgruntled part of the opposition was clearly the Theological element. The war was



being carried into its own territory with a vengeance, for Conan Doyle's special message was to the masses of the people, easily influenced by the verdicts of those whom they have installed as their idols. But although weakened by dwindling numbers, the opposition was in a measure strengthened by the consolidating influence of this new and formidable adversary. Nevertheless the advocacy of Sir Arthur immobilized some of the wavering sections and added the final touch needed to make the issues of Spiritualism a popular rather than an academic matter. There was a tremendous fluttering of ecclesiastical doves, and the leaders of the Churches raised their voices, their protests ranging from mild expostulations to such vehement condemnation that it almost suggested the addition of a new clause to the Communion Service. But the creator of Sherlock Holmes is a 'bonnie fechter,' and the opposition only increased his militancy. He held on with the tenacity of the bull-dog, following up his first book, *The New Revelation*, with another, *The Vital Message*, and taking the whole world as his arena. Public lectures with overwhelming audiences in England and Scotland, letters, articles, interviews in the Press of the English-speaking world—such were the main features of his policy and propaganda.

Concurrently with these events my attention was drawn to a remarkable outbreak of psychic manifestations behind the scenes. They occurred spontaneously in the lives of many people who until then had taken no interest in such things, and who, surprised and bewildered by their experiences, sought counsel of those versed in such matters. My work brought me into personal contact with cases of this kind. They formed generally the turning-point in many lives,

and the ranks of Spiritualists have been reinforced by a considerable number of persons who have had the matter brought home to them as directly and unexpectedly as Saul of Tarsus himself. Space will not permit me to cite any even of the most extraordinary cases. The subjects belonged to different ranks of life,—there were soldiers, sailors, artisans and professional men amongst them. Many of them discovered the possession of rare gifts of social service which they are now utilizing in connection with the Spiritualistic movement. I am content to record the fact. It has an eloquence of its own.

As regards the outburst of enquiry generated by the afflictions of the War, I have been painfully conscious of the lack of provision to deal with enquirers. Spiritualism, regarded as a body of facts, has indeed suffered severely from the absence of any adequately equipped institution. As one at the 'storm-centre' of the movement, I found myself hard put to it to deal with the multitudes of letters and visitors that have poured in upon me during the last three years. But for the aid of a numerous body of voluntary assistants, earnest people in all ranks of life, many suppliants would have had to be sent empty away. This great volume of social service proved a very present help in the crisis, and I have grateful recollections of innumerable acts of kindness and sympathy performed on behalf of bereaved persons, many of whom testified that their whole lives had been changed by contact with those who possessed the knowledge and experience needed.

As I have said, it is practically impossible to cover the subject of Spiritualism inclusively by any single organization. But there is certainly room, not to say



urgent need, for an institution which can co-ordinate some of its activities, chiefly those that relate to the consolation of the mourner, and take in as far as possible the best of its religious, scientific and philosophical aspects. A *punctum stans* is to be handled with some degree of adequacy, but Spiritualism is a *punctum fluens*. The most elaborately equipped centre would serve only as a nucleus for a portion of its energy ; but such a centre of radiation is a necessity to-day. Wisely ordered, it would never become a point of fixity refusing all later interpretations ; but would always remain ready to form a starting-point for fresh expansions. Such an attitude would of course place it in startling contrast to all those organizations which invariably resist the incursion of a new idea if it threaten the integrity of their particular system of thought. But then never was the world given so vast and comprehensive an idea, taking in not only religious but scientific and social values. Spiritualism, indeed, seems to belong to the primal things, and its purely psychic aspect is but a component of the principle it expresses. It affirms in unequivocal terms the spiritual nature of God, man and the universe. As a whole therefore it is incapable of reduction or fixity, and experience all down the ages has shown the futility of getting it stated as a definite creed. It will never run into any mould. Consolidated into a system its essential spirit invariably escapes. The conclusion is that we are dealing with Life in terms of life rather than in terms of logic ; and that we should arrive at the stage of recognizing the fact is a measure of the advance we have made. The old thought-structures are falling into decay, and we are passing into realms where mechanical systems can serve our turn no more.

That is the true significance of Spiritualism as a movement. Disruptive to all systems that positively oppose its course, it provides for all in affinity with it a fresh stimulus and new starting points. We seem to-day to have travelled an immense distance from table-tilting and spirit-rapping—those ‘pot-hooks and hangers’ of what promises to be a new literature of life.

Let us pass now to a brief survey of the corporate energies of Spiritualism in this country, where leading minds are beginning to realize its greater issues as I have tried to outline them in the foregoing remarks.

The largest body of Spiritualists in Great Britain is the Spiritualists’ National Union, operating mainly in the Midlands and Northern counties of England. It is practically what in financial circles would be called a ‘control company.’ It unifies and concentrates the working of some 370 societies throughout the country, with a membership in round numbers of 30,000. This is to say nothing of independent societies and groups holding meetings and circles for investigation. Regarding these no statistics are available. For the younger generation there is a Lyceum Union, on the lines of the idea worked out by Andrew Jackson Davis, the seer sometimes known as the ‘father of Modern Spiritualism.’ It represents 240 Lyceums with a membership of some 24,000 young people. In London Spiritualism is represented by the London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., originally founded in 1884, and incorporated under the Companies’ Acts in 1896. It owed its inception chiefly to Mr. Edmund Dawson Rogers, a leading journalist in his day, and to the Rev. William Stainton Moses, better known as ‘M.A. (Oxon),’ the author of *Spirit Teachings* and a notable medium.



Amongst other persons associated with its beginnings were Alfred Russel Wallace, the Earl of Radnor, the Hon. Percy Wyndham, General Drayson, Mr. C. C. Massey and Mr. Henry Withall. The last-named gentleman is almost the only survivor of the group who were connected with the beginnings of the Alliance, and of the Psychical Research Society. Of the latter Society I may in passing record the fact that Sir William Barrett and Mr. F. W. Percival are the last survivors of the original Council and were closely associated with some of the most interesting events in the germinal stages of psychical investigation. The London Spiritualist Alliance, which numbers some 1,500 members, was established on a non-propagandist basis, but the influences of the time have considerably modified its attitude. Its present Council includes Sir A. Conan Doyle and Dr. Ellis Powell. Dr. Powell, who divides the rest of his energies between finance, economics, law, classical scholarship and oratory, is a sound authority on psychic phenomena and has been associated with Sir A. Conan Doyle in lecturing campaigns on behalf of Spiritualism in London and the provinces.<sup>1</sup>

As I have shown, however, it is impossible to confine the consideration of Spiritualism to these more overt forms. The subject is pursued by thousands who take no part in the public side of the matter, but are content to study its literature and carry on their own investigations in private. Spiritualists by conviction, they make no confession of faith, but remain

<sup>1</sup> It is not possible to enumerate all the centres which in some phase or other represent Spiritualism in London, but I should perhaps mention the W. T. Stead Bureau, carried on by Miss Estelle Stead, in continuation of her father's undertaking, and the Delphic Club, a social centre, the outcome of the enterprise of Col. Roskell.

more or less passive sympathisers. Consequently their interest in the matter, even when they are public characters, is generally unknown. Of late this attitude of reticence has shewn signs of breaking down. I may instance the public declarations in recent months of Lord Glenconner and Viscount Molesworth. Since then a number of other persons of intellectual or social distinction have taken up the matter seriously and are being heard of in connection with its propaganda.

Of those to whom Spiritualism appeals on its religious side it may be said that they follow the spirit of a doctrine rather than a doctrine in itself. They are committed to no book for their creed although finding in the Bible a warrant for their faith. They acknowledge no form of personal authority—whether of Pontiff or Presbytery. Indeed the whole teaching of Spiritualism is that it is character and not creed which counts. This at one stroke abolishes much of the friction which comes of doctrinal differences. I am speaking now of the Spiritualist *quâ* Spiritualist, and not of those who, while accepting the facts of Spiritualism, still belong to the various religious bodies. Concerning the realities of a spiritual world and communication between the two states as a proved matter, there is no dispute. That the acceptance of these fundamental truths should have made a distinction sufficient to differentiate the Spiritualist not only from the avowed Materialist but from the rest of the community is a striking commentary on modern thought. So far then as Spiritualism is identified with its foundation principles its future as a world-force is assured.

I am convinced that Spiritualism will remain Spiritualism with continued expansion until its work



as a permeating element is done. In surveying its career past and present it is impossible for me to avoid the conclusion that as a modern movement it was initiated and is still directed by the agency of the unseen world. That indeed is claimed by communications purporting to come from advanced minds in that world, and I have seen no reason to doubt the claim. To-day the message and mission of Spiritualism are being thrown into high relief by the ordeal through which the world is passing. There is clearly a confluence of forces ; the seen and the unseen are coming into close conjunction :

“ The ghost in Man, the ghost that once was Man,  
But cannot wholly free itself from Man,  
Are calling to each other through a dawn  
Stranger than earth has ever seen ; the Veil  
Is rending, and the Voices of the Day  
Are heard across the Voices of the Dark.”

DAVID GOW.

## JACOB'S LADDER.

IN the year of our Lord 1918, and on the eleventh day of November, there was in his usual place, in pursuit of his usual occupation, a very old crossing-sweeper.

Jacob had swept the crossing at the end of Buckingham Palace Road for more years than he could count, and knew neither his own age nor genealogy. He knew a great many other things very well indeed, being an expert in his way on the habits and customs of the Royal Family, and on the psychology of his friends the passers-by. He knew the nine o'clock rush to business in the morning, and the ten o'clock stroll to office work; he knew who came up Birdcage Walk, who from beyond the Mall, and who turned in at the first gate on the left going down St. James's Park. Until four years ago the latter class had nearly all been well-dressed carefully groomed men; but now that things were different, every variety of officer in uniform took that particular turning as they streamed down to work from Belgravia and Pimlico. With every additional year of war Jacob noticed the rapid increase in the number of lame men who joined this early parade; and was glad to think that a grateful country had found them suitable employment at a wage which enabled them to keep their brown boots so admirably polished, and also permitted them to live in the sacred purlieus of Eaton Square.

By virtue of his profession Jacob was a connoisseur in boots. Boots meant a great deal to him, more



probably than they ever did to their owners; they represented a precise definition of social status and an almost unerring indication of character, and the very fact that the only time of day when the passers-by really concentrated their attention on their boots was at the moment when they greeted or did not greet Jacob, formed a link or a barrier between them.

Chief among his morning acquaintances he reckoned the lamest of them all, a real Captain of the Old Army, who walked with a stick, and whose left leg was entirely stiff. Jacob described him mentally as the 'Man of God,' and for no known reason drew his aged form as nearly to attention as possible when the Captain passed.

"Big things doing to-day, Sir, isn't there?"—he enquired on this particular morning, peering anxiously through a bank of local fog at the red cheery face. "Will they 'ave it, or will they not?"

"I think they will, Jacob; or if they don't, they will have something that they like very much less. Perhaps we shall know in the course of the morning."

The Man of God went his way followed closely by a noisy group of office-girls on whom Jacob frowned. He abominated the whole loud-voiced, fur-coated, short-skirted race, which was nothing but a by-product of the last three years, and whose very presence, with its rank assurance born of high wages, was an offence to his aristocratic soul; moreover their boots were too thin, too high-heeled, and not well-made. Such pedestrians he thought were not worthy of his crossing, and still less of the first turn to the left inside the Park.

He spat lustily upon his hands and continued to scoop the nice fresh mud from the middle of the road until eleven o'clock. . . . And then it happened.

The crossing and the passers-by vanished temporarily from Jacob's vision. He knew a moment's fear and stood quite still, while guns fired and fired again. Then he remembered his own remark that big things were doing to-day; and he laughed aloud. Quite suddenly large numbers of people appeared as from nowhere, running and shouting. Some ran this way, some that; some were hatless, but all were jubilant; and none of them seemed to know exactly where they were going. Church-bells began to ring in every quarter; and like magic, flags of all shapes and sizes were unfurled by mysterious hands from every window. Minute by minute the crowd increased; but no one noticed the old crossing-sweeper, who was weeping silently with his back against the wall, while his broom and scoop stood erect by the lamp-post in the middle of the road. It was the church-bells which had this peculiar effect, unknown on Sunday or Saint's day, but sometimes perceptible even to a crossing-sweeper at a wedding.

After a little time Jacob became aware of his surroundings, and also of the fact that something further was going to happen. Of course, he had forgotten the King. The King would be coming out. The Armistice was signed, and no one was being killed to-day. The anxious feeling had suddenly snapped. Of course the King would be coming out. All these people had come and were still coming to see the King. He made his way slowly and laboriously along the pavement, until he was near the central gate of Buckingham Palace; and only then did he realise that it might be difficult for even an old hand to see the King. A sea of loyal, victorious, vociferous humanity was surging up to the very palings of the Palace; and



Jacob felt like the remotest cowrie-shell washed up on a strangely familiar shore, but helpless before the tide. By good fortune he was jostled at that moment against a local and stalwart policeman who happened to be his friend.

"Hullo, Jacob my boy, out peace-making are you? Better take a front place on the grand stand while you can." And without further ado he hoisted the old man on to the stone coping, and saw him grip the palings firmly with both hands. "There now, if you can hold on long enough you'll be like to see all there is to see."

Jacob held and held, until it seemed to him that he had been holding iron palings for years, that he had been born with an iron paling in his mouth, that he was an iron paling,—so stiff and rigid had his limbs become. He gazed at the non-committal stone face of the Palace, and he gazed at the good-tempered, effervescent face of the British public. It was one of the biggest crowds he had ever seen. The band of one of the regiments of Guards was slowly working its way to a convenient point of vantage; the Mall looked like the dilated limb of a giant octopus; and Queen Victoria's memorial was rapidly clothing itself with a thick covering of the populace.

Jacob wondered vaguely what Queen Victoria herself was doing on this occasion. He reflected that, though her family feelings might be somewhat lacerated, at any rate her mother-heart must be overflowing with joy for all the Earth-mothers to-day, who could now rest from their unceasing cry: "Keep my son safe!" What would happen, he further wondered, to last night's and this morning's crop of Allied as well as German prayers? Were they all accumulated in one place? If so, there must almost be a block in the

traffic. And had all the ungranted prayers for victory perished, or were they lying on some gigantic spiritual rubbish heap? He turned his head blindly, as though to ask the late Queen who scavenged on the celestial roads, and whether there were any crossing-sweepers there—when suddenly some one behind him on the pavement called out: "Hold on, Jacob; the King is coming out." And two strong pairs of arms proceeded to support him from the rear. He supposed that he had very nearly fallen from his wonderful place.

Jacob heard the roar that went up from the crowd, heard the roar melt into the rhythm of the National Anthem. But he could not sing; something queer had happened to his throat. Then fell a strange silence, and the voice of one man spoke. The King was speaking. But where was the King? Jacob strained his eyes to see. Where was the King? Where was the Palace now? A mist had come up before him and he could see nothing, a thick, white mist . . . of course . . . the fog . . . the early morning fog . . . the King . . . God . . . save . . .

\*                      \*                      \*

The Man of God followed the ambulance which bore Jacob away to St. George's Hospital. He felt that it was quite useless for him to follow; but yet it seemed such a pathetic end for the old man should he regain consciousness alone and in a strange place. No one would care, and everyone was so terribly busy peace-making to-day. So he followed. He shuddered slightly as he limped along, and reflected that there were some things which filled him with even more terror than the battlefield, and that the loneliness of a crowded London was one of them.

After some hours Jacob opened his eyes and



looked uneasily about the ward. He did not appear to notice his Captain sitting meekly beside him on an upright wooden chair, nor a nurse who was standing near the bed.

"Is there anything you want, Jacob?" enquired the Man of God gently. "I could take a message home if you like."

The question penetrated gradually, and in a few minutes a breath of an answer came:

"I left my tools . . . in the middle . . . of the road . . . shall want them . . . to-morrow."

"All right, Jacob. I will get your tools for you. They will be quite safe."

The nurse moved forward rather quickly and held the old wizened wrist for a moment. Jacob's eyes were closed again; and in half a minute of time he did the most interesting thing in his monotonous life: he died.

\* \* \* \*

A new hand swept the crossing, and only a few of the passers-by were aware of any change. One or two of them missed Jacob, and even went so far as to wonder where he was; but they did not trouble to ask. Only the Captain knew. He it was who made such simple arrangements as were necessary for the burial of the old man's body; and he it was who travelled in a tram to Brixton to seek out the only living relative traceable by the friendly policeman. But on arriving at his destination he found a loud-voiced, blowsy looking woman who had evidently celebrated the signing of the Armistice too well to be able to understand what he had come to tell her. After a vain attempt to make his meaning plain, he retired with the firm conviction that it mattered very little whether such a person knew that Jacob had passed on or not.

So it came about that the Man of God was the only human being who really thought of Jacob at all. Now he had lived through so much and seen so many die during the course of the last few years that he had acquired the habit of spending a certain amount of time each day with silent friends. He was therefore not at a loss in setting out to find the crossing-sweeper. He pictured Jacob at the top of a ladder, and very wide-awake, unlike his namesake in history who slept at the foot of the garden furniture; and up that ladder he himself climbed, his vision increasing as he went. Jacob was there, and very much occupied, in surroundings which were full of light. He was sweeping busily, and looked much younger than before.

"What are those things you are sweeping up, Jacob?"—queried the Captain, now sure of his footing.

"Prayers," was the succinct rejoinder. "All the old stale ones said by heart, all the useless dud ones that never took effect, and all the idle and misdirected ones that could not carry far. They are nearly all here. I knew there would be a lot for me to do."

"Are you going to do it all by yourself? It seems a big job."

"Not for long. There's a whole army coming over from your side to help me very soon; at least so they tell me. But just now I am in a hurry."

"And what is the hurry now, Jacob? Do you mind telling me?"

The crossing-sweeper turned a radiant face upon his friend, and smiled.

"The King," he replied slowly and reverently, "the King is coming out to proclaim peace on earth, and I am clearing the crossing for Him."

BRIDGET MORDAUNT.



## TO THE SEA.

BREAKING with filmy fleck and foam  
Upon a fertile shore,  
Lashing against a barren reef  
With angry rush and roar,  
Lying with scarcely heaving breast  
Sunlit, quiescent, blue, at rest,  
Calm as a little child asleep,—  
Subtly alluring art thou, deep  
Great Sea!

Alike if mighty dreadnought trail  
Through thee to doom,  
Or wraith-like barge with russet sail  
Enfolded in a foggy shroud,  
Weft with thyself and lowering cloud  
For warp and woof,—  
Silent, aloof,  
Thou wait'st the harvest yet to reap  
Ere mists by morn are riven, deep  
Cruel Sea!

Yet what a charm thy throbbing heart doth hold;  
What varied moods, emotions manifold!  
Pathos and passion and caress,  
Rapture, despair, delight, distress,—  
Thou knowest all.  
And we, the flotsam of a great unrest,  
Baulked of desire and baffled in our quest,  
Obey thy call,  
And find in thy vast cradle quiet sleep,  
And near thy pulsing heart some deep,  
Strange peace.

LILIAN HOLMES.

## TREE-SPIRITS.

ON bleak high-blowing days,  
When drops shaken from the storm-cloud's cloak  
Swish on the barren fields;  
When the last dead leaves,  
Sad relics of Autumn's glory,  
Float slowly to the ground,  
Mournfully wheeling and whirling,  
Fondly and vainly endeavouring  
To reach once more their aerial home  
Unwillingly forsaken for the coldly-welcoming earth,—  
The sorrowful spirits,  
The grieving, sorrowing tree-folk,  
Enfold themselves in their damp and chilly cloaks  
And fly, mourning softly, round the melancholy trees.  
Their song is weird and wildly sorrowful:  
They look back on the mad sweet days of Spring-tide  
When the West Wind,  
Now a bitter enemy,  
Shouted gleefully among the glowing tree-tops;  
They look back on the slow full-breathing days of  
    Summer,  
When the even pulse-beat of the forest-heart  
Gave rhythmic cadence to the song of the birds;  
They look back on the days of early Autumn  
When the forest flamed like fire,  
When crimson and gold  
And rich nut-brown and scarlet  
Burned in the woodland;  
And they sing a song  
Low, and of infinite sorrow.

PETER WORTH.



## REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

### LIFE AFTER DEATH.

Problems of the Future Life and its Nature. By James H. Hyslop, Ph.D., LL.D., Secretary of the American Society for Psychical Research and formerly Professor of Logic and Ethics in Columbia University. London (Kegan Paul, etc.); pp. 346; 9s. net.

IT is hardly necessary to tell readers of THE QUEST that Dr. J. H. Hyslop is the heart and soul of the American Society for Psychical Research. For twenty-five years he has devoted himself to a methodical and systematic study of the phenomena of mediumship with the primary object of obtaining accurate detailed records on which to base a judgment with all the facts impartially set forth. He has never flinched from publishing records containing matter which what he calls 'snobbism' would withhold from print. In the present volume, however, he is dealing not so much with the facts as with the problems which arise from the facts. He thinks himself fully justified in contending against the radical sceptic that now, after upwards of a generation of scientific research, ample evidence for the substantive fact of the persistence of personal identity after bodily death has been educed to satisfy any really unprejudiced enquirer, who will take the trouble to make a careful and critical study of the enormous amount of scientifically recorded phenomena accumulated by members of the two Societies in this country and in the U.S.A.

Dr. Hyslop is keenly aware of all the difficulties that confront the scientific investigator, knows all the alternative theories and is fully alive to every twist and turn of the arguments of the sceptic and materialist. Perhaps no one during the last decade has had more experience than himself in recording and analysing first-hand *data* germane to the subject. When then he says he has been forced, in spite of prior scepticism, to accept in last resort in many cases the spirit-hypothesis as the only one that will really work, we have the judgment of an expert and not of an amateur. His appeal is invariably to the evidence furnished by a

drastic analysis of the recorded facts; if the facts render the alternative theories either untenable or only of secondary importance we must have the courage to say so. When, however, Dr. Hyslop speaks of the spirit-hypothesis it should be understood that by 'spirit' he means simply a stream of consciousness or group of mental states with a memory. He will not allow that at present we can scientifically go any further than this; if we would keep strictly to the minimum of hypothesis we should not allow ourselves to picture a spirit as a *quasi*-material form, even though, he adds, we may "ultimately find such a thing to be a fact." Our own view is that without the hypothesis of a subtle body of some kind the proximate conditions of the hither hereafter are incomprehensible.

If one seeks to refute philosophical materialism the first thing one has to do, as our author contends, is to "isolate an individual consciousness and have evidence that it can act independently of the organism with which it had normally been associated." This evidence can be procured; it is already on record in abundance. But the problem of the survival of personality which is solved by the memory-test is not of an exalted order; it must be kept apart from the further question of the nature or the dignity of consciousness. The most convincing evidence of identity generally consists of otherwise trivial personal details. The 'cosmic reservoir' theory of memories does not really offer an explanation inimical to survival; for "any continued existence of my memories in that reservoir is tantamount to my personal identity."

The present volume is not documented with cases; of these Dr. Hyslop has in his previous voluminous publications given us a remarkable abundance. It is rather a general consideration of the whole problem of a future life. The first six of the eleven chapters are mainly historical. In the chapter on 'Christianity and Psychic Research,' after reviewing many instances of supernatural happenings set forth in the New Testament, Dr. Hyslop concludes: "There is no mistaking the nature of all these events. They implicate the origin of Christianity in psychic phenomena of the types which we are able to observe or reproduce by experiment to-day, and so take Christianity out of the category of inexplicable facts, putting it along with the ordinary laws of nature."

In the chapter dealing with the 'Difficulties of the Problem' we are warned against complicating the survival question pure and simple with the far greater difficulties of the question of the



nature of the world in which we survive. The first problem is easy in comparison with the difficulties of the second. For obtaining the right kind of evidence of survival three requirements only have to be satisfied: "(a) The exclusion of fraud and secondary personality from the facts which claim to be communications from the dead. (b) The acquisition of supernormal information bearing upon the personal identity of the dead. (c) The exclusion of the telepathic hypothesis in explanation."

After a very instructive chapter on the 'Process of Communication,' which brings out the complex nature of what many regard as a simple matter, we have what is the most important contribution to the volume—a discussion of the attitude the scientific mind must adopt towards communications purporting to describe the nature of the future life. The analysis of these rumours of the hither hereafter in order to determine their nature must naturally be a difficult problem and calls for long and serious investigation. All that Dr. Hyslop attempts in the present work is to suggest the considerations that must be taken into account when discussing the problem. Nevertheless he permits himself after the discussion to put forward what seems to be the most probable assumption with regard to the most proximate strata of *post-mortem* existence as follows:

"Assume it to be a mental world with the power to represent thoughts in the form of apparent reality and you have a clue both to the interpretation of a spiritual world in terms of normal experience, inner mental experience, and to resolve many of the perplexities in the whole problem of that world. But for the retention of memory we should lose our sense of personal identity, and hence for a time after death this memory is concentrated on the earthly experiences until adjustment to new conditions can be made. The subliminal functions act to produce apparent reality and then when the subject of them gets into contact with a psychic, the communication of these images or pictures conveys the idea that you are dealing with a *quasi*-material world. The dream-state of the psychic's trance leaves the interpreting powers intact and, just as we deem dream-pictures real when asleep, the psychic understands the pictographic images as representing a real world until he or she comes to learn that they are but mental symbols of a reality not accurately or fully expressed in the pictures. Until thus adjusted to the spiritual world, the dreaming spirit would be what we call earth-bound. This would mean pre-occupation with memory-pictures either of the past or

of ideal construction, and life would be a creative one, so to speak. The spiritual life would be a dream-life, irrational until the earth-bound condition had been overcome, and rational when the adjustment of the mind had been effected for both the dreaming functions and the responses to an objective environment."

As to higher states Dr. Hyslop does not venture a theory further than to remark at the end of his discussion: "But while we may well conceive the other life as a mental world, a rationalized dream-life, it may be more, and the earth-bound condition immediately after death is merely a foretaste of the rationalized form of the 'dream' life. What else it may be remains to be determined."

'Dream' then, as Dr. Hyslop suggests, may be found to be an insufficient if not erroneous description of those deeper states; and indeed it may be generally said that even the most ordinary type of communicators insist first and foremost and all the time that the new conditions are such that they feel they have experienced for the first time what it is really to live. But the descriptions attempted make it almost impossible to discover what is the common objective reality of the states about which such rumours reach us from these borderland realms.

The chief feature of the rest of this thoughtful volume is an instructive summary of the Doris Fischer case of multiple personality—a useful piece of work, as few are able to procure the three fat volumes of the Proceedings of the American S.P.R. in which this now classical case is recorded and commented upon.

#### SHRI-CHAKRA-SAMBHĀRA TANTRA.

A Buddhist Tantra, edited by Kazi Dawasamdub. London (Luzac): pp. xxxix. + 88 + 108; Rs. 5.

THIS is the first text of a Buddhist Tantra that has been published and the first translation of one in any European tongue. The text is a Tibetan version from the Sanskrit, preserving intact the original mantras. The Sanskrit title may perhaps be rendered 'Collection of Holy Circles'—that is symbolic diagrams or instruments for yoga-practice; whereas the Tibetan title, *Demchog*, means simply 'Highest Happiness' or 'Supreme Bliss.' In addition we have the text and translation of a short but interesting statement of Mahāyāna doctrine called the 'Powerful Good Wishes,' put into the mouth of 'the most ancient Buddha' Samanta Bhadra, ending with the words: "By the power of the



good wishes of Me . . . may all existent beings, without exception, attain Buddhahood." The editor, translator and commentator of the two works, Dawasamdub Kazi, is a learned Sikkimese, the present Head of the State School at Gangtok, and the whole forms Vol. VII. of the *Tāntrik Texts* series under the general editorship of 'Arthur Avalon' (Sir John Woodroffe). Only the first third of the Tantra is translated in full, the rest being given in synopsis, owing to the regrettable death of the translator's Guru, who was a votary of the Tantra and whose learned assistance had been indispensable in furnishing notes and comments. The Tantra belongs to the Vajra-yāna—the 'Diamond' or 'Thunderbolt' vehicle as Western Orientalists would translate it, but whose true significance is: That which is steady, indestructible, irresistible, a term applied to the perfected 'mind' as well as to ultimate reality.

The complexities of the recipes given by this Tāntrik manual are truly bewildering for one accustomed to the simplicities of the early Buddhist *sutta*-teaching; it is difficult to see how they can be of any real service in strengthening the spiritual power of the mind, which is so onerous a task even when the simplest and most straightforward methods are used, though doubtless they develop a great vividness of imagination. Here as elsewhere in Buddhism the monks have mechanically multiplied the letter at the expense of the spirit. Indeed it is frankly admitted that disciplines are imagined for the purpose of method only. There is thus, except for the rare comparative student of such difficult material, little to be got out of the *Demchog Tantra* if one is in search of philosophical principles. It is of interest, however, to track out the conversion of Hindu into Buddhist terms. For instance, Shiva and Shakti, Consciousness and Power, the male and female aspects of deity in Tāntrik symbolism, are equated with the Buddhist fundamental principles of wisdom or spiritual knowledge (*prajñā*) and compassion or universal love (*karuṇā*). The latter is "the power, means or method by which everything is done as compared with . . . the wisdom which guides and utilises it." Philosophically the 'Good Wishes' treatise is more instructive than the Tantra; it begins with the declaration: "All which is visible and invisible, whether *saṃsāra* or *nirvāṇa*, is at base one, with two paths and two ends." The ultimate unitary reality is called *Shūnyatā*, the 'Void,' the equivalent of the Vedāntic Supreme or Brahman. It is so called as being void of all qualities known to us. The two paths are ignorance and knowledge and

the two ends are the transmigratory state or phenomenal world (*saṃsāra*) and eternal peace (*nirvāṇa*).

But in Tantra psychology is the dominant interest. Sir John in his useful Introduction writes: "To my mind one of the most distinctive marks of the Tāntrik system is its profound application of psychology to worship, and the manner in which it not only formally teaches through symbols, but actually *creates*, though its ritual methods, the *states of mind* which are set forth at the end of its teachings. As the translator and editor of this text acutely observes, the Buddhist Tantra does not so much say, 'Here is the answer or theory. Train your mind to believe so'; but, 'Here are the problem and the means. Work out the answer for yourself.'"

But what we want to know in the West is how many to-day do so and at what do they arrive. It is said in India that of one thousand who endeavour to achieve success by means of this particular *sādhana* or bodily and mental yoga-practice only one arrives at the goal. In the West it is probable that not one in a hundred thousand would achieve any really spiritual illumination by following these traditional Indian forms as they stand. The whole elaborate structure will have to be analysed into its basic constituents and its simplest essentials, and then re-formed or re-formulated, if it is to be adapted to Western needs. The studies of the general editor of these Tāntrik texts are gradually coming to grips with the essentials, and if this re-formulation should ever be achieved, it will be due mainly to the pioneer labours of Sir John Woodroffe in this most difficult field of research and his praiseworthy attempts to clarify the theory underlying the practice.

#### THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE GOOD.

An Essay in Moral Philosophy. By Vladimir Solovyof. Translated by Nathalie A. Duddington, M.A. London (Constable); pp. lxiii+475; 15s. net.

It is delightful to have something from Russia uninfected by the terrible perturbations into which she has been plunged; for her purification, as we must hope. Here is the Ethical system of the man who Mr. Stephen Graham assures us is the most influential of Russian philosophers to-day, Vladimir Solovyof (died 1901).

It is easy to assign his position: he belongs to the Idealist School; in fundamentals taking a stand in close affinity with



Professor James Seth, Dr. J. S. Mackenzie and Archbishop D'Arcy, for example. But there are freshness and independence due to the atmosphere in which Solovyof lived; thus Tolstoi is as much in his mind as Mill and Spencer have been in ours. Where we might turn for illustration to Browning or George Eliot he turns to Dostoievsky. And he does not regard Ethics as a 'dry' science, but is evidently strongly affected by the influence upon his own countrymen's practical thinking which has been exerted by the writings of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche.

His aim is to achieve an insight into the Good; and for him the enquiry must include not only the Individual and Society, but these regarded as the Kingdom of God. In fact, whilst studying the first two spheres he always has in mind the ulterior purpose of establishing an inner connection between Ethics and Religion.

He builds upon the concept of Goodness as an ultimate intrinsic quality; he takes Universality as the supreme criterion as against Empiricism; and insists on Concreteness as against Abstract Idealism; and he stands for the Freedom of Reason.

In two of the spheres, that of the Individual and that of Society, his choice of fundamental psychological facts gives us the greatest differentia of his treatment, and affects us with a surprise which is not unaccompanied with regret. For the Individual he calls the moral feeling, Shame; and for Society, Pity. This is to be lamented, surely? For both of these are negative in character as regards the Good; they refer to Badness, or at least to Weakness and Suffering. If contrasted with positive Self-respect and Benevolence, they indicate an enterprise of warfare with Evil rather than an adventure in quest of the Good. And in the sphere of the Individual the course actually taken by Solovyof is of this character. For him the natural man is replete with 'fleshly lusts, egoism, and wild passions,' and the principle of Goodness consequently takes the form of Asceticism; so we see in this an evidence that Tolstoi really exemplifies the general Russian mind. But in the Social sphere, the negative significance of Pity for what is weak or wrong in others is not allowed to dominate after all; Truth and Justice emerge as positive features of Social Good.

It is when he passes to the sphere of Religious Ethics that Solovyof becomes finely positive. Here he builds not upon fear but on respect for supremacy, and on gratitude for good received. And it is by this sphere that he is to be finally judged; for to him the moral order is inchoate and fragmentary if dissociated from the supremacy of the Divine will.

In criticisms Solovyof is very clear; his examinations of Hedonism and of Utilitarianism, for instance, are marked by insight and thoroughness.

From the sphere of general principles he passes to some of the great problems of life in concrete. He gives a vindication of Nationalism, but only as falling within Cosmopolitanism; a theory of Punishment in which he relegates Retribution to past phases of thought, and lays down as his three principles, the individual's right of protection, society's right of security, and the ill-doer's right to be reformed; he carefully sets out the scope of the State in criminal justice; he assigns a certain temporary necessity to War, with its disappearance as the ideal of Society is approached; and he gives a well-balanced application of Morals to the Economic sphere of social activity.

We do not find in Solovyof's Moral Philosophy anything of the Mystical temper: the impression we have received is that of a clear-eyed Rationalism applied to a vividly apprehended psychological constitution. Even the heights of the Religious level are within the purview of Reason, and there seems to be no need to bow the head before any Mysteries.

The translator, Mrs. Duddington, a distinguished Russian graduate of University College, London, has given us what we have no competence to acclaim as an accurate translation but what we can unreservedly commend for its excellent English. And we place the volume on our shelves rejoicing sincerely in the thought that Russian philosophy and Russian academic teaching include such an exposition of Moral Philosophy as this. It assures us that in the high level of philosophy the League of Nations is already in being.

A. C.

#### OUTSPOKEN ESSAYS.

By William Ralph Inge, C.V.O., D.D., Dean of St. Paul's. London: (Longmans); pp. 281; 6s. net.

IN any circumstances Dean Inge would be acknowledged to be one of our most independent thinkers and under present conditions he is perhaps the most courageous writer of our time. He not only refuses to bend the knee before the fashionable idols of the schools or the market-place, but will burn no incense to them even when they are fairly respectable. It matters not whether they be



philosophic or religious, social or political palliatives, he refuses to take the shadow for the substance; he stands ever for spiritual values and will not be put off with any counterfeits, even the most specious. Thus he mercilessly exposes the fallacies of the present democratic gospel which is being preached as the panacea for all our woes. While sympathizing with all efforts to better conditions for the worker, he strips naked the unpatriotic selfishness of the new labour caste and the corruption of a trade unionism fast degenerating into a system of trusts and combines for profiteering at the expense of the community, and even sinking still lower to deliberate attempts at blackmailing the State. Such selfishness, if persisted in, can lead nowhere but to the brute tyranny of mobocracy and the red terror—that dictatorship of the proletariat which is the most hideous form of slavery corrupt humanity has ever devised. Dr. Inge addresses himself especially to the confused thinkers and sentimentalists who imagine they are checking the epidemic, but who are really carriers of the disease to innumerable minds that would otherwise have escaped infection.

From the eleven essays it is difficult to select, for all deserve notice and are provocative of thought. Of the seven on religious subjects, perhaps the most interesting for readers of *THE QUEST* are those on 'St. Paul,' 'Institutionalism and Mysticism' and 'Survival and Immortality.' Writing of the labours of the man who ushered Christianity into the world, the Dean writes:

"It is useless to deny that St. Paul regarded Christianity as, at least on one side, a mystery-religion. Why else should he have used a number of technical terms which his readers would recognise at once as belonging to the mysteries? Why else should he repeatedly use the word 'mystery' itself, applying it to doctrines distinctive of Christianity, such as the resurrection with a 'spiritual body,' the relation of the Jewish people to God, and, above all, the mystical union between Christ and Christians? The great 'mystery' is 'Christ in you, the hope of glory' (*Col. i. 27*). It was as a mystery-religion that Europe accepted Christianity. Just as the Jewish Christians took with them the whole framework of apocalyptic Messianism, and set the figure of Jesus within it, so the Greeks took with them the whole scheme of the mysteries with their sacraments, their purifications and fasts, their idea of a mystical brotherhood, and their doctrine of 'salvation' (*σωτηρία* is essentially a mystery-word) through membership in a divine society, worshipping Christ as the patronal deity of their mysteries" (p. 227).

Of mysticism and the new 'type of faith which is astir among us' he courageously declares:

"It encourages us to hope that for each individual who is trying to live the right life the venture of faith will be progressively justified in experience. It breaks down the denominational barriers which divide men and women who worship the Father in spirit and in truth—barriers which become more senseless in each generation, since they no longer correspond even approximately with real differences of belief or of religious temperament. It makes the whole world kin by offering a pure religion which is substantially the same in all climates and in all ages—a religion too divine to be fettered by any man-made formulas, too nobly human to be readily acceptable to men in whom the ape and tiger are still alive, but which finds a congenial home in the purified spirit which is the 'throne of the Godhead'" (p. 232).

In the last essay, 'Survival and Immortality,' we have a vigorous statement of the uncompromising position which the Dean assumes to any and every form of eschatology. One might even think that he really believes there is no survival possible short of the perfection of sanctity that merits immediately Eternal Life. What provision he makes in his mind for the countless multitudes that have not reached that exalted state of perfection it is hard to discover. The idea of *post-mortem* purification and progress he does not hesitate to call a 'superstition.' In this he over-reaches himself; our brilliant master of fence, losing his balance with his temper, places himself at the mercy of the veriest *amateur*. This is all the more regrettable in so fine a swordsman who so frequently gets home with a witty phrase, the dexterity of which should make even the victim chortle. Thus even a Stonyhurst professor should have difficulty in suppressing a chuckle on reading that "the normal end of Scholasticism is a mummified philosophy of authority, in which there are no problems to solve, but a great many dead pundits to consult."

#### JACOPONE DA TODI.

Poet and Mystic, 1228-1306. A Spiritual Biography by Evelyn Underhill. With a Selection from the Spiritual Songs: The Italian Text translated into English verse by Mrs. Theodore Beck. London (Dent); pp. 521; 16s. net.

THE only prior essay in English on this eccentric mystic and high poet is the article by Prof. Edmund Gardner, 'The Poet of the



Franciscan Movement,' in *The Constructive Quarterly* for June, 1914. Evelyn Underhill is therefore laying English readers under a debt of gratitude by her excellent study of the life and songs of one who was not only consumed with love of God, but sang of the Divine Love with a natural flow and fervour of poetical expression that perhaps even Dante has not equalled. The 'Spiritual Biography' which occupies the first 248 pages of the volume is a fine piece of work; for not only does it carefully discriminate and evaluate the sources, and supply the reader with a mass of very necessary information, but it deals with its subject as a living problem in mystical psychology, and sympathetically traces out the stages of development, as purgation leads to illumination and this to the supreme beatitude of union. Evelyn Underhill's study is an excellent example of the value of the method of comparative mysticism; it enables her to throw light on many obscurities, fill up with high probability a number of *lacunæ*, and generally get the whole picture into perspective so that the lights and shades are clearly seen.

There is still a certain type of fanaticism in India which deliberately sets to work to atrophy the intelligence; these mental suicides rejoice to call themselves the 'fools of God.' If we do not entirely reject the legend of his life, Jacopone da Todi was for long obsessed with a somewhat similar foolishness. It is impossible for sanity to believe that the Divine wisdom under any circumstances requires of a rational being the deliberate stultification of the good gift of reason; nevertheless, in spite of his wilful artificial craziness, Jacopone in the end attained to a profound state of mystical self-transcendence and a contact with reality which made as nothing the so highly praised prior raptures of a more formal orthodox nature, which he had enjoyed when overloading his 'brother ass' with quite unnecessary burdens. For many years, report will have it, he mercilessly tortured his body with the most extreme rigours of a barbarous asceticism. The *Vita* will have it that he foolishly imagined it well-pleasing to God for His servant to keep his body filthy, frowzy and verminous without and starved and dyspeptic within, and that he should at times vie with the most naturalistic of the Cynics in outraging the decencies of life. His mind he reduced to an equally starved condition; indeed he made a fine art of what was called 'holy craziness,' and for long scandalized the soberer members of his Order by his eccentricities. But in the end excuse was found for his aberrations and the inscription on his tomb belauds him as

"the fool for Christ's sake who by a novel craft tricked the world and robbed heaven." Miss Underhill questions the authenticity of this tradition and thinks it highly coloured by the fond fancy of the laudators of God's simpletons. However we discount these antics of an unbalanced asceticism, it was not by such means that he won to the Great Experience, but because deep within him worked the virtue of a genuinely moral self-conquest. During the whole of his religious life he poured forth his soul in song, and towards the end composed some poems of the highest mystic import. Indeed Evelyn Underhill, in respect of three of these, says they will repay the closest study, "for they are among the few successful attempts in literature to express the secret of ecstasy." Only one of these is included in Mrs. Theodore Beck's selection of thirty-five of the most famous of the *laude*, which she has rendered freely from the difficult early Italian into English verse with a good measure of success. It is the longest of all the poems and tells how the soul by holy self-naughting and love reaches the ineffable state of uttermost verity. States of rapture that were heretofore thought all-sufficing are transcended; all symbols, even the most holy, are found useless and prior notions misleading.

"The light that was once so clear  
 Now seems as dark as night:  
 All that was thought as right,  
 Imperfect and poor we find:  
 Nor can we see and hear  
 In figures, as once we might,  
 When we could speak and write,  
 With the searching, curious mind.  
 The perfect Good to bind,  
 The symbols we fancied true,  
 Are useless, through and through;  
 So prisoned she cannot be."

Jacopone da Todi was not a man of the people; he came of one of the old noble families of Umbria and was educated at the University of Bologna, second only to Paris in reputation for learning, where he gained the doctor's degree. Before his conversion he lived a wild and luxurious life, but at the same time won distinction and wealth as a successful lawyer. Indeed he was possessed of a strongly sensuous nature and of a powerful intellect, and it was the violent repression of the latter, we may



well believe, which gave rise to the neurotic extravagance of behaviour he displayed at any rate in the first period of his religious life. He doubtless was a good Latin scholar and could have written Latin verse, but of this we have no authentic example. The conjecture that he wrote the famous *Stabat Mater* must therefore be held to have little probability to sustain it.

#### THE GOLDEN FOUNTAIN.

Or the Soul's Love of God. Being Some Thoughts and Confessions of One of His Lovers. London (Watkins); pp. 144; 8s. net.

LOVERS of Christian mysticism will find much to hold their attention in this frank record of what bears all the marks of being the outcome of genuine spiritual experience. It is the intimate confession of one who, though at times overwhelmed by the intensity of the power of the spiritual life, has nevertheless not lost her sense of proportion nor been tempted to pose as a vessel of election. Indeed, as far as one can gather, it is the story of an inner life hidden from others and at times with great difficulty. There is moreover nothing of the cloister about it or of external asceticism. The outer life is lived in the world, in society, in the family, in fulfilment of the duties of marriage; though with regard to the last the writer says it was some time before she could fully realize that "in every way it can become a sacrament: there is nothing in it which is not holy, in no way does the marriage bond of the body separate the spirit from acceptableness to God."

Nor were the inner changes wrought in the soul the outcome of external piety. "All these changes in my heart and mind continually filled me with surprise, for I was never pious, though inwardly and secretly I had so ardently sought Him. I was attentive, humble and reverent, nothing more. But though perhaps I had little or no piety, and never read a single religious book, I had a deep thirst for the perfect and the holy and the pure, as I seemed unable to find them here on earth."

The writer speaks of three distinct experiences of 'conversion'—the first two of terrible suffering and the third of overwhelming joy, "in which it is no exaggeration to say that for a few moments I seemed to receive God and all the freedom of the heavens into my soul." After this last, "I was for a period of some months in such a state of exaltation and enhancement of all faculties that I did not know myself at all." As with Traherne in his childhood,

all things, even the meanest, were glorified or became beautiful. "An object of quite ordinary charm seemed, because of that something that now filled me, to expand into prodigious beauty. The very pavements and houses, mean and hideous as they are, overflowed with some inexplicable glamour. The world was turned into a veritable paradise. . . . At this time my only trouble or difficulty was to conceal my condition from others."

This illumination was the beginning of many experiences not only of intense joy but also of agonizing pain, or of an indescribable blend of both :

"How can Contact with God be in any way described?" she asks. "It is not seeing, but melting and fusion with awareness. The soul retaining her own individuality and consciousness to an intense degree, but imbued with and fused in a life of incredible intensity, which passes through the soul vitalities and emotions of a life so new, so vivid, so amazing, that she knows not whether she has been embraced by love or fire, by joy or by anguish: for so fearful is her joy that she is almost unable to endure the might of it."

A hundred pages later on the writer returns to the same experience when she avers: "By contact with God we acquire certain wonderful and terrible realisations of truth and knowledge. . . . We learn, at first with great fear, something of the awful intensities of pain, or of joy, which can be endured by the spirit when free of the body: for when we are in the spirit we do not *see* fire, but we feel to *become it* and yet live. And so equally of pain or joy—we do not feel these things delicately, as with, and in, the body, but we pass into the essence of these things themselves, in all their terrible and marvellous intensity, which is comparatively without limit."

These few quotations will give the reader some idea of the nature of the confessions in this little volume, but not of the writer's thoughts or reflections upon them. These also are generally worthy of attention; but at times they are provocative—as, for instance, her theory that curiosity is the root of all evil. The desire to know, so deeply implanted in the human soul, without which man would not be man, should not be confounded with curiosity in its undesirable sense, though this might be thought to be the case, as when our mystic writes:

"Fear curiosity. Fear it more than sin. Curiosity is the root, and sin the flower. This is one of the reasons why we should never seek God merely with the intelligence: to do so is to seek



Him, in part at least, with curiosity. God will not be peeped at by a curious humanity. The indulgence in curiosity would of itself explain the whole downfall, so-called, of man.

"The Soul is the Prodigal. Curiosity *to know* led her away from the high heavens. Love is her only way of return.

"Curiosity is the mother of all infidelity, whether of the spirit or of the body."

The title, 'The Golden Fountain,' is very attractive; but it is nowhere mentioned or explained in the text.

#### WILLIAM BLAKE THE MAN.

By Charles Gardner, Author of 'Vision and Vesture,' etc. London (Dent); pp. 202; 10s. 6d. net.

IN this artistic production, finely printed and adorned with twelve plates reproducing some of the best of Blake's works, the author of *Vision and Vesture* returns to his studies in Blake and gives us a well-written and discriminatingly enthusiastic account of the life and work of the man. Mr. Gardner's deep sympathy with the free working of the spirit in the mystical life and his enthusiasm for the union of art and religion permit him to treat comprehendingly and in a spirit far removed from puritanism the vagaries and revolts of the rebellious Blake, who anticipated no little of the better side of Nietzsche, and to forgive him much in that at the end he "alone in his time saw Christ as the supreme symbol of the passionate imaginative life." Christ stands for him as the protagonist of the Eternal Life in the Eternal Imagination. He loves Blake also for his war against 'abstraction' and his unabashed anthropomorphism. Theologically Mr. Gardner seems to think that the 'Catholic Church' is the safest guide as to the mysteries of creation, and deplores Blake's tendency to pantheism, as when he writes: "His doctrine of creation is pantheistic, but his affirmation that 'God doth a human form display to those who dwell in realms of day' is splendidly Catholic." The experience of the greatest mystics, however, is not confined to so narrow a view-point, though it is natural enough in Blake, who was a very fanatic for form and line. We should fancy that many 'Catholics' will fail to see anything very 'splendid' in limiting theology and the philosophy of religion by the necessities of artistic expression. The '*Père éternel*' cliché is no longer tolerable even when a Blake is the engraver. Mr. Gardner, in treating of the various influences playing on Blake's mind in its formative period, deals faithfully

with that of Swedenborg, and shows how the dominant 'rationalism' of the Swedish seer and his lack of the æsthetic temperament were bound finally to bring about a strong reaction in Blake—who indeed did not hesitate to give it vigorous expression. Mr. Gardner is entirely on the side of Blake in this and his remarks are little calculated to please Swedenborgians. Thus he writes of the *Illuminate*: "He had given for life, theology; for beauty, ashes; and instead of emancipating the modern world he condemned it to the appalling tedium of an everlasting Sunday School. The doctrine of the New Jerusalem is not half so beautiful as that of the Old Jerusalem. Christ come again in Glory was stripped of that beauty that men had perceived in His first lowly coming. Blake's indictment of Swedenborg was severe. It was also an indictment of the whole of protestant theology."

Speaking of Blake's symbolism, and especially the riot of it found in the prophetic books, which has proved so great a stumbling-block to even the stoutest-hearted students, Mr. Gardner has some good and true things to say, in spite of his very great admiration of Blake's genius. He speaks of him at a certain period as "spinning fast the special mythological web with which he was to clothe or strangle his vision," and later on he writes:

"The one thing in these poems that we can positively affirm to be new is their symbolism, and that cannot be defended. Symbolism is beautiful only as it is universal, or can become so. It should be one language against many tongues. But Blake's is not even the tongue of a nation or a tribe. It is his own private invention, and, incidentally, uncouth, forbidding, unintelligible, and in actual fact a little insane. It is true that we can learn his symbolism after much labour; but a beautiful and catholic symbolism is the one thing that we have a right to understand, without learning, through the imagination, which Blake always affirmed to be divine."

This is well said and shews that Mr. Gardner is by no means an indiscriminating admirer of one for whose undeniable genius he has in general an enthusiastic appreciation.

#### HOPE TRUEBLOOD.

By Patience Worth. London (Skeffington); pp. 320; 6s. 9d. net.

In the July number, 1917, we gave a very favourable review of the 'psychic mystery' now widely known as 'Patience Worth,' and are still of the opinion that the automatic scripts of which P. W.



purports to be the inspirer are of a high order of literary merit, and a remarkable series of studies of Early English country life, speaking with homely wisdom, wit and humour, all set forth in a characteristic and consistent dialect that would be very difficult to 'fake' from glossaries and lexicons. It was therefore with high expectation that we turned to the present volume, and with proportionate disappointment that we laid it down after perusal. There is little of the genius of 'Patience Worth' in it. It is no longer Elizabethan but Early Victorian in setting; no longer crisp, but long drawn-out; of unrelieved sadness and full of repetitions. The heaped-up miseries are largely owing to wilful and unnecessary secrecy; and it is only in this feature that they betray one of the main characteristics of 'Patience Worth,' who under no circumstances can be persuaded to betray her identity. As a novel *Hope Trueblood* would be immensely improved by cutting out half of it. It is in comparison with *Patience Worth* that we feel compelled to make such unfavourable comments, and also in protest against the misleading 'puff' of the publishers, who find in it: "Life such as none of us has seen it in the garb of fiction, since the days of *David Copperfield* and of *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*." Had the material been severely edited by a skilful writer and maker of novels, it might have been made as characteristic of its period as the stories, legends, dramas and poems of 'Patience Worth'; but as presented it falls far behind the quality we expected from that capable personality so knowledgeable with wit and wisdom.

#### THE SECRET OF THE CROSS.

A Plea for the Re-presentation of Christianity. By Edmond Holmes. London (Constable); pp. 94; 2s. net.

THIS is an eloquent plea for a return to the simplicities of the whole matter. The 'Secret of the Cross' is to be found in self-sacrifice which leads to self-transcendence; it is the spiritual mystery of death and resurrection. The root of evil for us is attachment to the lower self, the clinging to a life of separation, imperfection and finitude. The whole scheme of progressive life in all its stages is indicative of the principle of dying to live.

"The presence of evil in the universe," writes Mr. Holmes in his concluding chapter, "is a mystery which is impenetrable by human thought. Christ taught us that it is penetrable by human

will. The mystery of evil seems to be intimately connected with the yet deeper mystery of growth. And wherever there is growth there is self-transcendence. We mean by self-transcendence the triumph of the ideal over the actual, of the goal of the process—the type which is struggling to evolve itself—over the stage which has actually been reached. A price has to be paid for this triumph. The resistance of the actual to the ideal has to be overcome. Self-transcendence, whether in a chrysalis or a saint, is the outcome of self-sacrifice. And if self-transcendence, then growth. And if growth, then life. Therefore, if you would find yourself, you must lose yourself; if you would live, you must die.” It is the secret of the mystic way in all the great religions—the yearning of the finite individual for self-transcendence and ultimate union with the Universal Self. What we stand in greatest need of to-day is “the emotional presentment of the idea of cosmic unity, the bringing it home to the hearts of men.” Mr. Holmes holds that to simplify and clarify Christianity we must begin by disentangling it from the anthropomorphic ideas of God it has inherited from Judaism, and then proceed to rescue it from all taint of supernaturalism. “It was the static conception of the Universe, centring in the belief in a supernatural Creator, which necessitated the story of the Fall; and the story of the Fall led to the demand for a supernatural Redeemer. If the story is baseless, the demand has no meaning. It is impossible to redeem what has never been lost.”

#### GHOSTS I HAVE SEEN.

And Other Psychic Experiences. By Violet Tweedale. London (Herbert Jenkins); pp. 313; 7s. 6d. net.

MRS. TWEEDALE is a skilful writer and the descriptions of the ghosts she has seen herself or heard of from others lose nothing in the telling. The air of romance enwraps her pages and she is never dull. She certainly has had a wide and varied experience of psychic states and happenings and known a number of interesting people. Where, however, our knowledge of some of the latter overlaps hers we are inclined to take a more prosaic view of their characters and accomplishments. There are many good psychic stories in the book, and the best is perhaps the one entitled ‘I commit Murder,’ which is an excellent instance of sympathetic transference.



## MYSTICA ET LYRICA.

By Cloudesley Brereton. London (Elkin Matthews); pp. 127 ; 6s. net.

IN this artistically produced volume we have forty-two verse-pieces from the pen of an idealist philosopher achieving high poetical expression in the autumn of life. There is a virility in these poems which instantly differentiates them from the general mass of uninspired and uninspiring versification with which we are just now being deluged. There is nothing sentimental, strained or precious in Cloudesley Brereton's verse. In his mystical pieces especially he envisages vistas of the deeper nature of things and is caught up into the cosmic processes and the great sweeps of creative evolution. But not only are his high themes grandiose and grandly conceived ; he is also a bold adventurer in rhythm, thus matching form to substance. It is not necessary to give a specimen of our poet's skill ; a number of the pieces in this volume have already appeared in our own pages, and we doubt not that many of our readers will be glad to know where they can find more of the same quality.

## WILDERNESS LOVE SONGS.

By Mary Raleigh Richardson, Author of 'Symbol Songs.' London (Headley) ; pp. 141 ; 2s. 6d. net.

THESE verses are musical, in spite of their formlessness, and in fact one feels at times as though the poet's ear had had more to do with their making than her vision. There is indeed no lack of images, some of which have considerable beauty ; but they do not always seem clearly realised or significant ; and one regrets that the writer remains almost entirely at the standpoint of her own personality, thus missing the simplicity of universal truth. Yet out of the rapid flow of sensuous and at times striking imagery there arises now and then the outline of something greater and truer—the stuff of which real poetry is made. The writer's undoubted gifts lead us to hope for a further development of the best elements in her verse.

S. E. H.

## PERSONAL POEMS.

By R. L. Mègroz. London (Elkin Mathews); pp. 88; 3s. 6d. net.

THIS little volume is unequal in quality, and therefore should be judged by the best in it, which is unquestionably the sonnet sequence 'Con Amore,' dedicated to the writer's mother, with which it opens. This rings true, and has some passages of real beauty. The attempt to refute the philosophy of 'a contemporary' (Mr. Masefield, we gather) is somewhat thin, and there is a certain insufficiency in the poet's treatment of those mystical and philosophical aspects of life which seem to attract him. The poetical images, however, are frequently pleasing.

S. E. H.

## MAN-MAKING.

From out of the Mists to Beyond the Veil. By W. H. Benton. London (Watkins); pp. 181; 7s. 6d. net.

THE first half of this volume consists of chapters treating of cosmogenesis and geology, anthropogenesis, anthropology and ethnology, the history of civilization and the present state of industrial and national affairs. Mr. Benton marshals in summary fashion a large amount of information that should be generally known, but of which many are ignorant. From this he passes on to present prospects and especially the question of religion, his belief being that a form of Christianity is the most fitting to survive. Finally he tells his reader something of psychical research, its subject-matter and problems, and is of opinion that the facts of Spiritualism will help greatly to make more credible much that has of late been rejected as foreign to a rational spiritual faith.

## A CORRECTION.

IN the last number (p. 61) we referred to M. Gustav Meyrink, the author of *Das grüne Gesicht* and *Der Golem*, as 'an Austrian Jewish man of letters.' We are asked by M. Meyrink to say that this is an erroneous description of him. Though deeply interested in and keenly sympathizing with Jewish mysticism, M. Meyrink is not an Israelite, nor is he Austrian, but a Czech. We are glad to make this correction and to add that we hope before long to print in translation some of M. Meyrink's shorter mystical pieces.—ED.



# THE QUEST



## SOME UNCHARTERED MYSTICS.

Rev. Prof. A. CALDECOTT, M.A., D.Litt., D.D.

IN face of the great interest in Mystical thought and literature in which we are now living many of us feel some self-reproach. We seem unable to enter into such inner circles as those from which we hear voices speaking or singing in intonations which charm us but leave us with feelings of remoteness and detachment. It is plainly incumbent on us to remember that we are alloys, and must be content if our highest qualities can maintain themselves as central amidst the other elements of our mixed nature. For us it must suffice to walk on terraces which though higher than the marshlands and flats are not the mountain plateaus. If for a time we make ascents to higher elevations under the influence of the happy voices which call to us from the Delectable Mountains of vision, we find that we cannot breathe there for long, and we subside again to the lower levels.

This reflection is made, not for its own sake—it is too obvious for that—but in order to make a claim for a genuine share in the Mystic life on behalf of those

who cannot attain to the peaks of eminence which its literature discloses. My claim is that we are not to be dismissed as outcasts because for us the individualized and concrete manifold of the personal and social levels of human life, and even of the physical world, are indispensable. We wish to be reckoned among those in whose nature the Mystical element is present, though we are well aware that in us it does not win sole possession of the soul.

In this situation we find that our appreciation of Mysticism in literature is affected. We are not able to make long sojourns with those who are the high lights of Mysticism. Plotinus, Ruysbroeck, Boehme, Blake, overwhelm us: they appear outside us, above us; we do not identify ourselves with them or with their raptures. In our mystic quest we gain more from literature which is not explicitly aimed at the expression of Mysticism, but which contains it in flashes and outbreaks, often unexpected and surprising. They come upon us when we are not looking for them, and have the force of contrast and the glow of novelty and wonder. We thought we were engaged with things of ordinary human interest when we find windows thrown open, and glimpses of the universal and the eternal around the human scene enlarge our vision and stir the deeps of feeling.

For example, if asked how best to learn the secret of Stoicism, we should not advise recourse to the expositions of the great teachers of that School, but rather to seek the companionship of Marcus Aurelius. In his company we are not engaged in tracing out a system of principles, but we are listening to one who amidst reflections on the vicissitudes of life sounds from time to time the deep notes of participation in



general Reason, of universal Fellowship, of Vocation, and of providential Destiny.

The difference comes out if we compare two memorable 'Confessions' of the nineteenth century, John Stuart Mill's *Autobiography* and Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*. The former is offered as a plain record of the growth of a mind; in the latter the same offer is made, though invested in a whimsical literary form. But in Carlyle's Confession the Mysticism is prominent and is the explicit thing upon which he directs attention and interest, his own and ours. It is the eternal and the universal from which he sets himself to strip the wrappings, and he does this by telling us how he came to do it for himself; after what fightings and gloom the light broke in. It was in an age when courts and pomps were being shaken; but more important than that, when the physical and mental sciences were voluminously weaving fresh vestures for men's life on the plains, Carlyle stood definitely forward calling from the mountains, the sky, the stars. In his own terms, to go about throwing Greek fire, such as the Mysticism of Plotinus, into the general wardrobe of the universe was not only for him a chosen occupation, but a heaven-appointed office.

Mill's procedure is quite different. His aim is to record the formation of his opinions, to give a history of his pursuit of truth. But what have fascinated his readers are those crises in which the searcher after truth had glimpses from time to time into a larger world; became aware of lights flashing upon him from without, and from within himself also: thoughts not generated by the amassing and classifying of the 'sensations and possibilities of sensation' and the feelings of pleasure and pain within which he sup-

posed himself to be confined. He found these circles broken by the invasion of duties which are imperative and aspirations which reach beyond the range of hedonism. It is because he came to suspect his principles and to look out for other sources of value that he moves us, and even becomes an inspirer of the Mysticism he could never bring himself to avow.

But Carlyle and Mill were men of the philosophic order which deals with world-views and fundamentals *ex professo*. Let us turn to two men of letters who present themselves rather as spectators of the variegated phases of life, nature and character without taking themselves to be philosophers or bearing any other responsibilities than that of talking or writing according to their own unchartered pleasure.

Take the *Essays of Elia*. "What?" some rash reader may exclaim, "go to Charles Lamb for Mysticism? Surely from him we have before us the interests of this world only, and those by preference of the trivial and superficial sort?—delicately handled, finely embroidered, no doubt, and with a pathos and humour of his own, not uncharged with deeper significances. You will be at home with Charles Lamb if you are interested in old plays, in antique customs and bygone manners, in children, or in superannuated men and women. But not if you are thinking of the Duties or Heroisms or Enthusiasms with which the Beyond inspires the deeper souls." This is probably the preconception with which we should turn to Lamb after a long absence from his company. But let us take the *Essays* and spend an evening or two with him.

In my own gleaning I find in them an appreciation by him of the precise point we are raising, though at a lower level than ours. It is the very purpose of his



character-descriptions to show that even in ordinary minds there is often present a *star* which sheds a light of its own. It may be a very mundane star, such as that which casts a ray into the narrow chambers of Deputy Thomas Tame and his wife, *viz.* a remote relationship to an aristocratic family; or of somewhat higher value, the antiquarian lore beloved by the Oxford Don. That his tenderness of feeling gave him insight into the hearts of so many men and women in the backwaters of life is of course marked by every reader. His admiration for the power of imagination soaring above fact is seen in his commendation of Captain Jackson's refashioning of his environment by an indomitable 'will-to-believe' it to be in all respects superior to what in actual fact it is. But for Lamb himself we soon become aware of stars shining from the other world: the radiance which arises in his soul at the Quakers' meeting; his refusal to find a place for the fear of death; even his seemingly playful objection to Grace before meat is based upon an essential reverence for the all-pervading beneficence of Divine Law.

What is marked in Charles Lamb is an inaptness for systematized knowledge, as such: *e.g.* for science or history. He shrinks from the propensity of Scotchmen for these: in his own expressive phrase he is content to be an encyclopædia behind the learned world. But does not his very resistance to being overwhelmed with massive knowledge imply that he feels that need of freedom to soar which is the mainspring of Fancy on an ordinary level, but at the heart of Spirituality higher up, and the very nerve of Mystical aspiration? Does he not stand before us with his unscientific temper, his preferences for the unuseful

and the antiquated, for the realm of Fancy and Dreams and make-believe, not merely as offering us a combination of quaintness and humour, and kindly feeling, but also of recurrent undertones of seriousness and pathos, and even of intuitive insight into some of the spiritual significances of man's nature and destiny?

Next let us take the *Autocrat of the Breakfast-table*. The *mise-en-scène* is not promising: the haphazard company at a New England boarding-house, and this not in the twilight or the late evening hours but in the glare of the opening meal-time of the day. The most persistent current of interest in the Autocrat's conversations is precisely that which is absent from the *Essays of Elia*: here it is a deep interest in science in its most recent forms in application both to physical nature and to the workings of the mind. The Professor of Anatomy sits drawing upon his professional studies, but he sees beyond them to the rising science of Mind—not yet named Psychology. He pours out a stream of similes and parables throwing light upon mental phenomena hitherto obscure or wholly unaccounted for. But if these had stood alone Wendell Holmes would have won no permanent attraction for the general reader: they are facts or laws which when once learnt are catalogued by science, and we know where to look for them when we require them.

But there are other thoughts than these: thoughts which come from beyond the limits of science. Under the guidance of the Autocrat we see something of the Universal around us; like the breaking in of the light of Nature through the cracks and chinks in the walls and floors of city-houses, to use his own simile. We are invited to observe the mighty forces of Nature



expressing themselves in the smallest and least considered facts and things; we feel the mind stretching itself and passing through stages needing new habitations, as in the delightful poem, *The Chambered Nautilus*. With him we detect in certain human voices tones which intimate affinity with something illimitable. We find even in the 'dandy' one who desires to have his part in the handsome and the admirable. And we see the Autocrat with a fine touch wiping the dust from the faces of the unattractive and unloved to show us the loveable features that are truly theirs. We tremble as he narrates his first youthful act of disobedience to the inner voice of Moral Law, finding ourselves, as he found himself, faced with something absolute and inspiring awe. 'Throbbing flashes of the poetical intermittent,' as he calls them, touches of mystical experience, as we may call them, sparkle in his pages and impart breadth of lustre to the general surface of the monologue.

These examples may suffice to illustrate my theme. It is for us, as Sir James Frazer finely puts it in his Preface to *Folk-lore in the Old Testament*, "as sunbeams which appear to shine with a greater effulgence of beauty when they break through the murky elements of a winter evening than when they flood the earth from the serene splendour of a summer noon." This is precisely descriptive of my meaning: and I offer these reflections through the desire to mitigate the self-reproach which many of us feel for our incapacity for prolonged companionship with the recognized leaders of Mystical literature; for our being obliged to think of ourselves as *cultores parci et infrequentes* of the austere practices which they enjoin. We salute these dwellers in the white light of the

empyrean with admiration, but we are fain to be content with offering them the tribute of our respect and even of our awe. We make our 'apology' for ourselves by claiming that we too have our appreciation of the Mystical element in the life of the spirit: that, indeed, it is for us indispensable; but that we discern it not as a separated transcendency but as the interpenetrating essence which from time to time, in many forms and divers portions, shines in the ordinary lives and thoughts and characters of men.

A. CALDECOTT.



## THE LAUGHTER OF GOD.

A. BARRATT BROWN, M.A.

SOMEONE has wisely said that no man is really serious in his religion unless he can laugh about it.

A recently published booklet contains the letters of Miriam Gray called *God in Everything*. Her Parson correspondent writes: "Many of the religious people that I know, when they talk of religion, have a bedside manner and walk about in felt slippers. And if they speak of God they always tidy themselves first. But you go in and out of all the rooms in God's house as though you were at home. You open the doors without knocking, and you hum on the stairs, and it isn't always hymns either. My aunt thinks you are not quite reverent; but then she can keep felt slippers on her mind without any trouble." And then he asks Miriam if God likes you to enjoy *Pickwick* and *Punch*, and Miriam replies: "Someone asked me once if God liked *Punch*. 'Why He helps to write it,' I said; and I really mean that. Certainly, if He doesn't for you, you have no right to enjoy it." And she tells the story of the little Indian boy Christian who had learnt Christ better than most of us and who, when he made a fine kick on the football field, exclaimed: "Look, Lord Jesus, look!"

The common conception of reverence and blasphemy needs drastic revision—and in some cases a complete reversal; for many of the most reverent have

been persecuted as blasphemous and many an act of blasphemy has been supported in the name of piety. It is a strange world in which human flesh and blood are not treated as sacraments of Christ with the reverence that is accorded to the bread and wine of the altar; in which the temple of the Holy Ghost is carelessly defiled and destroyed while the cathedral of wood and stone is venerated; in which war and poverty and disease and all degradations of the minds and bodies of men are not recognised for the blasphemies they are. And if in these things there is a fatal lack of reverence, in other things again there is a false and misplaced reverence. For reverence is not an artificial and affected piety, nor a laughterless solemnity assumed for special times and places, but that deeper feeling that comes from a sense of the bigness and worth and loveliness of things and persons. Such reverence and appreciation of life is the source of joy and laughter, not of gloom and a morose indifferent silence.

“The world is so full of a number of things,  
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings”—

and in these days of tottering thrones infinitely happier.

Nothing intensifies the joy of life so much as a temporary deprivation of the normal comforts and enjoyments and companionships. It is not only the enhanced value that is felt in the recovery of sights and sounds and scents long missed that makes the returning exile want to cry out with George Fox: “The whole creation has a new smell.” It is also the sense of the real values in life—the things that are vital and really matter. Among these I myself have found—I would almost say pre-eminently—Joy; joy in the fullest sense of abounding vitality, enthusiastic



appreciation rising to rapture, wonder that stands open-eyed before simple familiar things, humour and good humour, and a care-free spirit of reckless abandon and adventure. Joy is a sensitive plant and easily spoilt by rough and careless hands. It dies in the presence of hate or jealousy or selfishness. Joy follows love among the fruits of the spirit. To attempt to win or keep it to oneself is to lose it out of hand. It is the most elusive of the virtues, that comes and goes with the gusts of the spirit—blowing where it listeth.

“He that bends to himself a joy  
Doth the wingèd life destroy;  
But he that catches the joy as it flies  
Lives in eternity’s sunrise.”

(BLAKE.)

It belongs of special right to the young, but is never lost by those to whom years bring only a deeper joy in the glory and wonder of life.

Aristotle likens the pleasure which accompanies harmonious activity to the bloom upon the face of youth—a happy figure, if we add a smile. Of all the moods and tempers of the soul joy is the least easy to simulate. The forced laughter of a heartless mirth has notoriously a hard and false ring that reveals at once its hollow insincerity. Equally unreal and easily detected is the empty laughter of a merely silly and superficial gaiety, which has an appearance of simplicity but is to the simplicity of joy as a garland of ribbons to a daisy-chain. Depth must be added to buoyancy to give the note of joy. That is why sorrow is more nearly than gaiety allied to joy. Joy penetrates a deeper self than pleasure ever touches. And the springs of tears and laughter rise from the same fount of deep

experience and feeling. Only he can rejoice with those that rejoice who knows how to weep with those that weep. A wide personal experience is the mother of sympathy with joy or sorrow. And the deepest joy is so far from being alien from pain and sorrow that it is often wrested from the midst of grief ("O Joy that seekest me thro' pain")—not as a sentimental self-condolence but as a sense of the indestructible values that cannot be shaken.

All this has suggested to me an aspect (I only claim it as *one* among many others) of the meaning of life, and therefore of God, which has been too often overlooked. Even Jesus, who, as I have come to see him, was a man of intensely buoyant humour and laughter, is represented by tradition as a 'man of sorrows' rather than a man of joy, and seldom in the sense in which the epithets imply each other. But of his nature and outlook we must say something later. What of the Laughter of God?

Granted that the phrase implies an element of metaphor and of anthropomorphism, which to my mind is permissible if not indeed indispensable to our human understanding of God's nature,—do we find in God this quality of deep joy and hearty laughter? T. E. Brown thought so, for he names one of his poems *Risus Dei* and writes:

"Methinks in Him there dwells alway  
A sea of laughter very deep,  
Where the leviathans leap,  
And little children play,  
Their white feet twinkling on its crisped edge."

But if we are to gain a view of this side of God's nature, some kinds of laughter must first be ruled out.



The empty and the forced or heartless laugh obviously have no place in a God who is to be true and real and undeceiving. But equally we must reject the laughter of scorn or of malignancy which some have claimed to overhear in Heaven. The cruelty and deceit of the Homeric gods and of their Homeric laughter is clearly untrue (as Plato saw) to the deepest requirements of the Divine idea. But so also is the cynical laugh of mocking contempt of mankind which is sometimes heard in the Old Testament, and which finds a more definite modern parallel in the God represented to us by Thomas Hardy or Anatole France. We remember the close of Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*: "The President of the Immortals had finished his sport with Tess." And is it not on the title-page that he quotes Shakespeare's

"As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods;  
They kill us for their sport"?

But there is no note of cynicism in the Divine laughter. It is sympathetic even when He is laughing at us, which He must often do—especially at theologians. And the two main notes in His laughter are those of joy and humour.

The note of joy we hear in Nature. Poets have caught it often—since Æschylus marked the 'myriad laughter' of the sunlit ocean, and the author of *Job* spoke of the creation when "the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy." The Jews indeed, who strike one as singularly lacking in humour, with the outstanding exception of Jesus, have a lively sense of the joy of Nature. It is in the *Psalms*, whether of David or of others, that we get the exultant echo of Nature's joy—"Ye mountains that ye

skipped like rams, and ye little hills like lambs." (Ps. cxiv. 6.) It is probable that here as in modern poetry the so-called 'pathetic fallacy' is to be seen, and the words reflect the singer's mood. But there are moods in Nature herself that suggest to us the smiles and laughter of God's joy:

" Oh good gigantic smile of the brown old earth,  
This autumn morning! How he sets his bones  
To bask i' the sun, and thrusts out knees and feet  
For the ripple to run over in its mirth."

(*James Lee's Wife.*)

And it is Browning again in *Paracelsus* who ascribes to God the continual joy of the Creator who still sees what He has made and finds it very good. In a great passage Paracelsus tells of his discovery of

" How God tastes an infinite joy  
In infinite ways."

He describes the changing seasons and how

" God joys therein . . .  
. . . and God renews  
His ancient rapture."

So too in *Saul* the human delight in the joyous world finds voice:

" How good is man's life, the mere living! how fit to  
employ  
All the heart and the soul and the senses for ever  
in joy!"

And it is not merely the outer world of Nature that images the smile and echoes the laughter of God. Supremely we find it in the human heart and in each other. No one needs further evidence of the Divine laughter who loves the earliest smile and crowing



laugh of a child. There is a legend of St. Michael (suggested perhaps by the original meaning of the name) that he asked of God as a gift that he might have a smile like God upon his face. I think not only St. Michael but all Angels—which includes all children—have inherited this gift of grace. One sometimes has the feeling that our thrills of human joy are the ripples of God's laughter. And the causes of His laughter must be as manifold as the delights of Nature and the whimsicalities of man. For there must be a triumphant joy in the mind and heart of God such as we only dimly know—the joy of the Creator, and the joy of the inflowing Life, and the joy of the all-conquering Redeemer, whose certainty of the victory of goodness is not broken as in our desperate doubts and infidelities. And not only the laughter of triumphant joy but the laughter of humorous appreciation must be the privilege of one who sees the world and man *sub specie æternitatis*. For the wider our horizon the more laughable is human nature, not only in its whims and vagaries, but in its absurdly solemn conventions and ridiculous poses and gestures of unwarranted dignity and self-assurance. A recent novel of Laurence Housman's, *The Sheepfold*, contains a heroine with a refreshing sense of humour. Even in her childhood attendance at a little chapel of Primitive Brethren she could not resist the bubblings of laughter at the solemn congregation.

“She who had hitherto looked upon human beings with a simple and direct gaze now began to see them round corners; and dimly the philosophical thought dawned into her mind—‘If this is the way God sees things how He must laugh!’ Before long she became convinced that it was indeed the only way in which

He could see things and that a certain many-sidedness was the essential quality of the Divine outlook. And since, where she saw only round one corner, He saw round all, the resultant fun He got out of it must be proportionately more.

“When this conviction became fixed she had a great longing to communicate it to others: she wanted to get up before the congregation and say, ‘O Lord teach us to see round corners!’ . . .

“They were a flock of sheep baaing in the wilderness they had made for themselves, and mainly because they would not see that life was really a joke, and God the maker of it. ‘O Lord, teach ’em to laugh!’ prayed Jane, as she stood or knelt to worship in the midst of a congregation whose solemnity grew funnier and funnier. In her own person that prayer was answered abundantly; time and again the spirit of the Lord took her and tore her as she became the vessel of His mirth.”

It is generally agreed that the broadly essential character of the humorous lies in our perception of the incongruous, and to one who takes a philosophic view of the world the incongruities of human character and behaviour are a laughable spectacle enough. We speak of things such as make the angels weep, but there must be many more that make them laugh. Dr. Orchard once said: “God must have a sense of humour or He would never have made a hippopotamus—and some of us!” Within the wide circle of the incongruous there is one particular class of a markedly comical character, which M. Bergson in his *Essay on Laughter* has chosen as the distinguishing feature of the comic—namely, the incongruity of those who should be living and human but pose and act as if



they were machines. Rigid mechanism where we ought to find moving life—that is the crowningly ironic humour of man's most solemn and sacred institutions. It is most obvious perhaps in our big State machines—in our military or penal institutions especially; for militarism as a generic term for the mechanical regimentation of human lives whether in barracks or in prisons (and the writer can speak from experience of both) is more ridiculous and stupid than wicked and immoral, and in a world of men and women who were really alive and had the divine and saving sense of humour would be laughed out of existence. But the same quality is no less marked in our religious institutions, where the organisation and regimentation of human minds and souls is carried on, and where the rigid pose of piety, the mechanical performance of ritual, and the pretentious fabrications of dogmas by learned theologians and solemn repetition of creeds by unlearned worshippers make the spectacle of orthodox and established religion the most absurdly funny of any of the human happenings that God has cause to laugh at. And *how* He must laugh at our religions and denominations—not unkindly but with irresistible humour mingled with compassion!

Sometimes I think the very Throne of Grace must rock with heaven's laughter, and then you may know that some new and solemn piety has been established among men, some new pronouncement of orthodoxy in final and unalterable terms defining truth, or some new form of ordered prayer that asks in dignified and measured periods for graces and consummations which the solemn kneeling worshippers would be astonished, if not horrified, to see fulfilled. For they have never dreamt of what would happen if their prayers were

really answered, or their aspirations taken seriously—what inconvenient and uncomfortable revolutions might occur to turn their whole world upside down. But the fact is that God cannot take seriously prayers that we ourselves do not take seriously. If we took our prayers more seriously we should laugh with the joy of faith and adventure and set ourselves to the stupendous task of acting as though we meant them to be answered.

There are times when the laughter of God comes to him who has ears to hear, mingled with a sob of sorrowing pity—when a Bishop consecrates a Dreadnought, or a nation offers thanks that it is not as other nations, or asks the forgiveness of another nation's sins. For the humour of God is very penetrating but also very pitiful. Or at least I imagine so from what I understand of the humour of Jesus. It has seemed to me that those strange and much discussed 'Woes' pronounced by Jesus upon the Pharisees were spoken not in wrath so much as with a compassionate laughter. For Pharisaism is like Militarism in presenting the comical if also tragic spectacle of the rigid and mechanical usurping the place of the living and human. And Jesus uses the weapon of laughter to strike at the Pharisees' self-righteous solemnities, knowing that the most ridiculous class of men is composed of those who are mortally afraid of appearing ridiculous. 'Strutting actors' he calls them, and rounds on them with an ironic laughter which is rather a friendly banter than a merely scornful disdain. (The author of *An Unknown Disciple* has the same conception. "It was as if he would have had them also for his friends, for he mocked them gaily as friend mocks friend.") We often miss the rich humour of

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the sallies which Jesus directs against them—chaffing his host and fellow-guests at dinner and vainly trying to break down their stiff reserve into a hearty laugh at themselves for the solemn absurdities they are. What could be more delightful than the picture of the Pharisee carefully straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel? Dr. T. R. Glover has brought out the full humour of it.

“We are shown the man polishing his cup, elaborately and carefully; for he lays great importance on the cleanness of his cup; but he forgets to clean the inside. Most people drink from the inside, but the Pharisee forgot it, dirty as it was, and left it untouched. Then he sets about straining what he is going to drink—another elaborate process; he holds a piece of muslin over the cup and pours with care; he pauses—he sees a mosquito; he has caught it in time and flicks it away; he is safe and he will not swallow it. And then, adds Jesus, he swallowed a camel. How many of us have ever pictured the process, and the series of sensations, as that amplitude of loose-hung anatomy—the hump—two humps—both of them slid down—and he never noticed—and the legs—all of them—with whole outfit of knees and big padded feet. The Pharisee swallowed a camel—and never noticed it.”<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Chesterton, who would compass sea and land to make one epigram, closes his *Orthodoxy* with a suggestion which is quite preposterously false to the facts as I read them. “There was something,” he says, “that He (Jesus) hid from all men when He went up a mountain to pray. There was something that He covered constantly by abrupt silence or

<sup>1</sup> *The Jesus of History*, p. 49.

impetuous isolation. There was some one thing that was too great for God to show us when He walked upon our earth; and I have sometimes fancied that it was His mirth." I would rather have said that if there was one thing that Jesus left unmistakeable and so clear to all as to excite the shocked disapproval of the pious, it was the liveliness of his mirth and the merry ring of his laughter. Let me take an example chosen because it pokes fun at the same kind of blind self-importance that is so laughable in the Pharisees. It is essentially a carpenter's joke—the picture of the man who says to a neighbour: "Do allow me to take that splinter out of your eye," and all the time he has a six-foot plank in his own. But the talk of Jesus rings with his laugh. How many readers have noticed that the greater part of the reported conversations belong to what we should call 'table-talk' and how racy it is—sprinkled with parable and picture and playful chaff? But we must not linger now to listen to it—only I would suggest that Jesus might have truly said: "He that hath heard me laugh hath heard the Father!" For the mirth of Jesus surely echoes the mirth of God and he reveals to us a heaven of joy among the angels in the presence of a companionable Father—not an austere and unbending Judge. We may remember John Fiske's boyhood memories of his idea of God—a figure standing at a high desk just above the zenith, "a tall, slender man, of aquiline features, wearing spectacles, with a pen in his hand and another behind his ear," and attended by his assistant recording angel, watching and registering the deeds of men. That is, I fear, only an exaggeration of a still too prevalent conception. It is not the anthropomorphism one complains of so much as the kind of



'*anthropos*' that is represented; and it is a curious fact that those who have exalted Jesus with most insistence to complete equivalence with God have been the last to shew us in God the features that we love in Jesus. I sometimes wish that those who want to bind us to a particular set of dogmas about Christ would only leave us to enjoy him. And that brings me back to my starting point.

A true reverence for Christ and what he stands for will bring with it the sense of his abiding joy and his infectious laugh. He offers us abundant life and vitality and he offers us in consequence abundant joy. "That my joy may be in you and that your joy may be full to the brim" (*Jn.* xv. 11). It is not that he would have us exempt from suffering and sorrow; it is the deeper joy he offers that sings the best of all songs, 'the songs before sunrise.' "Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh," is one of his Beatitudes in Luke (vi. 21). "You will mourn," John makes him say, "but your grief will be turned into gladness. A woman . . . when she has given birth to a babe, no longer remembers the pain, for her joy that a man-child is born into the world. And ye also now have sorrow; but I shall see you again, and your hearts will be glad, and your joy no man taketh from you" (*Jn.* xiv. 20-22). The joy of Jesus and the joy of his followers, which echoes through the *Acts* and the *Epistles*, is the joy which comes in the midst of adversity and suffering and which no man can take away. It is genuine "good news" that Jesus brings—of the Kingdom at hand and "a good time coming"; but more than that,—of a spirit that you can have here and now and always in your heart and in your life, a spirit of love and joy and peace, which you can

carry everywhere even into the hottest, tightest corners and never lose. For the 'Holy Spirit' means to those who possess it 'holy spirits'—the hilarity of St. Francis and the 'Jugglers of God,' whom men found laughing even at their prayers and whose happiness was not dulled or dissipated by hardship and persecution.

St. Paul's most joyful letters are those he wrote from prison, and in one telling phrase he sums up his own experience. He is writing to his friends at Philippi who have sent him a parcel of good things; and he says that although he is very glad to get it and still more glad of their friendship in sending it, he can be happy whether with or without material comforts. "I have learnt," he says, "whatever be my outward circumstances to be content and self-sufficient. *I know both how to go short and how to abound.* . . . I have been initiated into the mysteries of fulness and of hunger, of abundance and of want" (*Phil.* iv. 11, 12).

I think perhaps only those who know how to go short know how to abound; at least it is a general experience that the delight of abounding is enhanced by occasional privation and especially so is the appreciation of simple enjoyments. But what I am concerned to emphasise is the importance of knowing how to abound. There are some people who can go short all right and endure hardship, but not only do it rather too solemnly and seriously but also are unable to relax when they get the opportunity—people who never take a real holiday or (as we say) "let themselves go." And how many more, alas! are so everlastingly tired and jaded in limbs and nerves by the sheer pressure of their daily work that they have no vitality left for the scanty leisure that remains, and resort to artificial stimulants or to amusements that merely



titillate the fancy and are unbeautiful and unexacting. To such the joy of life and of abounding life is never known, and even the smile dies out upon the face and their only laughter springs from a coarse obscenity or bitter derision.

To restore the Divine laughter to the drawn faces of his people is the highest service that we can render to Christ. A religion of negatives and prohibitions and solemnities must give way to a religion of joy and fellowship and glad sharing. Keble's 'daily round and common task' verse contains only a dismal half-truth. We want more than 'room to deny ourselves'—we want room to *express* ourselves as well; the former may be at times 'a road to lead us nearer God' but it is a *via negativa* at the best, and for most of our fellows there is enough involuntary mortification of the body and denial of the good things of life in the daily circumstances of their existence. What they need—what we all need—is God's joy and humour, joy in the simplest things of His universe and humour in its hardest bumps. Rupert Brooke's *Great Lover* is a happy expression of the first, with its delicious catalogue of all the wonders of the everyday things of Nature and of human life. More briefly and simply it is the burden of Robert Bridges' verse :

" I love all beauteous things,  
I seek and adore them ;  
God hath no better praise,  
And man in his hasty days  
Is honoured for them."

But the second need I mentioned—to see the humour of the bumps and casualties of life—is an even greater gift than that of making sure of a good time,

because it means to those who win it that they will never really have a bad time again. It means that they have the abiding joy of Christ in their hearts and the laughter of God in their faces, and are able to see the immense joke of human life and human nature. It is that gift for which all of us should pray; so that whatever comes to any of us of happiness or of hardship, of fellowship or of opposition, we may rejoice together and laugh to our heart's content, and when the hardest buffetings of circumstance come upon us join in the simple prayer of Lawrence Housman's heroine: "O Lord, teach us to see the humour of it."

To-day as we look around upon the tragic aftermath of war it might seem at first an unfitting time to ask men to turn their minds to joy and laughter. It might seem to betoken some unforgivable forgetfulness of the sorrowing homes of Europe and the wan, worn faces of mothers and little children. But I am desperately serious in insisting on the Gospel of Laughter even at this moment. "God shall forgive thee all but thy despair." And anything short of a buoyant and triumphant certainty is inadequate to face the stupendous future that we see before us. Now, while the cloud of the passions of war still hovers darkly over Europe and only here and there begins to lift—now is the time to sing our 'songs before sunrise':

"Rise ere the dawn be risen,  
Come and be all souls fed;  
From field and street and prison  
Come, for the feast is spread;  
Live, for the truth is living; wake, for night is dead."

And the one great hope for us all is to win for ourselves and one another the sense of joy, and of what



God means our life to be. Let those of us who have known this joy and laughter, and have found it only deepened and sanctified by the sufferings and sorrows of these last five years, be ready to share it with those who have lost it or have never really found it yet. We shall know how to do it without intruding on the grief of those who weep. We shall find a way to make them smile again through tears and to break down barriers of bitterness and hard reserve. Let us show them what we have found of the beauty and gladness of life, and share our overflowing enthusiasm for the things that are worthy of reverence and lovely and of good report. We have found that

“The world’s no blot for us nor blank,  
It means intensely and means good.”

To discover that is to know a joy which makes “all worldly joyes go lesse,” in which the desire for wealth and fame and power dies out, and the roots of war are utterly destroyed. “For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink ; but justice, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Once we have that, the other things will be added, and no child will cry of hunger, and men and women will not grow old and tired of life before they have begun to live, but the joy of the Holy Spirit will be in all men’s hearts and the Laughter of God in their lives.

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF PURPOSE.  
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY  
OF SWEDENBORG'S DOCTRINE OF DEGREES.

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WHEN a man is asked to give an explanation of any action he may have committed, what sort of reply is it that we expect? The man might give an elaborate account of the action considered as something occurring in the objective world, describing it in all its details; but although such an account would certainly enable us to understand the action better, we should by no means regard it as affording a satisfactory explanation of the action. And the same remark applies were the man to describe in detail the psychological (or mental) processes whereby the action was brought about. What is it, then, that we expect in reply to our enquiry and alone regard as affording a satisfactory explanation of the action? We expect the man to assign a motive to his conduct, to state a purpose or end. Then only do we feel that we are in possession of a satisfactory explanation of his action. The motive may not be one of which we approve, and in that sense (*i.e.* ethically regarded) the explanation may not be 'satisfactory'; but it is satisfactory intellectually, because we feel that our enquiry has reached its logical termination, and that it would be absurd to ask for an explanation of the man's purpose, for that is an aspect of his individuality or self, whereby he is distinguished from



other selves. It is true that some philosophers have asserted that a man acts in the manner that he does, because he is compelled by forces originating from without him, not because he wills so to act; that his so-called purposes are mere illusions. But if we are to deny the clear evidence of our consciousness on this point, we must logically deny the validity of all evidence, and regard all so-called knowledge as illusory. In fact, to deny the existence of will as the originating cause of man's actions is to deny man's, and thus one's own, existence.

We recognise then that in reference to any one of a man's actions three distinct enquiries are possible. Firstly, we may ask for a full description of the action regarded purely as something occurring in the world external to the man. Secondly, we may enquire concerning the psychological processes occurring within the man whereby the action is produced. And, lastly, we may ask, What is the motive or purpose of the will setting in action these processes? These three may be termed respectively phenomenon, efficient cause and final cause; the what, the how and the why; or, in Swedenborg's terminology, effect, cause and end. That is to say, underlying every action of man, regarded as a phenomenon or effect, we must recognise the existence of a cause and an end.

But is this statement true only of men's actions? Must we not hold it as true also, not only of man himself, but of everything that exists in nature? Man's nature, I think, is too closely interwoven with that of the universe to render any other than an affirmative reply possible. And this follows whether we regard man as constituting part of the universe, or whether we more rightly regard the universe as an

ideal construction of the perceiving mind, and thus as a part of man.

Science deals only with nature as a series of phenomena or effects. It shows us nature as self-consistent, and thus renders her more easy of comprehension; but it does not really explain her. It remains for philosophy to make nature really intelligible by exposing the causes and finally the purpose which underlie her phenomena.

Man, declared the old mystical philosophers, is a microcosm—a universe in miniature. Swedenborg restated this doctrine by designating the universe 'The Grand Man.' The truth of this designation immediately follows if the ultimate intelligibility of the cosmos is admitted. For the only absolute *data* are a man's own states of consciousness; these alone he knows immediately, and in terms of these all things must be ultimately explained if they are to be made intelligible to man. Hence, for man to understand it, the universe must be explained in terms of man. In thought, at least, man is prior to the universe; and if, as the whole of man's growing experience warrants us in holding, the universe is ultimately intelligible, what is prior in thought must be prior in being. It is not then the universe that has generated man, but Man (*i.e.* Will) that generates the universe.

There is a sense in which it is true that man, as an individual will, creates his own universe. Because not only do a man's percepts depend to a certain extent upon his own nature, but each individual's universe is an ideal product of that individual's intelligence attempting to harmonise and explain the percepts that are vouchsafed to it. Everyone, however, realises that there is an element in experience which is not self-



generated, and which to some extent at least is, or may be, shared by all minds. We can imagine what ideas we please and in what order we please; we can moreover experience what percepts we please to a certain very limited extent; thus I can smoke tobacco or not as I please, provided I have sufficient money to purchase the herb and there is a shop at hand. But there are certain definite sequences and orders which our percepts follow or are arranged in with which we cannot interfere; thus, if I wish to smoke I must certainly apply a light to my pipe or cigarette, though if I merely wish to imagine the experience of smoking this may be dispensed with. And this is true not merely for me or for any one individual, but for all men. Thus the definite orders and sequences in our percepts, that is the so-called 'laws of nature,' constitute a world not of our creating. And what is chiefly characteristic of this world, that is of what is called 'nature' or 'the physical universe,' is its harmony and oneness. That at least is the testimony of Science, whose whole reputation is staked on the principle of the uniformity of nature, and not foolishly if results of practical worth are any criterion. Hence we must conclude that nature is the product, not of many wills, but of *one* Will, operating by means of *one* Intelligence.

We are thus led to the concept of God as the Divine Man, which plays so fundamental a part in Swedenborg's philosophy. Swedenborg's views concerning the Deity have sometimes been criticised as excessively anthropomorphic. Certainly many of his statements concerning the nature of God strike one at first sight as curious, or perhaps fantastic. But that, I think, is because it is possible to miss the true

meaning of what he says. If what I have written already concerning the intelligibility of the cosmos is valid, then God must be conceived of anthropomorphically and must be in very truth Man. The real objection to those creeds which are generally termed anthropomorphic is not that they liken God to man, but that, failing to realise what man truly is, they liken God to what man is not. "Love," declares Swedenborg, "is the life of man."<sup>1</sup> It is Love (or Will), operating through Wisdom (or Intelligence), and thus producing action, which constitutes man essentially, and not any outward form or necessarily finite passion or quality.

This triple analysis of man into love (final cause or end), intelligence (efficient cause) and action (phenomenon or effect), it is interesting to note, is in agreement with the traditional threefold division of man into soul, spirit and body; and it is an analysis which is true of man throughout, for there is not one of his actions (an unconscious action, of course, can hardly be termed 'his') that is not the result of some desire or will, operating by means of intelligence (whether rightly informed or otherwise). If then what has been urged concerning nature's relation to man is valid, the whole universe must permit of a similar triple analysis; there can be no phenomenon of nature which has not its end or purpose, which does not exist from love operating through wisdom.

A digression concerning the pressing problem of evil in nature is called for here. To deal with this large question within the confines of the present study is of course impossible. I would suggest however—and I

<sup>1</sup> *The Divine Love and Wisdom* (Bayley's translation), §1.



think the suggestion is in accord with the views of the philosopher whose system I am here endeavouring to explain in part—that the solution of the problem is to be found in the concept of Nature as the arena where will manifests itself in action and meets with co-operation and opposition from other wills. Not only the Divine Will and the wills of incarnated humanity meet here, but also, we may well suppose, to some extent the wills of those who have as it is said ‘passed beyond.’ Nature bears the impress of all these wills, some for good, some for evil; for evil is permitted, according to Swedenborg, in order to preserve such wills as produce it in freedom. But over all, we may well believe, operates the Supreme Will, making all things subservient to its Purpose, utilising even that which is evil and in so doing transmuting it into good.

Now end, cause and effect constitute what Swedenborg terms ‘discrete degrees,’ and are sharply distinguished by him from what he calls ‘continuous degrees.’ This distinction is of prime importance in his philosophy and is one, I venture to think, of great value to modern thought. His own explanation of the differences between the two kinds of degrees, rather too long to quote here, will be found in his *Divine Love and Wisdom*, §§184 and 185, and *Intercourse of the Soul and the Body*, §16. To put the matter briefly, however, it may be said that continuous degrees are such as gradually merge one into the other—for example, degrees of light and shade, colour, extension, density, temperature, etc. Between such degrees no sharp lines of division are possible. It is impossible, for instance, to fix a size (except arbitrarily) greater than which is large and less than which is small, or a temperature above which is hot and below which is

cold. No such sharp lines of demarcation are possible, because one degree merges imperceptibly into another; small merges into large, cold into hot, light into heavy, red into yellow, etc. Moreover two continuous degrees of the same series cannot co-exist with one another. A body cannot have two sizes or two temperatures at the same time, nor can it be both red and yellow, heavy and light, in the same part. The case is otherwise with discrete degrees. They do not merge one into the other, but are perfectly distinct or discrete. Moreover they always co-exist, for the end does not exist otherwise than in the cause, nor does the cause exist otherwise than in the effect. As Swedenborg puts it: "Degrees of ascent [*i.e.*, discrete degrees] are homogeneous, one being successively derived from another, like end, cause and effect."<sup>1</sup> Desire, thought and action in man constitute one of the best examples of what are meant by discrete degrees. Desire does not merge into thought as small into large, nor does thought merge into action as cold into hot. Desire, thought and action are always discrete, and a sharp line of demarcation can be drawn between each pair. But for desire to exist as an end it must exist in thought, and for thought to exist as a cause, ministering to that end, it must exist, that is be manifested, in some form of outward action.

Now, although both desire and thought are manifested in outward action, and are thus immanent in space, they are essentially non-spatial, and may with equal validity be said to exist out of space. We say that desire and thought exist within us, and that nature or the external world exists without, and we are sometimes apt to think of desire and thought

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, §189.



spatially, that is as existing in the limited space bounded by our bodies. But thus used the terms 'within' and 'without' have no spatial reference. As I have pointed out in *The Magic of Experience* (1915) §15, in this connection, 'within' refers to the region where the individual will, operating only in thought, is sole ruler, meeting with no opposition; whilst 'without' refers to the region where will, through thought, flowing into action meets with opposition, both from the effects of other individual wills and from those determinations of the Divine Will we call 'laws of nature.' Now there is no cubic inch of man's body that does not come under the term 'without,' for not the tiniest cell is under the entire control of the individual will and free from the dominion of natural law. Analyse man's organism how we will, yet we never discover pure will or soul. Thus all space is included under the 'without,' and the 'within' is non-spatial. The 'without' is the domain of nature and action, the 'within' that of imagination and pure will. But if the 'within' is non-spatial, it must also be non-temporal. It is not, perhaps, so difficult to conceive of desire and thought, that is spirit, as existing out of space yet manifesting in space, as it is to think of spirit as existing out of time whilst manifesting itself in time. Yet if spirit is non-spatial it must also be non-temporal, for space and time are co-ordinate ideas inextricably bound together. Neither pure space nor pure time, but motion, is given in experience; and it is only through an analysis of motion for the purposes of thought that the concepts of space and time are obtained. It is obvious, therefore, that we cannot predicate temporality of spirit if we deny it extension. It is indeed difficult, but, as Swedenborg

warns us, we must free our minds from the fetters imposed by the ideas of space and time if we would enter into an understanding of the problems of philosophy.

But if man has a non-spatial, non-temporal 'within,' so too has Nature. God, the Divine Man—the Divine Love and Wisdom—is her 'within,' immanent yet transcendent, non-spatial and non-temporal, yet manifested in both space and time. Now between God as End or Final Cause and Nature as Effect, another term, Cause, is required. This is the realm of Spirit, the world of finite minds, discrete from God, though originating from him. All the causes of natural phenomena, that is of man's experiences, are to be found in this realm.

It is very necessary here to distinguish between the scientific and the philosophical usages of the word 'cause.' In the philosophical meaning of the term, and as used by Swedenborg, 'cause' is the source of a phenomenon, wherefrom it derives its existence. In Science, if one phenomenon is invariably and unconditionally observed to precede another, the first phenomenon is called the 'cause' of the second. There is little in common between these two meanings of the term, and in order to avoid confusion, it might be better, were not both usages already so firmly fixed, always to call the former 'source,' and the latter 'occasion.'

Cause in the sense of source is discrete from its effect, but exists within it. Cause in the sense of occasion is not discrete from the phenomenon which is called its effect, belonging itself to the phenomenal world, nor does it co-exist therewith. Thus, in the first sense, will is the cause of action; in the second,



the motion of the engine of a train is the cause of the motion of the carriages that follow, or the application of a fire to the explosive is the cause of the explosion. But the motion of the engine does not exist within the motion of the carriages (it is taking place in a different portion of space), nor does the fire applied to the explosive exist within the explosion (it occupies the same portion of space, perhaps, but not the same portion of time). Neither does the motion of the engine explain the motion of the carriages, nor the fire explain the explosion, in the sense that my willing explains my actions. For it must be remembered that the laws of nature are not explanations of phenomena, but simply statements of what phenomena we may expect to happen under given conditions. In order to explain natural phenomena, just as in order to explain a man's actions, we must assign a (spiritual) purpose and source. It is not the will of the engine's motion that produces the motion of the carriages (the expression is nonsensical), but the Divine Will operating *through* the finite mind which produces both motions as experiences *in* the finite mind. That the motion of the engine always results in that of the carriages and that there is a nicely-balanced adjustment between the amount of coal consumed, the weight of the carriages, the condition and slope of the railroad, etc., and the velocity of the consequent motion, prove merely that the Divine Will does not operate capriciously, but according to definite orders and sequences which it is the business of Science to find out.

Enough has been written, I think, to substantiate Swedenborg's Doctrine of Degrees in its most universal aspect, and to indicate something of its importance for

Metaphysics. But the doctrine permits of an immense number of applications of which no mention has been made, and is an organon of thought applicable to every universe of discourse, because, according to Swedenborg, there are degrees within degrees—discrete as well as continuous degrees within discrete degrees. Not only is the whole cosmos analysable into three great realms, those of end, cause and effect, or God, Spirit and Nature, but each of these realms permits of a threefold division. As Swedenborg puts it: “There are three degrees of ascent in the natural world, and three in the spiritual world.”<sup>1</sup> In fact there is no universe of thought, no subject of enquiry, whether it be phenomenal, spiritual or divine, which does not permit of this analysis into three discrete, as well as infinite continuous, degrees. Numerous examples will at once occur to every reader’s mind, as well perhaps as objections and apparent exceptions to the doctrine in this extended form, with which space hardly permits me to deal. The three ‘states of matter’—solid, liquid and gaseous—and the division of Nature into the three ‘kingdoms’—mineral, vegetable and animal—are but two out of many instances. Of course here the distinction of the three degrees in question as end, cause and effect, does not hold in exactly the same and obvious sense as in the general analysis of Nature, as an effect willed by the Divine Love and produced by the Divine Wisdom operating through the finite mind, or as in the analysis of man into body (activity), spirit (intelligence) and soul (affection or desire). But the relations between what perhaps may be called ‘lesser’ discrete degrees are in a manner similar to those

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, §66. See also in this connection §§190-194 of the same work.



between the 'greater' discrete degrees. The former do, as it were, mirror forth the latter, and in them we can see purpose achieving itself in distinct steps. Mineral, vegetable and animal, for example, are definite and distinct stages of that evolutionary impulse which is consummated in man, and are the manifestation of three discrete degrees of spiritual activity. Moreover such degrees are co-existent, not physically but metaphysically; for within the spiritual activity of which the mineral is the manifestation is the potentiality of the man, and in the womb of his mother man passes before birth through all the previous stages of evolution and sums up in himself all the lower degrees of the natural world.

Care must be taken, however, in using the Doctrine of Degrees in its extended form, to distinguish between functional and apparent discontinuity, between discontinuity in thought and discontinuity in appearance. It is the former only to which the doctrine relates. Functional discontinuity may be associated with apparent continuity, and functional continuity with apparent discontinuity. The point has been very ably illustrated by a modern expositor of Swedenborg's philosophy, and I cannot do better here than quote his words:

"One oak-leaf is separated from another by a distinct interval of space, but it is not, therefore, discretely separated. They are related in form, substance, character and function—in all the features that constitute each the leaf of the oak. There is no difference between them as to essentials. They are distinguished only by degrees of more or less. One is larger, or greener, or more irregular in outline than the other. One is higher up on the tree, or nearer to the eye. It belongs

to another branch, or to another tree ; it may be to a tree in another part of the world. The width of the globe may divide them. But when we think of them, the thought is as of things essentially one. The leaf would, indeed, appear to be more continuously connected with the branch from which it springs, for such a connection to the eye is clearly without a break or interval of any kind. Nevertheless, the leaf and the branch are on different levels so far as the life and growth of the tree are concerned. They are distinguished, relatively, as effect from cause, or as the thing proceeding from that from which it proceeds. And the relation between them is such that, while it is retained, no possible process of blending, adding to, or taking from either would ever convert them into similars. The difference is involved in the relation, and the relation in the difference. No difference could be greater, and no relation could be closer. Questions of comparison, the like and the unlike, the near and the far, the joined or the disjoined, have no place or pertinency here. The branch, as the bringer-forth of the leaf, is in the mother-function, and the interval between them is greater than can be measured either by æons of time or worlds of space. They are discretely separate.”<sup>1</sup>

Many of the world's great minds in the past, such as Emerson and Carlyle, have acknowledged indebtedness to Swedenborg. Now-a-days his philosophy, to my mind, is being rather badly neglected by students. I do not know whether this is due to the excessive claims that are made on his behalf by over-zealous

<sup>1</sup> H. Gordon Drummond, *Degrees* (1908), pp. 15 to 17. True as these words are of leaf and branch, how emphatically true are they of matter and spirit!



disciples—claims so likely to turn aside the enquiring mind—or to other causes. But I greatly deplore this neglect, because I think Swedenborg's philosophy contains so much of real worth. However, if by means of what I have here written, I shall have stimulated interest in one of its leading and to my mind most useful theories, I shall be well content.

H. STANLEY REDGROVE.

## THE MOON OF BUDDHAHOOD.

L. ADAMS BECK.

THERE stands in a cleft of the great range of the Yoshino Mountains of Japan an old, old temple. Built of the wood of the surrounding forests it stands as much a part of nature as the trees themselves. It clings to a crag, reached by tracks suitable only to mountain-born feet, with dizzy drops of precipice before it and the soaring of the eternal hills behind. Music sweeps about it—the wind striking its harp of pines, the steady diapason of the torrent plunging into the rocky basin far below. The sun rises upon it and daily ages a little more its worn timbers and wide-curved roof; the moon moves solemnly before it, illustrating the Moon of Buddhahood to the old priests, who, succeeding one another as guardians of the altar, pass from the mountain peace to the peace of that country whence the shadows fall.

One day I climbed the track. A golden afternoon was declining and all things were reviving from the great heat. Far below us lay little Shitabuchi, to be reached only by toilsome travel down and over the mountain passes to the Tatsu river very far below. There life is busy with its small cares, but so far off and downward that it seemed like leaning on the walls of heaven and looking out and down with an almost unhuman pity and detachment.

When I reached the temple, the priest, very old and wise, incredibly wrinkled, but with bright brown



eyes smiling unconquered from the citadel of the soul, was sitting beside the pines, resting from worship, basking like a lizard on the sun-warmed rocks. Behind, the steadfast blue-green of the pines; in front, the radiant sights and sounds of a great and glorious afternoon of summer. So I had found him often.

He met me with a smile and gave me courteous greeting and a little cup of the pale straw-coloured tea of Japan—very grateful in the heat; then resumed his musing. I, also musing, sat below him looking down into the world.. It was a time for silence, for Nature was singing beside us in the voice of torrent and sunshine and of all her happy living creatures. A subdued but ceaseless hum of being filled the air.

After a while he spoke, though in the conversation that followed were many silences.

“Far away there over the passes is the track that goes down to Shitabuchi. Saintly feet have trodden it, and many sinners’ feet also. It is five-and-forty years since I passed that way myself. I have sometimes wondered what aspect the great world would wear for me now.”

The great world!—little Shitabuchi of the hills! I smiled, knowing that his youth had begun in a wealthy home in the Capital. He caught my expression and smiled also.

“It is in the human heart that the world reigns, and there are many hearts in Shitabuchi. Their tragedies and romances mount up here sometimes like the thin crying of bats in a dream. But if the feet be tangled in illusion the peace of the hills is no more peace than the noises of the city.”

“But may one not drink a moment at the Wells of Quiet and be refreshed, honourable one?” I asked.

"The thirst so quenched returns," he answered. "There is no coolness but the extinction of the fever of desire; no cessation of toil but by the attainment of Vision. This is an old knowledge."

Again a silence; then he spoke again.

"I have not travelled beyond our own shores, but I have heard that in your country this is not taught. It is there believed that desire may be tamed or yoked to heavenly things."

"So it is."

"Yet desire is always pain, be it even the desire of Paradise. Toil is the child of illusion and desire, therefore to attain peace desire must needs die. Have any of your wise men known that life is wholly illusion?"

I did not answer directly.

"May I tell you, honourable one, a story?"

Having received permission, I recited, for I knew it by heart, this parable.

"There is no chance and no anarchy in the universe. Every god is there, sitting in his place. The young mortal enters the hall of the firmament; there is he alone, with them alone, they pouring on him benedictions and beckoning him up to their thrones. On the instant, and incessantly, fall snow-storms of illusions. He fancies himself in a vast crowd, which sways this way and that and whose movement and doings he must obey; he fancies himself poor, orphaned, insignificant. The mad crowd drives hither and thither, now furiously commanding this thing to be done, now that. What is he that he should resist their will and think or act for himself? Every moment new changes, new showers of deceptions, to baffle and distract him. And when by and by for



an instant the air clears and the clouds lift for a little, there are the gods still sitting around him on their thrones—they alone with him alone."

"The man was wise who told this story," he said. "He was worthy to have washed the feet of the Blessed One. He had received understanding. I well suppose that he wrote this in some fastness of the Himalaya Mountains, where in the silence he received enlightenment. He was doubtless an Indian sage."

"He was an American, trained in cities, skilled in dialectic," I answered. "Has not the honoured one heard of the writings of Emerson?" He shook his head, smiling.

"This is a rebuke to presumption. I have thought that no good thing can come out of that market of the world, where all is bought and sold. But this man has beheld the Peace, if but for a moment. He has sat with the Immortals in their hall."

He recited a brief Chinese poem, which ran somewhat as follows:

"The clouds drift in the wind-ways of the world.  
For a moment they have obscured the moon;  
But she emerges in clear light and the clouds were  
vapour and nothingness."

"Yet," he added, "I do not think it possible that the Western peoples should accept the Law for ages to come. It is the denial of all you have prized. Your most urgent realities it knows as mirage—mirage that has led one great people to ruin and steeped the West in blood and tears. Have your priests and wise men declared that this was and ever must be the fruitage of desire and illusion? If this lesson has not taught you, what should?"

“Has the East had greater deliverance?” I asked. “You who have sat at the Blessed Feet, you have crushed China, you have broken Russia. Your dead lie like the leaves of autumn in lands not yours. And is your future peace?”

“Have I said that we were faithful?” he replied, with sadness in his tone. “This too was the fruit of desire. There is but one end appointed for all whose eyes are filled with illusion. That path leads always to the precipice.”

“And is that the end of all?”

“Not so; the beginning, always the beginning. Behold that torrent plunging into the abyss. The stream re-makes itself after the torture of the rocks and goes singing on its way. The Law is merciless and merciful.”

I quoted Browning:

“Other heights in other lives, God willing.”

He nodded his old head, smiling:

“Such is the Law.”

The cicadas filled the silence with their shrill chirping in the bushes. Infinity was golden around us.

“Shall this world ever see the fruition of the Law?” I asked.

“It will come. The Blessed One’s words are unheeded by the many, yet not in vain was he manifested. The Life was lived. And he himself bore witness unto that Greater who in unfathomable Light abideth; before whom are offered the deeds of all the righteous like an incense that continually ascendeth. Before whom the Blessed One himself uttered his lauds and for very bliss was silent. How shall the Eternal fail?—to whom be praise and honour!”



"May I speak and give no offence?"

"Speak, my friend."

"In the West it is said that in the Law is thought only for self, that right-doing is but the means whereby a man escapes the hells of consciousness; that if a man achieve his own manumission the world may perish and he not regard it, having entered into peace."

His smile was an abstracted sweetness, full of compassion.

"This comes of a little knowledge. How should this be so? Are not the brethren one, even as the Law and the Eternal are one with them? What says the *Bodhicharyāvatāra*? Hearken."

He murmured softly as one who considers the Beautiful in an ecstasy and with closed eyes:

"That which is myself, my joys, my righteousness that was, that is, that shall be, all these do I offer, that all having life may attain unto their goal. In the rendering up of all is Peace, and for Peace is my soul athirst. I would be a guard to them that have no protection, a guide unto the traveller; a ship, a well-spring, a bridge for the seekers of that Shore. I would be a lamp to such as need a lamp, a bed for the weary that need a bed, the very slave of such as need service."

He paused and continued:

"What else should be the teaching of the Law? Self is forgotten. It is not. The star fades when the sun rises. In the Law is no remembrance of self."

"I am answered. But if enlightenment should not come—how shall the Light be found?"

"The Light cannot be missed. On all it shines who will open their eyes. The path is straight. Obey first the negative commands—Thou shalt not. These

are for the little children of the Law. Treading on these as stepping-stones, press onward to the affirmative commands, and then already the Light dawns and illumination has begun, for he who obeys shall learn of the doctrine. Beyond this is the steadfast ascent through Right Rapture unto the higher heights and the Four Stages, and here cease the divisions of good and evil and no more are we deceived by names. And beyond this, the tongue is silent but the heart hath known. To this all the Buddhas bear witness."

"Do you look for yet another Enlightened One?"

"Very certainly, as I believe. The day should be at hand when the Voice speaks again. It is long since it spoke in India and in Judæa, and even divine words pass away. All passes but the Eternal."

"What will be its teaching?"

For answer he again recited a Chinese poem, in the strange sing-song of the cultivated Japanese:

"How shall I, poor and unlettered, speak with the voice of the Duke of Chow?

He instructs sages and the Yellow Emperor might obey his counsel.

I await in respectful silence his time for speech."

"But," he added, "it may be in silence that the next Light comes. This also was the thought of the Blessed One. Have you remembered this?"

I knew the wonderful passage that followed—a passage from a very well-known Scripture.

"The Blessed One sat high among His own  
Upon the Peak of Vultures, and there came  
Before his quiet feet the Heavenly King,  
And laid before those feet a heavenly flower  
Golden of hue, praying that he would speak



And in sweet speech instruct them in the Law.  
The Blessed One received the golden flower  
Within His hand, and sat in utter calm,  
But spake no word. And all the Assembly mused  
What this might mean, and, musing, could not know.  
But Mahakasyapa mused and smiled—  
He only, being wise and venerable.  
Then softly spake the Blessed One to him  
Who only knew: 'I hold within my heart  
The Essence of the Law, the wondrous thought  
That is Nirvana. This I gave to thee  
Wordless, and wordless thou hast seen and known.'  
Thus the great teaching moves from heart to heart  
Nor needs it words for wings."

"It may come like the scent of the plum-blossom  
wafted from one to another, speaking of the spring,  
but with no words. Or like the beauty of the cherry-  
blossom that fills the air with love, yet is silent. It  
may be that living so long in the solitude I have too  
little care for words, but the clamour of doctrine is  
less sweet to me than the noiseless rising and setting  
of the august one, the sun; and the pale glory of the  
moon is better than all speech. These set forth the  
Absolute Law. But words break it into the common  
coin of the market-place wherewith men buy and  
cheat."

I looked up to the sinking sun.

"There is neither speech nor language, but their  
voices are heard among them. Their sound is gone  
forth into all lands and their words unto the ends of  
the earth.'"

He did not recognise the quotation, but it pleased  
him and he smiled his wise wrinkled smile.

“So it will be and is,” he said. “What are words? Even in the pure mirror is the light distorted. Look up therefore to the sun. Better be blinded with excess of light than follow the marsh-light. There is no word shaped by the breath of man that is not falsehood and error, and of this disease must each faith perish late or soon. The Law would be no Law could it be told in words. It is above all evil and likewise above all good; but who shall comprehend this when it is told? In its eyes the two are one, and both nothing. Who shall receive this? But the universe is its syllabary. Seek if you would find. The humblest need not be ignorant; for the wisest it is too high; but within and without is the Great Law written. The wise know that the Law itself is not. There is silence beyond knowledge. Yet is it daily set forth from East to West, and only in the Law is there peace, and only in peace the Nirvana.”

I knew the strange paradox of the Two Spheres of Truth, in which all contradiction is reconciled—the Two Spheres of Reality: the relative truth for the many, and the Absolute Truth that baffles the reason for ever—the ‘Void.’

“And what is the Nirvana?”

Once more I put the unanswerable question. For a few moments there was no answer. The old eyes were following the great shadow of the mountains where it purpled the plain beneath with dusk, although for us in the height the sun was still shining. He sighed, recalled to earth.

“Of this neither the Blessed One nor the glorious Company of the Buddhas have plainly instructed us, nor could they. Therefore can this mystery least of all be spoken. Yet consider the ray of the sun, the



wave of the sea, the same for ever but never the same—the ripple of the river. Could we apprehend it, it were not. Music is but a stammerer, but it best shows forth the mystery. Many notes but one harmony; many parts but one melody; in one string all sound; the single note nothing, yet all; apparent silence, yet the once-stirred vibration rolling on to eternity; the bird's cry, the music of the universal march. There is no beginning, no end. It is the stillness. What more can be said? The Universal Life can never cease. The dew-drop is drunk up by the sun and is, yet is not."

"And this?" I asked, pointing to the little temple, set like a visible holiness among the pines.

"Useless," he answered, "unless a man see beyond and through it, and when he does this he loves it but needs it no more. Who heeds the alphabet when he can read the classics?"

"And your own office, honourable one?" I ventured.

"An old man's experience may help the very little ones—the children of the Law. What else? But we have spoken of great things, my friend; we have tried in vain to ascend the heights. Let us be silent for awhile and watch the setting of the sun."

The old voice trembled and stopped; the bright old eyes were dimmed. I sat remembering that the Greeks too had spoken of Music, the heavenly stammerer, in much the same terms and with the same underlying thought. Is all thought indeed one, only separated by words, all beauty but the geometry of the Universal, all love its light? What are creeds? Words, no more; the veils of truth, clouds that obscure the light.

We watched the majestic Nirvana of the sun.  
Very slowly and in a great glory he sank behind the  
shoulder of a mountain ; the mighty pomp of rippling  
oceans of gold and fire faded at length into grey  
twilight, and over all

“ The evening drew  
Her gradual dewy veil.”

The temple could now no more be seen in the  
deep shadow of the pines ; but still before the shrine  
burnt the starry glimmer of an inextinguishable light  
—earthly indeed but Light of light notwithstanding.

“ It is evening. Let us go in and worship,” he  
said, and led the way.

L. ADAMS BECK.



## MELANCHOLY AND SOME OTHER EMOTIONS.

L. A. COMPTON-RICKETT.

MELANCHOLY, or the *lacrimae rerum*, makes its appeal to our interest both because it lies so close to the heart of the lover, poet and mystic and because of its enigmatical nature to the psychologist.

This emotion arises independently of events ; it is the 'sweet sorrow' of Keats, the 'nameless sadness' of Arnold, the 'idle tears' of Tennyson, experienced so often spontaneously in youth as he himself said when asked the cause of his grief. It is not the flatness of mere dejection described in Coleridge's *Ode to Dejection*, not an aridity, but a poignancy sometimes spoken of as Celtic melancholy, or the melancholy of the artistic temperament that is an intimate combination of joy and sorrow.

Shakespeare, Fletcher, Milton, Burton, Shelley, Keats, Arnold, Tennyson sing its praises ; Shakespeare, in *As You Like It*, suggests its psychological genesis :

ROSALIND. "They say you are a melancholy fellow."

JAQUES. "I am so ; I do love it better than laughing. . . . It is a melancholy of my own compounded of many simples, extracted from many objects ; and indeed the sundry contemplation of my travels, in which my rumination wraps me in a most humorous sadness."

Here we find adumbrated a definite psychological process ; namely, that consciousness forms compounds or complexes of the simples of many emotions. The simpler components of melancholy, according to Tennyson's poem, are seven in number—freshness, sadness, strangeness, endearment, sweetness, depth, wildness.

If, as a suggestive exercise, we apply the famous dialectical movement of Hegel to the evolution of the emotions, we have a number of emotional triads, or groups of three emotions, in which the interaction of a pair of opposites, such as liking and hating, purges them of their unessential impurities and allows the essential element in both to unite into a new emotion.

Hegel expressed this triadic form by the terms thesis, antithesis and synthesis. Plato spoke of the same, the other, and the combination. Indian philosophy has a similar notion in the three 'qualities,' which may be roughly rendered as dreamy desire, passional energy and the harmony or rhythm of measured energy. As emotions these activities appear in liking, hating and loving; as instincts they are expressed in self-nourishment, self-preservation, self-reproduction.

Hegelian philosophy gradually reveals the pairs of opposites as in their essential nature not contradictory but complementary; as the two halves of a greater whole. For instance, the dependence of the second state on the first becomes evident when we see that we are only capable of hating because we are also capable of liking. We hate a thing because it does not conform to something within us we approve of, just as we disbelieve a thing because it does not conform to something else we believe. As M. Bergson in his *Creative Evolution* shows, the negative depends on a



hidden affirmation. To say a thing is not red implies the existence of red. Universal negation is therefore impossible; total scepticism is a figment, because such scepticism implies the validity of the sceptic's judgment *to that extent*. Opposite emotions then co-exist as positive and negative.

In looking at the three instincts of self-nourishment, self-preservation and self-reproduction, beside the dependence of the second term on the first may be seen the purifying effect of their interaction.

Existence begins with desire. The seed, the amoeba, the infant, begins with the instinct to acquire. It is the necessary laying hold on life. In the instinct for nourishment there is simple appropriation; it is the lowliest expression of union. This dreamy instinctive desire represents a lack of real choice. External objects are only dimly apprehended, and 'selfishness' and ignorance are necessarily interrelated. The *impurity* to be shaken out is this primal ignorance. Awareness has to be awakened.

In self-preservation contingency is warded off. The threatened or actual pressure of having to give up a desirable condition or object rouses the emotions of hate and fear. Something disturbs the estate. Contingency, therefore, by rousing hate and fear, rouses self-consciousness into relatively sharp differentiation. When the present is uncomfortable a comparison is made with the past and hope is entertained for the future. The acuter the contingency the more differentiating and self-conscious the life. It is impossible in apprehended danger to be as radically unaware of a choice as before, because the mind has to cognize and enter into outside relations, and the sharpness of the quickened sense of duality

involved in dislike awakens self-consciousness and discrimination.

In sexual reproduction we have the initial stage of love, the simplest form of giving. Whereas in aliment unity was effected by the mere absorption of the object, in reproduction the characteristic is giving. Although overshadowed at first by the emotion of taking or possession, the welfare of the object is increasingly considered until self-sacrifice is reached.

The stages of liking, purified by dislike (to which latter emotion all reform and refinement are due), may be marked by appropriation, approbation, admiration, adoration. The growth from liking to loving means the incorporation of the principle of dislike, an increasing differentiation of things, leading to the exaltation of a certain thing.

As it evolves, on a higher scale self-nourishment expresses itself in amassing wealth, while the instinctive preservation of the body becomes financial economy and the laws safeguarding property. Only when the mind has absorbed conscious experience of life to a considerable extent does the desire to give assert itself, just as only when the body has stored up vitality does the instinct for reproduction appear.

As the emotions develop to maturity we may see far more closely the synthetic nature of love. Self-sacrifice is the very outlet for the joy of love. The sacrifice that would have been painful without love becomes not only painless but a delight; pain seems to become a moment in a greater happiness, and upon occasion to raise pleasure to ecstasy, as when a motor car is travelling rapidly it can overcome the resistance of a higher gear and thereby increase its speed.

The same principles may be seen working out in



other emotions, such as the triad of pride, shame, self-respect. The character that is subject to the various shades of pride, such as masculine vain-gloriousness and feminine vanity, is susceptible to shame. The adage that "pride goes before a fall" is correct as psychological history. Like all the pairs of opposites the two have the affinity of positive and negative, or presence and privation. The essence of pride is self-reliance, its impurity is arrogance. Shame is a blow to the arrogance in pride, while in its turn shame requires the goad of pride to eliminate its self-distrust and servility, leaving its essence of meekness, which before was weakness. This synthesis of self-reliance and meekness we may call self-respect.

Humour again begins not as humour, but on the one side as fun, and on the other side as that state of disgust whose expression is ridicule. Or if we prefer to speak of humour and wit instead of fun and ridicule, we would say that humour begins in those humours or moods that are whimsicalities, incongruous but playful, while wit begins in the sallies of ridicule, and is more critical than playful because it passes over to the side of differentiation, duality. But when humour and wit are used instead of fun and ridicule, the term humour would have to be employed with a qualification for the synthesis to denote the combination of the tender and the discerning. The sense of fun is first suggested by, for instance, the freakish oapering of a terrier. Humour in the rough ore of fun contains foolishness and obscenity, while ridicule contains ruthlessness. In fun incongruity is subservient to kindly feeling; there is the primitive assimilation with the object as in nourishment. In ridicule incongruity dominates, and there is the duality of dislike. The essence of

fun is tender incongruity, its alloy being foolishness; that of ridicule is penetrative incongruity, its alloy being the cruelty arising from disgust. Ridicule sneers at misfortune; it twists to destroy without understanding. The highest satire also throws out of proportion, but in order to magnify the foibles and illusions of the mind that they may be clearly seen. In the synthesis laughter is the warmth of playfulness and the light of criticism. The increased seriousness of the critical stage breaks down the original good-humoured attitude, but its insight makes for true tenderness.

It is not needful to multiply the instances, nor is it necessary for the reader to agree with the exact expression of those taken, as long as the principle is to some extent suggested.

In general, emotions may be tentatively classed as: (1) sluggish; (2) passional; (3) harmonious. The difference between the second and third class is the difference between a storm and a tide. In the higher emotions there is a steady fulness rather than an agitation. The three types correspond to the horses and charioteer of Plato. There is the dark sluggish beast of simple desire, and the generous wild steed, both of which have to be guided by the charioteer. Herbert Spencer saw that life proceeded from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, but he did not see the movement from the heterogeneous to complex unity.

The movements may also be viewed as two; the one an expansion and the other a contraction, the diastole and systole of the spiritual heart. From the simple seed of instinctual desire for acquisition the emotions branch into multiplicity, 'splay out fanlike'



(to borrow a term of M. Bergson's), and so we get the various modifications of attraction and repulsion. Cupidity and pugnacity, which as Dean Inge avers colour the mind of the majority still, develop in the course of evolution, as memory and comparison grow, into hope and despondency, pride and shame, fun and ridicule—to name some of the more important emotions.

After the branching out of differentiation comes the synthetic movement making for complex unity. The more complex the emotion the wider its connotation, 'the sundry contemplation of travels.' We have seen that consciousness forms compounds, and that in mind there is an equivalent to the organic unities of matter, as the unity of hydrogen and oxygen in water. We have now to ask if there is a mental state that is the apex of lesser syntheses, and whether the simple seed of desire branching out into differentiation is folded again into the unity of the fruit. That such a mental state exists is supported by mystic testimony. From descriptions, which are always said to be inadequate, the condition on its emotional side seems to be one of peaceful ecstasy: peace without inertia, ecstasis without excitation. In 'high *samādhi*,' as it is called in India, on the intellectual side the personal thought-to-thought process is stilled and a higher activity takes its place. It seems to be a state of harmony and equilibrium in which the pairs of opposites are for a time balanced, and is claimed to be the conscious union of the human individual with the divine universal.

The synthetic state may again be suggested by representing the emotions by colours and shades of colour, all of which are not only blended but transformed

in the white light of peace; the prismatic "dome of many-coloured glass stains the white radiance of eternity."

The Indian castes, if viewed as stages in human evolution, may suggest the same psychological law. They are the labourer, the merchant, the soldier and the priest. Plato speaks of similar elements of the body politic as the slave, the merchant, the soldier and the guardian philosopher.

Out of the complete mental inertia of the labourer arises the desire to acquire, and produces the merchant or nourisher of the nation. By possession the defensive attitude is aroused and becomes the more ambitious and conquering spirit, the stressful dual state. Finally this fermentation ceases and we have the quietude of the primitive state with the awakened awareness of the ambitious in the guardian philosopher or God-conscious man. We may broadly indicate these stages as pleasure, pain, peace, or dreamy desire, striving passion, calm power. For it is possible to see from the zest of childhood how all things begin in the Garden of Eden and have their life, death and resurrection.

If we now call our comprehending emotional triad dreamy pleasure, passionate pain, peaceful power, we may follow our former line of enquiry and ask what is the essential nature of the fundamental duality, pleasure and pain.

It is clear that in pleasure, beginning with the blind greed of instinctual self-nourishment and culminating in the martyr's transport, there is the common quality of attraction—in the latter case the attraction of an ideal; and therefore, to use a medical term, we may say that the *active principle* of pleasure is love. When we look at pain we find the same



principle negatively expressed, because repulsion from an object or condition is an attraction towards something else<sup>1</sup>; but pain differs from pleasure in effect by purifying and refining through selection based on repulsion.

The note of suffering is gravity. Volitionally it strengthens by resistance; intellectually it arouses to resource by want; emotionally it is the parent of pity, deepening and essentialising its positive original, and making it more profound and permanent, for triviality dies away in the greater reality of pain and sorrow. When the turbid roaring torrent of life deepens it flows calm and clear. To change the metaphor then, the fruit of pain is profundity, and the end of sorrow solemnity. The emotional content of peace must therefore be described as solemn love.

"Solemnity," says William James in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, "is a hard thing to define abstractly, but certain of its marks are patent enough. A solemn state of mind is never crude or simple—it seems to contain a certain measure of its own opposite in solution. A solemn joy preserves a sort of bitterness in its sweetness; a solemn sorrow is one to which we intimately consent."

James in his last contribution to *The Hibbert Journal*, 1910, gives an extract from the writings of a mystic describing a state in which sorrow is well-nigh entirely merged in solemnity, and yet this solemnity seems to lack the ecstasis of full *samādhi*. It is as follows:

<sup>1</sup> This is probably what is meant when evil is spoken of as the negation of good. It would perhaps be clearer to substitute the word privation for negation, for it is not a mere blank to be filled with good. It is a duality, good and its absence, the state that realises good as absent. The presence of a friend does not depend on the immediate thought of his absence, but his absence would have no reality apart from the experience of his presence.

"So am I now not only firm and familiar in this once weird condition, but triumphant—divine. To minds of sanguine imagination there will be sadness in the tenor of the mystery, as if the keynote of the universe were low, for no poetry, no emotion known to the normal sanity of man, can furnish a hint of its primeval prestige, and its all but appalling solemnity; but to such as have felt sadly the instability of temporal things, there is a comfort of serenity and ancient peace, while for the resolved and imperious spirit there are majesty and supremacy unspeakable. Nor can it be long until all who enter the anæsthetic condition (and there are hundreds every secular day) will be taught to expect this revelation and will date from its experience their initiation into the Secret of Life."

Melancholy seems to fall just short of this state. In melancholy we find an extreme complexity. It is far above life's opening of dreamy desire, and yet is the condition of a commixture that has not been completely integrated into something radically new, an organic compound like the peace of *samādhi*.

In Tennyson's concise anatomy of melancholy, 'tears, idle tears,' we have seen its attributes enumerated in freshness, sadness, strangeness, depth, endearment, sweetness, wildness; or, if one had to express it in three terms, perhaps one would say, remoteness, loftiness and self-intimacy.

"The depth of some divine despair" is so near "the almost appalling solemnity" of that mystic state which touches the hem of high ecstasis, that we have some warrant for regarding melancholy as the penultimate human emotion, or the twilight threshold of peace.



Divine despair! The words have such a ring in them that we should not hurry to fix their meaning. Tennyson suggests that we are here co-partners in the world-melancholy of God; while Milton suggests that what we experience as melancholy is an exaltation that saddens us because our nature is not 'tuned up' to it.

" Whose saintly visage is too bright  
To hit the sense of human sight,  
And therefore to our weaker view  
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue."

Certain it is that melancholy, like simple dejection, is rooted in separation. A person is dejected because a business scheme fails; he is separated from a condition that he held in hope. He does not *yearn*, however: that is the mark of suffering touched with love, and usually called grief. The same man loses a friend by death; there is a feeling of yearning. The separation has melancholy in it.

"A night of memories and sighs I consecrate to thee."

But the true *lacrimæ rerum* are impersonal; that is to say, melancholy is based on no misfortune in life, though it may be deepened by misfortune. It is tears, idle tears. Just as the words 'far, far away' acted as a melancholy charm on Tennyson as a boy, so Burns testifies to the spell of the words 'auld lang syné.' De Quincey derived 'the very grandest form of passionate sadness' from the spectacle of the dance. He remarks that "the highest pleasures are the most removed from merriment."

Melancholy is peculiarly associated with memory, with the soul in retrospect. Though medico-materialism

labels such a condition as morbid, a state of activity with little reflection is really quite as lopsided.

Again, as we have seen how much wider the connotation of melancholy is than the cheerfulness of simple pleasure, we do not feel that any contribution is made when New Thought optimists endeavour entirely to ignore it as an error of mind, any more than by the man who speaks of 'a fit of the blues.' Human evidence shows that the security of joy is not obtained by trying to 'short-circuit' experience, but by living it more intensely and intelligently.

"Ay, in the very Temple of Delight  
Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine,  
Though seen by none save him whose strenuous  
tongue  
Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine ;  
His soul shall taste the sadness of her might  
And be among her cloudy trophies hung."

If melancholy is rooted in separation and has special affinities with memory, we are led to ask if impersonal melancholy is not the separation of the individual from that which he loves but whose recollection is below the threshold of consciousness, and which he holds therefore as sub-conscious memory.

"Sorrow," says Dante, "remarries Man to the Divine"; and it is the need of the wandering Psyche to be taken up by Love and immortalised of which we are reminded by the enigmatical tears of things.

Or shall we say that divine despair is the midnight memory of the soul, and its loneliness the loneliness of the mountain-top beneath the stars waiting for the dayspring, till once again it is clothed with the Sun?

L. A. COMPTON-RICKETT.



## A LATTER-DAY CHRISTIAN MYSTIC.

CLOUDESLEY BRERETON, M.A., B.-ès-Lettres.

THE publication of *The Message of the Gospel to the Twentieth Century*<sup>1</sup> recalls a well-known story. The Venerable Bede translated the final portions of his version of the Scriptures when on his death-bed. On the morning of the last day he enquired of the scribe how much yet remained to be translated. The scribe answered: "Yet one chapter, Master." Master and scribe toiled on through the day till eventide, when once more the saint asked how much was yet left to be done. "Yet one more verse, Master," was the reply. And the translation made, the two sang the Gloria together and the Venerable Master passed away. Corbet's end was similar. He had only just finished the correction of the final proofs of his *Message* when, to use the expression he loved so well, he passed onward.

Corbet, one fears, was known only to a small if select circle, but in his earlier days he had numbered among his personal friends such Anglican leaders as Liddon, Hort, Bigge and Westcott, as well as mystics like Gordon. In some ways he strikes us, as far as our limited knowledge goes, as one of the boldest if not the ablest of them all. His standpoint as a mystic allowed him to tackle problems from which they shrank

<sup>1</sup> By the Rev. R. W. Corbet, M.A., Author of 'Letters to a Mystic. London (Elliott Stock) ; pp. xxvi.+156 ; 8s. 6d. net.

aside as from forbidden mysteries. Herein lies the paradox of the mystic, that since to him all is mystery, there is no other limit to his exploration of the Unknown than that of his own personal courage. Few who read Corbet will realize how the fundamental truths he had reached were only painfully attained through a sympathetic study of every stone of stumbling that lay in the path to them. This made him the wonderful debater he was, when after his weekly addresses he came forward to answer questions. Then the whole transparent honesty and singleness of heart of the man seemed to blaze up. There was no fencing with the question, no recrimination, no evasion, no hair-splitting, no retreat into ambiguous taradiddles, no attempt to fog or outwit an inconvenient inquirer, nothing in fact that savours of that lying spirit whose best exemplar to-day is the parliamentary answer to a parliamentary question, the *ἄδικος λόγος* of Aristophanes *in excelsis*. Corbet took the field, but it was always the field of his questioner. He met him on his own ground, and answered him in his own language. One might not always accept the answer, but its sincerity was never a moment in doubt. Further it was perfectly intelligible and perfectly in keeping with the system of his beliefs. I think it was his supreme *vitalism* that put him at once *en rapport* with all life and every living thing. To hear him expound the works of St. John, whether Gospel or Epistle, made one live over again the simple yet profound life of the Early Christian Church, ere it was attacked by the arthritis of mechanistic dogma. But he needed this constant contact with humanity to reveal him at his highest and his best. When he wrote, like Dr. Johnson, he relapsed into a totally different style which, though neither clumsy, verbose nor obscure,



yet lacked the supreme vitality of the living word as it came from his lips.

*The Message of the Gospel to the Twentieth Century* is his last will and testament. In it, after a eulogy on friendship as one of the ways of revelation, finding its highest earthly expression in the loving and beloved Evangelist of the Fourth Gospel, Corbet insists on the need of rising beyond creed and symbol into the vision and experience of perfect fellowship with the indwelling Lord and Giver of Life; the Law, the Creed, the Symbol, call it what you will, being but the schoolmaster to bring men to Christ and to the understanding of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as the Source, Essence and Energy of all. The true faith lies, not in a *hyphenated* Trinity, but *in* the Father, *through* the Son, *by the power of* the Holy Ghost. The 'atheism' of the Holy Ghost has been one of the most grievous failings of the Christian Church. If we are to understand the early sacred records, we must realise that there are three planes of belief: the material, the vital and the spiritual. On the material and natural plane God appears as something apart; on the vital and spiritual He is within us. Apostolic teaching clearly distinguished between the three, speaking of the offspring of God (all men), the children of God (those aware of their relationship to Him), the sons of God (those who attain fellowship with Him). Further it was the Apostolic practice to read the ancient sacred records allegorically or sacramentally, or as we say mythically and esoterically, early 'history' being treated as an inventory of the *sub-consciousness* of the race. The Apostles acted in fact as its psycho-analysts. From Abraham onwards the mythical record is *gradually* superseded by the historical, though the mythical

persists. 'Melchisedek' is the image of the *eternal Motherhood* of God, for God is at once the paternal source of our soul's being and the maternal completion of that being. The loss of this belief in the twofold relation of God as the complete *parent* has been the cause of the lapse of faith and trust since the Sub-apostolic age.

The Evangelical era has two stages of interpretation of fact: first the complete Incarnation of the Divine life and spirit in Jesus Christ; and secondly through Him the gradual completing of the same Incarnation in the personal consciousness of His human brethren, which is still going on. Christ's mission had two parts: a revelation of Divine Sonship and a revelation of how that Sonship is to be fulfilled. The Virgin-birth sins against the idea that God is both father and mother. It is a naturalistic conception probably due to Hellenic influences. The advent of Christ began not with the birth at Bethlehem, but with the new spirit at His baptism. His mission was twofold—earthly and heavenly. The Synoptic Gospels are mainly concerned with the first, the Fourth with the second. The first deals with *the Christ*, the second with *the Lord* who shows how the revelation is to be actualised.

Christian theology has suffered greatly from being cast too exclusively in a mechanistic mould. Yet, as Archbishop Temple pointed out many years ago, it has got to be shifted from a scholastic on to a psychological, *i.e.* vital and spiritual, basis. The Latin terms in which our Western Theology is couched are unfortunately largely mechanistic, as against the Greek which are vital. Theology if complete must deal, not merely with the material world of sensible experience, but



with vital instincts and spiritual intuitions. The family is the nearest symbol to God's Kingdom on earth, and so far as the Christian Church extends the ideals of the family in her institutional forms is she loyal to the Lord. The act of Redemption, while being the act of God Himself, is perpetually re-enacted by man. Moreover the final faith does not lie in such abstract things as Beauty, Goodness, Truth, but in a Personal God in whom they are one. There will be a new Coming of the Son of Man when mankind realizes the solidarity of humanity. The recognition of Christ as the Lord implies the *absolute* self-identification of Jesus with the *whole* human race, which the theory of the Virgin-birth, implying the creation of a demi-god, violates. Christ declares the forgiveness of sins—not the forgiveableness—'a Satanic substitute.' Three steps are to be noted in His mission: the Divine Sonship of man, the Saviourship of the world, the Vision of final Unity.

Corbet devotes much space to the mission of the Comforter. The Christian gospel is only a real gospel to those who have lost confidence in finding satisfaction in earthly things. Such have in fact recognized as a first step the intolerableness of their *isolation* from God and the need of a Comforter. In all great crises of the Church the saintly remnant have always turned to the mission of the Comforter. It was a subtle beguilement of the Adversary that led the infant Church to substitute an outward magically conceived presence in the Mass for the inward, eternal salvation-giving Presence of the Lord in the human soul. Personal sin is not doing naughty things, but not believing in Him who made us. The 'conviction of sin' which is the Comforter's work, means the con-

viction of the sinlessness of man's Being in and with God. Guilt is only incidental to the flesh and blood embodiment of man. The final act of the Comforter, —the conviction of the world of Judgment,—does not mean its condemnation but its trial, with the verdict that the process of Redemption has at last been completed. It is therefore world-wide and universal, being the work of God Himself. Viewed *sub specie æternitatis*, it sweeps away all the limitations of Ecclesiasticism in a Mysticism that carries the whole thing on to a higher plane. The action of the Comforter is not that of a human judge but of a divine physician.

Truth according to Corbet goes through three phases, alike in the ecclesiastic and the secular world.

First Reality is accredited to appearances; then a parallelism between the two is recognised; finally Reality is recognised as that of which appearance is but a transitory expression. We might perhaps illustrate this by transubstantiation, consubstantiation, and finally by the fact that in the immediacy of direct communion with the Divine the symbol disappears. The first is the dominion of the sensuous man; the second of the intellectual or religious; the third of the spiritual; and hence evil is only a relative reality, for the Prince of this World is judged, *i.e.* proved to be an illusion.

These three elements are also present in the Christian Church. It is a material institution in the world of here and now, a vital organism in the souls of men, and lastly a spiritual principle. Our true and ever present 'pedagogue' is Nature (from which Christ chose all his parables and similes). It is the real Book of God, even more than the Bible, 'the mingled



volume of Divine inspiration and of human misinterpretation.' It is in this sense that the old saying '*Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*' is true in the natural world, since *omnia opera Dei* are a witness of praise to the presence of the spiritual. The sacramental symbols of Nature bear testimony to the *catholicity* of the Gospel, observation being here as elsewhere the handmaiden of inspiration.

Again these threefold elements in the Church find their parallel in the Apostolic expression of the Body of Jesus, the Body of Christ, the Body of the Lord; and hence the explanation of the phrase the Bride and Christ and their final identification.

The allegory of the Good Shepherd is the fundamental symbol of the Christian Church in which the central thoughts are the One Shepherd and the Oneness of the Flock, though the folds being nationalities or churches be many. The substitution of one 'fold' for one 'flock' has, as Westcott has pointed out, been disastrous to the Church. Led astray by ecclesiastical ambition and mechanical theories, she has largely lost those ideals of filial and paternal relations between Man and his Maker that find their expression in the Sermon on the Mount in which the Church is depicted as a family—ideas that are represented to-day by the confused gropings after brotherhood by a democracy deprived of the Church's guidance. Yet it is imperative to get back to that social solidarity of which Juliana of Norwich, in speaking of God, said, "Out of Whom we be all come, In Whom we be all enclosed, Unto Whom we be all tending." As this solidarity in and through Christ becomes more self-evident in the souls of men, so must the visible Church take for its motto "He must increase, but I must decrease," for

the need of institutionalism as such will become less and less necessary. Her errors in the past have mainly been magic, idolatry and schism—magic as exemplified by the sacramental system of the Church by which has been allotted to the symbol the virtue of the *universal* element it represents. Heresy on the other hand limits universal truth to a particular expression, while schism denies to individuals the gifts common to all. The birthright of Christ is universal.

Such are some of the leading ideas of Corbet's testament. If one may make an analogy: according to Corbet, the Christian religion had largely fallen into the same mistake as Modern Psychology. It has exalted the mechanical element and neglected the study of the vital and the spiritual.

Without endorsing all his doctrines we cannot help feeling that a large number of them will be found to respond to the inner needs of many of his twentieth century hearers, to whom he longed to bequeath the mature fruits of a singularly pure and beautiful life. If every man is a Saviour *in posse*, one may say perhaps with all reverence that Corbet was inspired by the same passionate desire as his great prototype—not to leave those who survived him comfortless, but in all humbleness of heart by bequeathing to them this double portion of his spirit to become as it were an abiding Paraclete to the coming generation.

CLOUDESLEY BRERETON.



## ROERICH'S ART.

INTERPRETED BY LEONID ANDREIEV.

ROSA NEWMARCH.

WE have with us at this moment the most original representative of modern Russian art ; a seer, a painter, a creator without counterpart. Nicholas Roerich, happier than some of his contemporaries, has succeeded in escaping from the thrall of that so-called liberating *régime* which says to its intellectuals: Your conscience or your life. Since Roerich is, above all, the interpreter of ancient spiritual traditions and lingering memories from the myths of Northern Russia ; since he is the painter of ' the many-coloured land ' wherein as ' A. E. ' tells us we may see our first visions of super-nature—of what service could he have been to that government of astute fools who have said in their heart: " There is no God," therefore no vision ; no Divine Mind, therefore no ordered activity ; only the fevered and confused machinations of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Such a *régime* would have no profitable use for Roerich. It would have destroyed him, as an ill-disposed child let loose from school slashes down a beautiful plant on his homeward way because it bears no berries to satisfy his material cravings. Therefore we may rejoice that Roerich—thanks to the fact that he was holding an exhibition in Sweden—came safely among us and brought most of his more recent pictures, which are spared for us

and for the generations of Russians to come. We are indeed the gainers by his exile, for I venture to predict that his forthcoming Exhibition at the Goupil Galleries will prove a revelation of a new and strangely beautiful art. Moreover it will help to keep before us that aspect of the Russian soul which we are in danger of forgetting at the present time.

Roerich is probably less known in England—apart from his decorative work for the stage—than in any other country. In the second Post-Impressionist Exhibition at the Grafton Galleries (1913) he was represented by some half-dozen canvases, all rather more exclusively in the neo-Byzantine spirit than the work which he has recently accomplished. Several of these pictures were, I believe, bought for private collections. But, besides Moscow, where some of his finest work was to be seen, the Louvre, the Museum of San Francisco, Rome and Venice and Stockholm have acquired examples of his painting. In Russia, before the Revolution, several beautiful publications were devoted to the criticism and reproduction of his art. Benois, Remisor and Alexander Baumgarten have all written sympathetically about him in the Russian press. But Leonid Andreiev was undoubtedly his finest interpreter. The close spiritual kinship between the painter and the writer gives an intimate penetrative value to Andreiev's analysis of Roerich's work.

Andreiev's last literary effort was made on behalf of his friend. Shortly before the death of the great writer, from heart disease aggravated by grief at the condition of his country, he contributed an article to *Russkaya Zhizn*<sup>1</sup> (*Russian Life*) in March, 1919, entitled 'Roerich's Realm,' in which he seems to

<sup>1</sup> Now published in Helsingfors.



meditate upon this wonderful apparition in art with the clearness and intensity of vision which is sometimes vouchsafed to those whose hand already grasps the curtain of division between life and death. To make this essay known to English readers is, frankly speaking, the sole *raison d'être* of this article.

After speaking of the spell which Roerich's pictures cast as much upon those who are ignorant of their technical and spiritual values as upon the adepts of art who contemplate them with specific enthusiasm, he reminds us that neither of these conditions—naïve emotionalism nor special knowledge—will show us the way into Roerich's kingdom and give us the freedom of his dream-cities, the rights of settlers in his vast luminous plains. To draw all the joy from his art that it is capable of yielding, we must discern and strive after the hidden idea latent under the beauty of his paintings. He cannot insist too strongly that Roerich's realism is the realism of his own world, of embodied imagination.

"Roerich is not the servant of this world," he writes. "He is the sovereign creator of a vast world, a strange kingdom in which to dwell. Columbus discovered America, one more fragment of all the familiar earth; the continuation of lines already mapped out; and for this he is honoured to the present day. What shall be said therefore of the man who amid the visible reveals the invisible, and gives to humanity not merely a continuation of the old world, but a wholly new and more beautiful one?"

The first external impressions derived from Roerich's pictures are due to his astonishing wealth of colour and infinite variety of subject. When, having investigated the contents of his studio, we turn to talk

with the quiet, unassuming and reverent personality whose one soul and hand have created this profusion of beauty, we realize that the age of miracles is indeed with us. There is no limit to the creative activity of an artist who couples with complete mastery of technical means a clairvoyance that keeps him at all times vividly in touch with "images which are immaterial, profound and complex as dreams." In the effulgent beauty of his colour, in his endless transitions and combinations, we see a reflection of the methods of the Essential Creator. The things which he shows us are often incredible and incogitable: The Nocturnal Knight, a cloud-form sweeping home at dawn, spent with the conflicts of darkness; The Knight of Dawn, riding high and radiant in a pellucid morning sky; the terrible and portentous vision of the Doomed City, gradually being ringed about by the folds of a serpent of fire; the Moon-Dwellers who, reincarnated on our earth, still mount on high places at full moon to gaze half-regretfully at their once familiar home; the Façade of the House of the Spirit; other pictures, serene and translucent, or sombre as apocalyptic visions, howsoever inconceivable they may appear to us at first, leave us in the end convinced and satisfied, "for his eyes have beheld them." There is nothing false or strained or perverse about Roerich's art. It is, as Andreiev expresses it, "easy as the dance, and never swerves from the circle of the Divine logic. In the intoxication of his vision, at the climax of his ecstasy—his divinity ever remains the glorious and harmonious Apollo."

Roerich combines with his clear spiritual intuition that gift which is the birthright of all great Russian artists—an emotional and psychological realism. By



this we are reassured as to the existence of Roerich's Realm. "It is not merely portrayed for us in a few pictures; it is real and co-existent as the district of Orlov or the Kingdom of Spain. There we may journey as men journey abroad, and speak long afterwards of its treasures and special beauties; of its people; of its joys and fears and sufferings; of its skies, its clouds, its prayers. There, are risings and settings which differ from ours, but are not less beautiful. There, are life and death, saints and warriors, peace and war. There, too, are conflagrations with their wondrous reflections in the troubled clouds. There, are the sea and the wide horizon—not our sea or horizon; but such a sea of profound wisdom as geography takes no account of; its cliffs stand sloping down to it like the Tables of the Law. There, much is known; vision is profound; the silent earth and sky resound with the words of divine revelation. Forgetful of himself, much to be envied by mortals, is Roerich's man who sits on the highest cliff and gazes, gazes over this beautiful world; so wise, so transfigured, so lucidly serene and at peace, uplifted to the heights of supersensuous vision."

Those for whom Roerich's art holds a mystery which cannot be made clear by the ordinary methods of critical analysis, the types of mind which ever seek "to elucidate the celestial by means of the terrestrial"—how well we know the type in connection with Scriabin's music!—have invented a theory to account for the remote and dreamlike quality of some of his work: He is to be understood only as the painter of a period; of that far-off, crepuscular Varangian period when Rurik (Roerich) and his Viking companions founded Novgorod and settled on the shores of Ládoga.

He becomes intelligible if we attach to him the label of "poet-painter of the hoary North." But this is merely limiting his art to our own conception of it. Roerich, as Andreiev insists, "is not the servant of this world" in any of its phases, past or present. Yet the theory holds this much of value: that it may lead us to the point of contact between Roerich's wondrous Realm and the old familiar earth. Love of the northern landscape will quicken our appreciation of Roerich's pictures and draw us nearer to his immaterial kingdom. For he is undoubtedly the seer and interpreter of its secret and mystical spirit, of that North which is "deep and wise as its dark cliffs; contemplative and tender as the pale green of its springtide; sleepless and lucent as its own wan and faintly gleaming nights. This is not the dark North of the realistic painters where life and light end, where Death has raised his glittering throne of ice and sits looking, pale-eyed and envious, upon the warmer world. Here, life and light begin. Here, is the cradle of the wise and holy words of God and man, of their eternal life and eternal strife. The approach of Death only gives an outline to the atmosphere of this beautiful world . . . and that luminous, slight and almost undismayed sadness which overlays all the loveliness of Roerich's world. Do not the clouds die? Does not every seed die? Such vivid verdure as we see in Roerich's pictures could only be taken on by that grass which is conscious through the very brevity of its summer that winter and death are at hand."

And there are other qualities in the work of this artist who looks out through the window of the soul and reveals to us the fruits of his long contemplation.



There is truth, there is the liberating spirit which lifts us above all that is superficial, redundant and perplexing, there is an atmosphere which invites us to rest and meditation. Such is Roerich's Realm. What is to hinder us from exploring it? Let us respond to Andreiev's call, which comes to us like the echo of a magic horn ringing over the luminous plains and through the dusky forests and dream-cities of Roerich's world, summoning us to follow him who saw it from our plane and now sees it from another. Like him "let us take its dimensions; let us ponder it well; and afterwards write the history of this new world and mark its discovery in our human charts. For there only the rarest of artists have founded and increased their kingdoms."

ROSA NEWMARCH.

## THE MYSTIC, THE PHILISTINE AND THE ARTIST.

GUSTAV T. HOLST.

I DOUBT whether I shall ever dare to hope that any remarks of mine will be closely reasoned. Some time ago I learnt my shortcoming in this respect. I was speaking on Music to some soldiers for about an hour and a half, and afterwards while a few of us were talking together I happened to refer to the lecture I had just given. "Lecture?—you call that a lecture? That wasn't a lecture—that was a chat!" I therefore ask you to listen not to a closely reasoned exposition but to a chat on the Mystic, the Philistine and the Artist and their relations to each other.

First of all I want to dwell on our relation to them. We usually look on Mystics, Philistines and Artists as distinct and unusual. Mystics and Artists are either abnormal, unhealthy, morbid, neurotic, hysterical; or else superior beings, in touch with powers, visions, sounds, etc., which are beyond our ken. Probably we are all guilty at times of thanking God that we are not as the Philistines.

The real view of the matter is that we are all Mystics, Artists and Philistines. These names stand for three attributes of every human being. The difference between a Mystic who communes with God and the man who feels a power not himself making for good is obviously one of degree. Moreover, we are all Mystics in childhood.



In Art the difference between Mozart and an ordinary British soldier during the War was one of degree only. Both made music because they could not help doing so. Again all children are creative Artists. As for the Philistine spirit, surely none of us is entirely free from it. I accept the ordinary definition of Philistine—'inaccessible to and impatient of ideas.' I suggest another—'one governed by common sense,' using the word 'common' as meaning 'communal'; in other words, one whose mind is a storehouse of other people's prejudices. The Philistine is strong in all of us. He is as strong in Artists as in the man in the street. One is always meeting painters who are inaccessible to music and musicians who are inaccessible to pictures, and so on. But the biggest and wildest Philistines I know are those who are either Modernist or Classical.

I should like to mention here that all my illustrations in matters of Art will be taken from music because that is the only form of Art of which I have any real knowledge; but anything that is true of one form of Art is true of all.

In music the Modernist Philistine is he for whom music began with Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, or Wagner's *Tristan*, or Strauss's *Don Juan*, or Debussy's *Nocturnes*. It is quite immaterial which; the point is that he looks at music as something that began at some definite date. The Classical Philistine on the other hand is he for whom music ended with the death of Händel, or the death of Beethoven, or the death of Brahms, or the death of any other composer—in short, one for whom music ended at a definite date. I see absolutely nothing to choose between these two types. They are both imbued with the true Philistine spirit.

We all should know that the essentials in Art are eternal, and beneath the surface one feels the essentials in a beautiful piece of music of the 16th century just as much as in one of the 20th century.

To see the Philistine clearly, let us oppose him to someone with whom he is often confused—the Critic. It is impossible to overrate the real Critic. The critical faculty is as important, as necessary, as divine, as the imaginative one. The real Critic is always accessible to ideas; he is never impatient of them, only impatient of the absence of them. He and the Philistine may agree on some decision. For instance, they often agree that Mysticism is pure hallucination. But fundamentally they are opposed to one another, just as much as the Artist is to the Philistine.

How are we to define a Mystic? I suggest that all mystical experiences (like all artistic ones) are either illusions or *direct and intimate realisations*. To go further a skilled Critic is necessary and I am far from being one. I do not know if they are illusions or whether they alone are real and the illusion the world we live in. We need the Critic here even more than in Art, if possible.

This need comes out strongly in our dealings with children. A small boy of five hears the 'voice of God' one night (quite a usual experience). Next morning he relates his experience and is told not to be a little fool. Then he goes to school and hears about Samuel. Here is the grand Philistine spirit of refusing every new experience and accepting everything if it is old enough. But the other type of parent is just as Philistine. The boy has another quite ordinary experience at five years of age—he thinks of a tune. The mother goes to the other extreme and either



sentimentalises over him or puts him to study strict counterpoint and other horrors; for the Philistine spirit now-a-days shows itself in acceptance rather than in refusal—in cheap, blind acceptance of any imitation of Art or Religion that happens to be popular for the moment.

Again we need the Critic to tell us the dividing line between what are called 'mystic' and 'psychic' experiences—allowing the possibility of both.

All mystic experiences seem to be forms of union. It is worth noting that all these experiences, whether sublime or ridiculous, have one thing in common. They are hard to describe (because they have so little in common with ordinary life), and yet in themselves they are so convincing. It is easy to disbelieve other people's experiences, but you have to work hard before you disbelieve your own.

The highest Mystic is, I suppose, one who experiences union with God. Is he alone a Mystic? Or is Whitman a Mystic in his intense feeling of unity with all men, all life? What of the wonderful feeling of unity with one's pupils when teaching, a feeling of contact with their minds other than the contact occasioned by speech? Of the similar feeling of unity between musical performer and audience? What of being awakened at night by a thunderstorm and not knowing if one is oneself or the thunder? Of reaching an indescribable state of existence where sound and colour are one? If you do not draw the line somewhere, you will be landed in absurdities, like the man who woke up proclaiming: "Now I know that Liberalism and Pizzicato are the same!"

Art is likewise a matter of union, although not so obviously as Mysticism. Tolstoy says: "Art is a

means of communication." Some writers have said that a great painter seems to see a house apart from its human relationship—as a 'reality,' as a 'thing in itself.' This is obviously bordering on Mysticism. We are beyond the ordinary world of relationship and comparison; there is 'vision,' a 'direct and intimate realisation.'

But it is in Music that this feeling of unity shows itself most obviously and easily; I do not mean more deeply or truly. All Art is one below the surface. Above all, in Music you can see the growth of intensity. I have already referred to the feeling of unity established between performer and audience: how much greater is it between one performer and another! The least exalted and easiest form of what I mean is that experienced when singing in a choir. There is nothing here very profound; it is the simplest form of what Tolstoy called 'a means of communication.'

But there is a more wonderful experience—that of skilled players playing together in chamber music. It is this experience that enables one to realise, even if faintly, what is meant by a state where "the ocean receives the drop of water, but the drop of water receives the consciousness of the ocean." To begin with, you must be a master of your instrument; you must first master a portion of this world—which is rather significant. If not, you will be conscious of it and of yourself the whole time, and also conscious of the struggle between the two. You may at times get that delightful thrill that comes from playing a passage or phrasing a melody better than you thought you could.

This is most enjoyable but it is in another world from that of which I am speaking. If you are all



masters of your instruments and of your music—all sure of yourselves and each other—then you may go through an experience about which you will either keep silent or else use the language of the Mystics. Most musicians keep silent. Let us risk being absurd and try to express a little of what we feel. Your self is merged in the whole ; true, but the whole is likewise merged in you. You have trained your instrument to obey your will. Whose will is it obeying now ? Your playing is transcended (this is true physically and literally), yet it is yours, and in you the playing of the others is transcended. And like all true mystical experiences, while it is so transcendent it is yet so sane and inevitable.

This is even more true of creative Artists. Mozart declared he 'heard' the notes of a new work as a whole simultaneously in his mind before putting them down on paper. Here we find time and space annihilated—the true mystic state. Probably no other composer heard a work as a whole, but every thinking student knows the gradual progress which brings him to a point where he can dimly realise the truth of Mozart's experience. Perhaps he will begin by writing two tunes and putting some padding in between. Then, later, the padding grows out of the tunes. Then perhaps instead of tunes he feels a definite mood and tries to express that one thing. Or he may keep all his chaotic, unrelated germs in his head until they grow into a unity without conscious effort on his part.

It is almost comic to realise that the Philistine spirit is one of union also. It is a worldly, comfortable burlesque of the other two. If you would work peaceably with other men, the first thing to do is to be inaccessible to many of their ideas and to keep certain

of yours inaccessible to them. In other words—compromise. Bring so many ideas to the common store as the latter will hold and ignore aught else. How different is this from the artistic union! Compromise would have ruined all. You had first to make yourself valuable, to fill yourself, as it were, and then to give all.

I know no Philistine definition of a Mystic. But we all know the Philistine one of the Metaphysician. "A Metaphysician is a blind man looking in a dark cellar for a needle that is not there." A splendid definition; it gives a perfect picture of the relationship between the two. If the Philistine is tender-hearted—he is occasionally—one can imagine him looking gently and sadly at the poor Metaphysician groping his way out of that cellar after his weary search. Perhaps he gives him good advice as to his future conduct.

But what does he say when the Mystic rushes out? For the Mystic is he who leaves that cellar proclaiming that he has seen the needle. In former days the Philistine either knocked the Mystic down or made him a saint, according to which was more in fashion. Now-a-days the Philistine tries mildness. He reasons with the Mystic—which shows a lack of sense of humour. Fancy reasoning with a Mystic! All the same he has a strong line of argument. He explains that the Mystic could not have seen the needle, because (a) the cellar was dark; (b) the seeker was blind; (c) the needle was not there. The Mystic replies: "The cellar may not have been dark, in fact I am not sure that the cellar existed. I am not sure that you exist. I only know one thing: I have seen the needle!" Situation impossible! The situation



between the Mystic and Philistine in each of us is impossible. We get through life by ignoring it.

Meanwhile the Artist comes out of the cellar. Unlike the Mystic he is silent; but he brings the needle in his hand. The Philistine is not at a loss for words; he never is. He promptly points out that the needle is not a needle but a hairpin. This is really an under-statement. For instance, certain so-called musical critics in Queen Victoria's reign were not content to call needles hairpins; they called them pokers.

But what the Philistine says or does is not of much consequence. He has played his part in helping us to see the Mystic and the Artist more clearly; let him go. The interest lies in the difference between the Mystic and the Artist, who are now definitely opposed. I suggest that the latter has the advantage. He has no need of speech; he has something at once tangible and yet which belongs to eternity—that something which Artists call Form.

In order to get a clear idea of what Artists call Form, let us as before contrast it with its opposite. As opposed to artistic Form we have Philistine formalism—something which is inaccessible to ideas. Artistic Form to me has a wonderful live quality. One day I had the misfortune to have to wait in the studio of a popular portrait painter, in company with a friend. The latter summed up the contents of the various easels which crowded the room in one suggestive phrase—'cold storage.' Perhaps the best adjective is that used by Mr. Clive Bell—'Significant Form.' Artistic Form has a transcendental quality; it seems to transcend all ordinary laws instead of ignoring or flouting them.

Some months ago I saw the Parthenon in Athens. I fancy that one of the reasons it made so great an impression on me was that I had not studied Greek art or literature to any extent and therefore came to it with a perfectly fresh mind. The first sight of it was a direct and intimate realisation : it seemed to sing to me in the sunlight. This was the only way in which I was able to express its effect to myself. I certainly did not try to express the effect to anyone else until long after. On analysing my feelings afterwards I was struck by the number of things that the Parthenon did *not* suggest to me. At least two thirds of it have disappeared. And yet I was not conscious of looking at a picturesque ruin. I do not think that I was even conscious of the fact that it *was* a ruin. Again, I was not conscious of the fact that it was the supreme example of Classic architecture. I mean that it did not remind me of the British Museum or the Stock Exchange ; and on the other hand the British Museum and the Stock Exchange do not remind me of it. I am not conscious when I look at the latter two that they are bad imitations. I do not see any connection whatsoever. The pictures I have brought home only prevent me from remembering it. Its two great qualities were that it was unique and lyrical.

I would like to give two examples in music, about which it is easier for me to speak. In the 15th and 16th centuries musicians had developed the art of combining voices to a high pitch of perfection. As far as we know, this was unique and had never happened in the world's history before. In the 17th and 18th centuries, after this school had reached its climax, music developed on other lines ; but counterpoint, as it is called, is still taught. From the point of view of



training it may or may not be useful. There is no need to discuss that point now. From a mathematical or engineering point of view, a good student in the 20th century can turn out better counterpoint than the great artists of the 16th century; that is, he can combine more voices and write more strictly. But no one I know succeeds in writing what we call music in strict counterpoint now-a-days. We do not even try to do so. We know quite well that our exercises are but formalism.

Again, Form in music to a student usually means analysing the details of the Sonatas of such men as Mozart and Beethoven. It is like the engineer studying the Parthenon; and is quite interesting and not dangerous as long as you do not imagine that it has any direct bearing on Art. You are learning facts about Art; but Art is a vision, complete in itself, and an intimate one. Art is an emotion. Above all, Art is not the sum total of its details. It is exactly the same as the Mystic's experience. The latter does not add up all he knows about God and tell you the answer. He has a vision. So one of the safe uses of your knowledge of the details of Mozart's Form is to remember that, as you are not Mozart and are not living in his age or in his circumstances, if you produce music which has Significant Form, its external details will probably be different from his.

For Significant Form is not and cannot be imitation. Art like Nature is always creating and never repeating. This may sound obvious; but it would not be obvious, it would be a devastating revolution, if we never repeated or imitated ourselves or others. I read the other day that "music is waiting for the master who will combine the counterpoint of Palestrina, the

form of Mozart, the melody of Schubert and the instrumentation of Beethoven." He might be a master joiner, but certainly not an Artist. Each Significant Form in Art occurs once and is unique.

I cannot discover that the Mystic has any equivalent to the Artist's Form. The Mystic may proclaim his vision in a poem, and the poem may be one of the great ones of the world like Dante's. Or Juliana of Norwich may tell of her vision in the simplest, clearest and most beautiful prose. But that only means that we claim them as Artists however different they may be. There are plenty of Mystics who were not Artists, who had no artistic power of expression—Jacob Boehme, for instance. Finally, it will not do to proclaim definitely that the only difference is that the Artist is able to give Form to his vision of the Spirit. As long as we dabble in these matters, we talk rather glibly about the Form and the Spirit; but when we get down to serious thinking, we find that there is no Spirit in this world without Form. 'The Word made flesh' seems to me to sum up all religion. In Art no composer has given us true Form without true inspiration; he has only given us 'cold storage.'

During some periods of the 19th century some people looked on the Sonata Form as a mould into which you could pour so much music, and your chief business apparently was to make the mould perfect first of all. This comes out strongly in comparing the finest Sonatas of Beethoven with those of his imitators. It also comes out strongly in comparing the finest of Beethoven's works with certain others in which he seems to have been imitating himself. In the *Leonora* Overtures Beethoven reached one of the highest peaks



of perfection ever reached by a musician. Later on in his life he was content to write certain Overtures in which he was not creating but merely imitating—in other words, he was giving us not Significant Form but ‘cold storage.’ The same may be said of practically every great Master. On the other hand, it is said that Schubert’s inspiration was greater than his sense of Form. I do not know a case where great inspiration shines through ragged Form. When Schubert is truly inspired his Form is beautiful, as in the *Unfinished Symphony*. When his Form is poor, he is uninspired. His greatest work is probably his *Symphony in C Major*. Critics will point out to you very truly that the end is redundant. They are quite right; but it is also uninspired.

If I am a Mystic and tell of my vision, I must either argue, shout down or ignore, when confronted with the Philistine. In any case he has the last word: he can call in the brain-specialist. As an Artist I should do none of these things. If he tells me that it is nonsense to talk of Mozart hearing an Overture as a whole, because that is opposing natural laws, I shall agree. We all know the famous definition: “Life is just one thing after another.” In the same way the Overture is just one thing after another,—introduction, first subject, episode, second subject, another episode, recapitulation, and so forth. Mozart said he heard it all at once. Life to him at that moment was all things at once, not one thing after another. Obviously absurd! And the details of his case make it even more absurd. On one occasion his wife had to keep him awake by telling him stories while he transcribed his Overture. The word ‘transcribed’ is my own: I insist that it must have been mere transcription. If you sat

down to compose an Overture when worn out at night, you would be doing a very absurd thing; but it would be rendered still more absurd if you had someone in the room telling you fairy stories all the time. It will not do to say Mozart was under a delusion. Like most Artists he was very clear and definite. Besides which, like the Artist in the parable, he produced a needle; in other words, the Overture was ready the next morning for performance. He was worn out that evening with rehearsing and his wife kept his brain awake; and while she kept his brain awake his hand wrote the Overture. However, let us pretend that he was under a delusion and that he really composed music as others did—made notes and worked laboriously until the work was complete. Now take the hours of Mozart's short life; deduct what is necessary for sleeping, eating, travelling (a large item with him) and playing. He was a virtuoso on several instruments and even if he never practised he certainly played; he toured Western Europe as a performer. After deducting all these, see how much time he had left for writing down his innumerable compositions. In the case of another musician—Bach—someone has calculated that it would take a copyist sixty years to copy all that he wrote. In either case we have a purely materialistic impossibility or miracle. But both men were Artists, and being Artists they transcended the impossibility, so that one ignores it.

Again, if the Philistine tells me that it is nonsense to talk of a building singing in the sunlight, I will ask for his impression of the Parthenon. If he tells me that it is a miracle of engineering, I shall be extremely interested. Also he may tell me that Art is the truest history; that studying a work of Art will give you a



truer insight into the people who produced it than any books that have ever been written. I shall agree with everything, and therefore he cannot use the brain-specialist on me. He and I are one as far as he goes ; only I go farther. The singing or lyrical property of the Parthenon is the supreme proof of a quality that he cannot sense. But he is deficient, not I. So I am in the superior position. I can tell him, if I want to, of this quality which no engineer can measure, of which only Artists in words can speak, which having fulfilled all ordinary standards of value goes further and transcends them and reaches to the height where it is all-sufficing in itself and needs no comparison or foreign standard of value ; where not only is beauty truth, truth beauty, but also "that is all ye know on earth and all ye need to know."

G. T. HOLST.

## A WORD ON YOGA.

THE EDITOR.

As far as definite records go, Yoga is pre-eminently a development of the Indo-Aryan religious genius. The most ancient records, the Hymns of the Rigveda, do not seem to have any reference to it; but this is hardly to be expected because of their nature. The bards who sang the Hymns were, however, regarded as inspired in a peculiar manner; they were said to have 'seen' the Hymns. One of the very finest of these speaks of 'the Seer who is in highest heaven,' but nothing is said of a seer on earth. This may of course be a reference simply to the sun; but the context seems to demand a deeper meaning. When we come to the canonical treatises known as the Upanishads we move on towards a different atmosphere from that of the right performance of sacrifice and ritual, among sages and contemplatives and their deepest interests. We come in contact with schools of religious thinkers striving for light, interpreting and sublimating the older notions. Above all, there is a conscious inward search, a mystic quest, a striving after the gnosis of the true Self of the Universe and of Man, a confidence that this is one and the same reality, a yearning for union with God. Not only have we recitals and outpourings of high mystical and spiritual import testifying to inner exaltation and contemplative insight, but also references to and finally descriptions of characteristic yoga-practice. Dates are difficult; some of the



canonical Upanishads are earlier than Buddhism, some later. If the name is not in the earlier ones, the idea is there, and definite methods of practice must have existed, for indubitably yoga in the form both of ascetic austerities and of the highest contemplation was practised by the Buddha, some 500 years B.C. We may then say that perhaps for 3,000 and certainly for 2,500 years the yoga-idea has been intimately connected with the highest stage of the religious life in India. It is there that its processes have been developed and systematized to an extent that has no parallel in any other land.

Yoga means literally 'yoking,' and so joining or conjunction, uniting, union.<sup>1</sup> It can thus be used to signify the state of union of the worshipper with the object of his worship. This consummation may be conceived of in many degrees. In the highest sense it may be said to be the union of individual soul or rather spirit with the Supreme. But here we have to remember that in spite of the unanimous conviction that the utterly true and absolutely real is ultimately reached, there is no satisfaction with any attempt to define it. There is much subtlety of debate between the schools, much anxiety to guard its transcendency, and therewith a scrupulosity that favours negative expressions; the one positive agreement is that it constitutes the absolute liberation of man. But we are not concerned directly with this high theme and are well aware that exception can be taken to the terms we have used in leading up to it, notably by the Buddhists.

<sup>1</sup> It may also mean 'concentration,' as in the explanation of the commentary on the *Yoga-sūtras* (i. 1.), where we read: "'Yoga' in the phrase 'Yoga is concentration' is etymologically derived from the stem *yuj-a* in the sense of concentration and not from the stem *yuj-i* in the sense of conjunction."

'Yoga' then may be used to denote the goal striven after, the end in view; or the striving after it. But it is more generally applied to the means used or processes employed, and indeed this seems to have been its original meaning. Here it should not be forgotten that the most characteristic initial processes in themselves need have nothing to do with religion. Breath-control and mind-control, it is evident, can be practised without the least religious intent. They may be used for purposes of health or for sharpening ability; or again they may be practised in the hope of attaining certain of those supernormal powers to which reference is made in all treatises on yoga, and which, it is a truism to say, can be and so frequently are used for purely secular interests and purposes.

Again, even when yoga-practice of some kind or other is part and parcel of a man's religion, the value of its results depends on what his religion is. Religion can be of every grade and has no value for us if it is not firmly rooted in morality. You can be very religious and very immoral. Assuredly the ideals of yoga are impossible of realisation without the life of sanctity, of religion in its best sense square-based on the most scrupulous morality. But as in all the rest of human affairs there is naturally the obverse of the bright side of the shield, and it can be a very dark one. For the lures of the supernormal are many, and the dangers many. The psychical is not the mystical; the possession of 'occult' powers is no guarantee of morals and therefore no sign of spiritual achievement. All this of course is fully known to the true mystics of India, so rich in such experiment and experience. But I propose to deal solely with the elements and externals of the matter as found in the field of Hinduism.



The original literature is very extensive and much is untranslated. I will mention only the two most recent English books. The classical summary of the doctrine is Patañjali's *Yoga-sūtras*. These are terse mnemonic rules or aphorisms; but they are elaborately commented on and the Commentary is furnished with a further Explanation. The last and best translation is that of James Haughton Woods, Professor of Philosophy at Harvard.<sup>1</sup> Of late a mass of material, helping us better to understand much that is exceedingly puzzling in Hindu worship, and especially the Shiva-cults, has been collected and published by Sir John Woodroffe under the pen-name of 'Arthur Avalon.' His last volume, not the last written but the last published, has been held up for five years by difficulties in printing owing to the War. It deals with a special form of yoga and a special topic<sup>2</sup> and is a very gallant attempt to grapple with a subject bristling with difficulties of all kinds.

With so recondite a theme this note is not concerned; it treats only of the main generalities of yoga. But here also Sir John's Introduction is of great help in orienting oneself, especially concerning the main features of the yoga of breath and its extensions, whereas the classical summary of Patañjali is mainly concerned with the yoga of mind.

First then as to yoga considered as an attitude of the religious life apart from any characteristic practices. Yoga in this sense has been sometimes loosely classified

<sup>1</sup> *The Yoga-System of Patañjali or The Ancient Hindu Doctrine of the Concentration of Mind, etc.*, in the 'Harvard Oriental Series,' vol. xvii. (The University Press, Cambridge, Mass., pp. 384).

<sup>2</sup> *The Serpent Power. Being the Shaṭ-chakra nirūpaṇa and Pādukā-pañchaka: Two Books on Tāntrik Yoga*, with Introduction and Commentary and Eight Coloured Plates. London (Luzac); pp. 291+188; 21s. net.

in keeping with the three main types, or paths as they are called, of general religion. These three ways of approach—or shall we say moods?—are distinguished by the dominant tendency of the worshipper's nature. Hard and fast theoretical distinctions are not to be found in life, and allowance must be made in any concrete instance for the inclusion in each type of immixture from the others in varying proportions. These three paths are distinguished as those of works, knowledge and devotion.

The path of works (*karma*) signified originally external religious acts—such as sacrifice and oblation, ritual and ceremony. In its sublimation this way becomes the sacramental life, where every act is dedicated and made to yield a spiritual significance.

Next we have the path of knowledge (*jñāna*), a predominantly inner, mental and spiritual way of worship. Here reason in its best sense plays a prominent part and insists on a discipline which aims at the discrimination of the real from the apparent, the true from the false, leading up to the spiritual knowledge of the deepest self in man as being essentially one with the supreme spirit of the universe, the absolute reality of the transcendent Godhead.

Lastly there is the path of devotion or love (*bhakti*), where the object of worship is endowed with the highest attributes conceivable and envisaged as the Beloved. Here the life is primarily one of personal adoration, self-dedication and loving service.

In the path of devotion the emotional element is predominant; in that of knowledge the rational rules; while in the path of works efficacious acts are held in most esteem.

The followers of the several paths are naturally



inclined to claim superiority for the way most suitable to themselves ; but it is difficult to resist the conviction that it is at bottom a question of temperament and not of fundamental value, and that in their highest developments or supreme sublimation all these paths centre and merge into one ; at no stage indeed can they be said to be entirely independent of each other ; the germ of union is always there.

But this is using the term yoga in a very general sense. Distinctive yoga, though it may be combined with all forms of institutional religion, differs from it in being essentially a special personal and private mode of self-discipline. It is primarily a question of the development of the powers of attention and of the will. Definite and systematic experiment has to be made ; practice is what counts. Enhanced experience may come to any one unsought, but in yoga it is definitely sought after and may be of any grade,—physical, vital, psychical, intellectual, mystical or spiritual,—leading up to the Great Experience.

Within the province of such distinctive yoga there are two main aspects to be considered—mental and non-mental. Four main forms or types of yoga-process may also be distinguished, though they overlap or overflow in some respects. No satisfactory equivalents for their Sanskrit technical names have so far been found in English. Even for *yoga* itself we are still in a quandary. ‘Rule,’ for instance, which has been suggested by Professor Barnett, is, I venture to think, inadequate to convey its general sense and combines awkwardly in compounds expressing its characteristic special meanings. In face of this difficulty we are perforce obliged to use the Sanskrit terms for the four main varieties.

(1) *Rāja-yoga*, the 'kingly,' 'ruling' or 'chief' form of the art, is presumably so-called because it is deemed generally to be the higher side. Direct mind-control is its dominant characteristic. Apart from the purification of the passions, it seeks to simplify and gain mastery over the ideational and intellectual processes, imagination and thought, and works chiefly by this means. Its watchword is that 'breath' follows mind; that is, when mind is purified and controlled, regularisation and extension of the breath and vital currents follow automatically.

(2) *Mantra-yoga* is so-called because the chief means employed is reiterated or rhythmic sound. It is the outcome of a long development of chanting of prayers and praises, of invocation and spelling. Mantras may be uttered or muttered aloud; or the lips may move without sound; or they may be entirely mental. The silent mantra is presumably obligatory in yoga-practice. There is a subtle sound-craft and a learned theory of the elements of 'speech.' The letters of the alphabet are made to have correspondences with the elements of the outer and inner worlds and indeed with the whole of the utterance of the creative life. Single sounds or syllables (seed-mantras as they are called) are deemed to be most potent and may be made to stand even for the sum-consciousness of a prior meditation of the most complex nature. Sound is thus conceived of as existing in ascending degrees of potency from physical sound to the highest utterance of the spirit. It is the ordering and harmonizing power of the universe.

(3) *Hatha-yoga* may just possibly have been so-called because it was connected with the idea of 'forcing.' It is forcing of a particular nature, namely



of the breathing. This is suggested because the current derivation of the term is by no means satisfactory. It is said that it is so-called from *hā* (=sun) and *ṭha* (=moon), names which are used symbolically to designate two of the ways of breathing, namely through the right and left nostrils, and also parallel subtle processes connected with the vital airs. This derivation is probably a mystical word-play rather than a genuinely philological one. The term generally rendered by 'breath' is *prāṇa*; if it originally signified simply physical 'breath,' it has taken on other and deeper meanings and is generally equated with the life-principle. Its history may be compared with that of our own term 'spirit.' This form of yoga is predominantly occupied with experimenting on modes of breathing and learning thereby to control among other things the automatic physiological and biological processes. Its watchword is that mind follows 'breath.'

(4) *Laya-yoga* is connected with the idea of the ingathering or re-absorption of previously out-going energy; its process in man is said to correspond with that of the recession or reduction of the universe to a state of rest or equilibrium after a period of creative activity. This seems to be an ancient notion in all yoga that aims at attaining a sabbatical state of blissful consciousness. But *laya-yoga* by no means aims at simply resting in a withdrawn state, at any rate in the form of it known as *kuṇḍalī-yoga*. It posits that there is a certain most potent power latent in the body on which all else depends. This may be gradually roused into activity, and led up from below to the brain and become at last united there with its divine complement; thereon, it is said, supervenes a regeneration

of the whole nature. It is especially insisted on that this includes the physical body, and indeed that there is no true consummation in yoga unless the physical side is perfected. There is an elaborate philosophy concerning the nature of this power, and my indication of the process is the crudest possible. It is with this that Sir John Woodroffe's volume deals. The adjective *kundalī* refers to this power in one of its aspects and has the meaning of 'coiled' or 'serpentine.'

If certain practices in yoga have nothing in themselves to do with morals or religion in its orthodox tradition, these latter head the list of what are called its 'limbs.' From the start it is laid down that "morality, religious disposition and practice . . . are essential prerequisites of all yoga which has for its aim the attainment of the Supreme Experience."<sup>1</sup>

The traditional eight 'limbs'—aids, components, or accessories—are as follows; and here we must ask the reader to be content with the *barbara nomina* for the same reason as before.

(1) *Yama* in its primitive sense signifies a 'rein,' 'curb' or 'bridle'; hence restraining, controlling, training. In yoga its general meaning is moral purification and self-control. It includes the practice of such virtues as: harmlessness, the avoidance of doing injury to any living creature; refraining from taking what belongs to another, restraint of avarice and covetousness; chastity, sexual continence in act, speech and thought; truthfulness; patience, endurance, forbearance, forgiveness,—the bearing of all things, both pleasant and unpleasant, with equanimity; fortitude, steadfastness, resolution, in both happy and unhappy circumstances; sympathy, compassion, kind-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, Introd., p. 201.



liness, pity, mercy; simplicity, sincerity, honesty, rectitude; purity, cleanliness of body and mind; abstemiousness, moderation and regulation of diet.

If such is *yama* and *yama* is the first essential of yoga, it is evident that the art should be the most moral of arts. The theory is so far impeccable; if faithfully carried into practice it should equip the aspirant with the breast-plate of righteousness from the start. As a matter of fact it is of course the most difficult of all the yoga-conditions to fulfill.

(2) *Niyama* covers the general idea of the fulfilment of religious duties and devotions, and any such aids as are helpful to the cultivation of a pious disposition. As set forth from the standpoint of popular religion, it can be made to include such observances and attitudes as: ascetic vows in general, *e.g.* fasts, watchings, pilgrimages, penances and the more rigorous bodily austerities; firm belief in God, faithfulness; study of scripture, especially scriptures of liberation, rightmindedness towards inspiration, brooding upon it; generosity and liberality, including gifts of the mind, teaching and instruction; worship; offerings and oblations; contentment, modesty; shame at wrong-doing.

The latter two should perhaps come more naturally under (1). And here it may be more convenient to interpolate a word on cleansing, connected with purity of body, which is generally put under (1), but sometimes under (2).

Elaborate washings and cleanings of the body—indeed a regular gymnastic of cleansing, especially of the inner canals or ducts—are said to be necessary according to some before practice of the control of the breath can be safely attempted. Others say that

these are requisite only in case of those who suffer from inequalities of the humours—namely wind, phlegm and bile. Others again maintain that a prudent practice of breath-control is sufficient of itself to regulate the health and cleanse all internal channels.

Extraordinary developments have been made in this as in other physical exercises, and some of the gymnastics are really amazing. It is said, for instance, that the 'navel' can be made to touch the spinal column or the intestines flushed by the drawing up of water, a reversal of the peristaltic action thought to be impossible in the West.

(3) *Āsana* means literally 'seat.' It thus signifies generally the pose or posture that is assumed; the object being to attain steadiness or fixity of body. The directions vary from the simple recommendation of any way of sitting that is firm and pleasant—that is, which involves a minimum of fatigue when remained in for any time—to precise recipes for a regular trussing of the body. The most usual posture is sitting or rather squatting cross-legged with the spinal column and head erect. But '*āsana*' is not only sitting; it may be applied to reclining or lying down. In *hatha-yoga* there are stances or standing positions; gymnastics too may come in and hands or head may be made to support the body, none of which of course are necessary for high yoga. There are five chief poses; but no less than thirty-two are described in detail, and eighty-four are said to be excellent by the small fry among our authorities.

'Steadiness of seat' is said to be aided by the subsidiary practice of what are called *mudrās*. This term generally refers to certain symbolic signs indicated by the hands, mainly by the joining or inter-



twining of the fingers ; but in *haṭha-yoga* it can signify supplementary positions of the limbs. Thus the ears, eyes, nostrils and mouth may be stopped with the fingers or the lower orifices with the heels ; or external pressure may be brought to bear on certain plexuses with a view to inhibiting their activity.

(4) *Prāṇāyāma* is generally rendered control or restraint (*yama*) of breath ; but its more correct significance is the extension, expansion or development (*āyāma*) of the vital activity. It aims at control not only over the physical or gross breathing but also over the subtle or vital 'airs' or 'animal spirits,' if that ancient and mediæval term may be allowed to stand. It is thus the practice whereby in the first instance normal imperfect breathing, which is but a slight manifestation of the power of *prāṇa*, is lengthened and strengthened and deepened. This regulation of the breath has thus been developed into an elaborate art. There are detailed recipes of inhalation, exhalation, retention or exclusion, taken in varying sequences. A sublimation or transmutation of breathing processes and the 'vital airs,' which among other things control the automatic processes of the body, may be experimented with, and controlled in their turn.

The practice is naturally by no means free from danger, and therefore the need of an experienced instructor is strongly insisted on. Indeed with regard to one of such practices we find it laid down with true Eastern hyperbole : " It can be learned from the teacher alone, and not from ten million scriptures."

If the grosser ducts of the body can be cleansed by breathing-practice there is also a subtle purification of what are called the *nāḍīs*. These are traditionally

conceived of as a system of exceedingly minute 'tubes'—to use the most literal meaning—so fine as to be invisible, indeed 'ten thousand times finer than a hair.' They are hardly nerves in the modern sense, though sometimes they are so rendered and here and there correspond.

They seem to be thought of as processes of a finer physical system, and this system has first to be purified before there can be a healthy and unimpeded flow of those more interior forces of life with which it is the object to come into conscious contact.

(5) *Praty-āhāra* means with-holding or holding back or retraction. It is used in the special sense of withdrawing the senses from external objects. It is the first step or exterior stage in the subjugation of the activity of the sense-organs. The preliminary stabilisation of the mind by first getting control over the senses is thus its special purpose.

The above five subservients are called the 'outer limbs.' They are also classed as *kriyā-yoga*, a term generally rendered as the 'practical,' presumably to distinguish what follows as the 'contemplative' part. The last named 'limb' seems to be on the border-land however; for it has been described as 'making the sense-mind introspective.' With it the yoga-process is said to pass from the physical and to occupy itself with those forms of practice which are designed to bring about equipoise of the psychical nature, with control of the 'subtle body' proper, or perhaps better 'inner organ' of the mind.

The following three elements of the process are thus called the 'inner limbs.' They constitute the initial basis of the method of mental or *rāja-yoga*. But *haṭha-yoga*, which is rooted in 'breathing,' con-



siders sense-control and the practices which follow as progressive extensions of its own distinctive method. They are therein determined by the increasing length of time of the power of retention, during which 'breath' in its various grades can be deepened.

These three 'inner limbs' when taken together or blended into a unity are called *sam-yama*, and then constitute full or deep restraint; perhaps it is better to call it constraint.

When deepened experience or intuitive knowledge of any thing or quality or power is sought for, it is said that the means of attaining it is this constraint; *sam-yama* has to be performed upon it.

(6) *Dhāraṇā* is the act of focussing the attention on an object. This may be an organ or centre of the body; but it is generally the act of holding fast a mental object. The attention is kept firmly fixed or becomes one-pointed upon a single mental image to the exclusion of all others. This is generally rendered by concentration; but perhaps focussed attention is a better term. The stilling of the 'gyrations,' modifications or fluctuations, of the ever-changing image-making mind is the first step in gaining control over the flux of feeling-thought or mind-stuff.

(7) *Dhyāna* is meditation on an object thus held steady by concentration or focussed attention. By the practice of this further dwelling on an object, a stream of ideas unaffected by any other ideas can be held. An unbroken flow of knowledge, a clear intuition or mental realisation, is aimed at by this process of meditation. Some prefer to call this further dwelling on an object contemplation and not meditation. In any case it is not thinking about a thing. Its highest sublimation is when the self becomes its own

object of meditation. In Buddhism *Dhyāna* stands for the whole higher yoga-process.

(8) *Samādhi* in a general sense means 'collecting' or 'composing.' In yoga it is used for the stage deeper than meditation. It is a state of intense 'concentring' rather than 'concentration,' which some use for it. Contemplation seems best to bring out the meaning, for it aims first at the partial and then at the complete union of mind and object. When it is effected a new order of consciousness supervenes. *Samādhi* is thus of two kinds: lesser or incomplete, where some opposition of subject and object still obtains; and greater or complete where opposition is overpassed, and a state of equality or oneness is reached, to the exclusion of all sense of doubt or feeling of otherness. But even this equality is still of various degrees according to the object contemplated. For, as we have seen, even when the three are combined in one in *sam-yama*, this is still a means and not an end.

Such are the famous eight 'limbs' of yoga. The first two should be fundamental throughout; the rest are generally regarded as progressive stages. Whatever results may be obtained from this strenuous exercise of the will and development of the power of attention, the spiritual value of yoga depends on a still sterner self-discipline—on the purification of the will itself, so that its intention may be centred on the highest alone.

G. R. S. MEAD.



## A MYSTIC VIEW OF SUFFERING.

PIERRE BERNARD.

ALL mortals struggle in the formidable grip of the law of suffering. For over 3,000 years the wise have realised this and pointed it out. Yet the many still live in dreams, illusions and hopes; they find in the routine of life or in unceasing activity the means of forgetting the great problem to be faced and solved. Some however have tried to solve it and ventured many solutions. The 'sick souls' flock after the cynic, the pessimist, the materialist or the blind believers who see in pain the wrath of a revengeful deity or the inscrutable mystery of his will. They go through life apparently without having understood or cared to understand. This show of carelessness would bring a sense of despair into one's heart if one could believe that the purpose of life could be defrauded. But somewhere, sometime, somehow even those who have chosen the 'longer way,' we are assured, will learn and understand. Let us then here study specially the *rôle* of suffering in the mystic life.

To the mystics it is a truth beyond doubt, nay it is a fact of experience, that "the heart of things is sweet and the soul of all eternal bliss." With this knowledge they cannot curse suffering as the blind revolted ones do, or endure it with the snivelling passivity of the weaklings. They are content to walk humbly, silent, unnoticed on the path of heroic life. At every step they are confronted with pain; but if they are

‘healthy minded,’ they recognize in it a heaven-sent guide and teacher—the one guide and teacher from which their humanity can learn—and so can meet it with the smile of thankfulness and fortitude.

They tell us that suffering is of different kinds and has different consequences according to the way in which we meet it. Sometimes it keeps us back on the way of progress, when we resist or try to escape; sometimes it frees us from the consequences of our past misdoings; sometimes it helps us onwards as nothing else can. In order to reap fully the blessings that it is meant to bring us, we must realize clearly that we suffer only in and through our imperfections—in our selfish nature, in our weak points, in our ignorance. There is ever a deep spiritual significance to all suffering in a life devoted to ‘upwards striving.’ If we place ourselves in the right attitude of mind, no suffering can befall us that cannot be used to purify, to redeem, to liberate, to protect or to teach us.

If we are ‘thoughtful and mindful,’ pain teaches us in many ways. It brings to our notice the weak points on which our ‘self’ is specially sensitive, the tendencies of our lower nature which have still to be controlled by our higher. The deep recesses of our hearts hold many a germ of weakness and vice of which we have no conception. Were it not for the light thrown on them by suffering as it searches us through and through, unerring, uncompromising, what piteous falls would there be at moments in our spiritual career when their consequences would be irreparable!

Suffering teaches us also the utter ignorance in which we live as long as we view ourselves and others and regard life and its purpose from a selfishly personal point of view. It teaches us discrimination between



the real and the unreal ; for we cannot become attached to the unreal without feeling pain as a result. Thus it helps us to attain and maintain an attitude of mind to which the outside world stands out in impressive and striking contrast.

If we examine ourselves carefully, we soon find out that we are really at our worst and most in danger while we 'enjoy' our times of comparative rest and comfort. Then it is that we sink down so easily into old moods, old habits of mind, old inner attitudes. But suffering helps us to remain alert and strenuous ; it protects us from sinking down or forces us to rise up when we have sunk.

When suffering has at last forced discrimination and understanding upon us, we become wiser ; and it is wisdom that purifies, redeems and liberates us. It gives us the power to detect and eliminate our lower tendencies, uprooting many a cause of pain in the future ; it liberates us from the causes of spiritual barrenness and bondage, all of which lie in us ; it redeems the causes of pain which our ignorance and weakness have accumulated in the past.

Lastly, pain is a great cement for binding hearts together ; it leads to the discovery of points of contact between diverse human souls, and helps in breaking down barriers ; it thus imparts greater capacity to help.

The man who resolutely engages himself in the quest of true spiritual life comes under the laws of that world ; his whole life undergoes a deep change, deep yet outwardly unseen ; and in his case more than in any other, suffering has a profound meaning and mission. He must learn to know that it is the very hand of Compassion which inflicts on him the most

poignant pangs of pain. And this is enough to show the futility of macerations and asceticism, which are but artificial forms of suffering. Of course a life of simplicity, a careful control over our senses, is a wise measure of moral hygiene; but what is the good of choosing for ourselves the kind of pain we shall undergo? This leaves untouched all our weak points save a few already known, and thus it fails to achieve the very purpose in view.

Whenever a sincere endeavour after the spiritual life is made, a wise guidance takes charge most closely of him who makes the attempt, and places in his way the trials of which he is most in need. Sometimes the aspirant fancies that his present trial is too much for him, that he cannot stand any more; then must he remember that he cannot be tried beyond his strength, and so realize joyfully that he is stronger than he knew. When he has gone through one fierce trial and has to face immediately another still worse instead of enjoying the respite he was anticipating, let him realize thereby that he has been successful in his first fight, and that he has been found strong enough to be tried to the utmost. At all times it is in his choice either to give up his quest and to sink down once more into his lower nature, put an end for himself to the sufferings of the uphill path, or to escape by rising above his 'self' and finding a temporary rest in spiritual bliss. But the greatest are those who renounce this blissful state and choose to remain among men, sharing their sufferings, in order to enlighten them and to show them the way to the spiritual world.

The whole of high mystic literature warns the aspirant of the pains he will have to undergo before he obtains the second birth, the birth into spiritual life;



it often speaks of it as a suffering unto death itself, and rightly enough. Let us take a good man of the average kind; his life is one in which senses, feelings, intellect, imagination, beliefs, habits, etc. play their part. Now if he would tread the mystic path, he must practise discrimination and control, and eliminate all in his life that is not compatible with the life of the spirit. He starts with enthusiasm; but soon comes a reaction. A sense of loneliness, of bereavement and dread overpowers him, as more and more of what was his former life crumbles away. His 'self' feels its life ebbing away and resists desperately with the fierce instinct of preservation, calling forth to its help all the powers of illusion which the mind possesses. This is indeed for it nothing less than a process of slow conscious death; yet it is at the same time a process of life and growth. Such suffering holds wonderful lessons for us and we should learn to find in it a supreme joy.

Our spiritual being grows, as does all in nature, gently, imperceptibly. No fierce effort, no deliberate action, can hasten the time when the bud shall give forth the rose; but nothing can delay it either, if we provide the necessary conditions, which depend on us. When then we consider in the true light this double process of death and life, we find that after all it brings more happiness than pain.

This transference of consciousness from the plane of 'self' to the plane of the spirit is very apt to develop in the mystic a greater sensibility, and so becomes for him the cause of more suffering; and yet throughout he enjoys an infinitely greater happiness than is known by the man of the world who puts so great a price on his health, ease and success.

In his lecture on 'The Great Man' Georg Brandes makes the same statement of the man of genius. He asks the question, after Stuart Mill: Who is happier,—a Socrates with unsatisfied aspirations or a satisfied fool?—and he concludes that a greater sensitivity to suffering is by no means too high a price for the uplifting of the whole of one's vital capacity. Socrates is happier than the fool, even with the cup of poison in his hand. He had misfortune, but he was not unhappy; his soul remained firm, above misfortune, above suffering. Let us do away then with the current idea that there is something morbid in the mystic view of suffering. Indeed Attar is healthy-minded and true to the real conception of the inner life when he bids adieu to the teaching both of believers and infidels and when, remembering the all-wise lessons he has received through suffering, he asks for no comfort or joy, but 'a single particle of pain for the heart of Attar.'

There is no way out of sorrow but through suffering, calmly faced, rightly understood. Let us then be of good cheer when we beckon to it as to our guide and teacher. In India Mahādeva, the Supreme Lord, is said to meditate raptly on the burning ground. What an inspiring picture to our weaker souls, so apt to be appalled by the fury of the blaze of our lower self! Let us look upon our own cremation unconcernedly and as a natural function inevitable for our growth, and presently the scene will shift. Nothing in the wide world is as sure as the final triumph of the Good and the ultimate conquest of the Beautiful.

PIERRE BERNARD.



## BEAUTY AND A STREAM.

### A PHILOSOPHY AND AN ILLUSTRATION.

“ Turns them to shapes.” “ The art itself is nature.”  
SHAKESPEARE.

A STREAM in summer. Not the magic brush  
Of Milton could have made its loveliness  
More lovely. Yet they say ideal art  
Out-beautifies the real. Real—what is real?  
Or what ideal? Why not change about?  
Our old perplexity again: Is life  
The sleep, or death? Which is the dream and which  
The awakening?

Below me glides the flood;  
I gaze upon it, deem it beautiful,  
Gather it up in thought, in memory,—  
Its form, sound, colour, flow of rhythmic wave  
Which these lines emulate. We turn to art:  
What is it painted? What in this poor verse?  
And what is beauty?

'Tis a theme too vast,  
Too subtle for my out-worn fantasy.  
What if I parley with the stream? Belike  
Its potent loveliness may yet uplift  
My drooping thought, its clear and living voice  
Speak thro' my lips.

Rise then, O fainting song,  
Essay the perilous flight—thy last; content

If thou but point the way, content to fall  
Headlong, if fall thou must, from heavens unreached  
Into some nameless sea.

First then, the truth  
By which all science, all philosophy,  
Shall stand or fall : This world of life is growth,  
The growth of circumstance.

Two realms there are,  
Of Nature or of Man, in their dark dawn  
Co-working and co-equal ; each evokes  
The other into being, each evolves  
By virtue of the other.

Now the growth,  
The human tree, the story dimly told  
Of life and not-life, mind and matter, nay,  
Me and not-me.

But here a loftier truth :  
Self-interest—the need, the joy, the use ;  
Such are the prime, the earthy principles  
Of growth, of life ; but later they reach heaven  
As service, love, yea even sacrifice.  
Thus with our tree : utility as root  
(Figure it thus—old, yet for ever new,  
Or newly put) ; knowledge the branching stem ;  
The good, the beautiful as fruit and flower.  
We pluck this bloom of beauty, lay it bare.  
We murder to dissect ? Not so, my friend ;  
Appreciation (or in statelier phrase  
The wreath of pleasure) like our fruit or flower  
Hangs on that tree of knowledge. Nay, good friend,  
Pardon my strained preamble ; now the song.



And first we chant the briefer overtures  
Of our brief canticle; we swell the theme  
Of beauty's upward growth from sod to soul,  
From dull use to delight, from tone to tune,  
From sight to sketch, from daubings of the cave  
To frescoes of the fane, and highest of all  
From discord to the concord of great verse.

Or thus we sound our brief epitome  
And symphonise the chords, telling the tale  
Of twilight, dawn and day. By sense effused,  
By primal interplay of mould and mind,  
Aspects of earth and heaven, rhythmic forms,  
Were fashioned, till they pleased a lingering eye,  
And then a lingering hand, and slowly grew  
Gaining by time and myriad increment  
New potencies of new æsthetic force—  
Shapes such as Shakespeare imaged in his Dream.  
Fine is the poet's craft in loveliness  
And first; first to create, immortalise,  
Inspire. Within his symbols burns a soul  
Intense, divine: and oft his deathless phrase—  
Often, indeed, one throbbing syllable—  
Is lambent with the emotion of an age.

But now the pæan of our ampler strain:  
All that is best in nature with our best  
We mingle shape-wise; call it beautiful,  
Goodly to look upon, goodly to hold  
In ceaseless memory. These forms again  
By gradual art we copy or refine,  
Adding to sound and colour fullest thought,  
Deepest emotion. Thus, in shapes renewed  
(We call them painting, music, poesy)

All that is best in man, body or mind,  
 Of fair and good and wise, mingling again,  
 Again we store it up, we symbolise,  
 Hold it at will ; so with a glance recall  
 The hoarded wealth of years, and drench our souls  
 With joy and beauty.

But the stubborn years  
 Advance their standards. Turn and see them creep  
 From savage on to sage. Thus beauty throve,  
 And thus we chant the thesis of the soul :  
 " Value is progress, measured, definite ;  
 You can mark growth ; you can appraise the good,  
 The true, the beautiful ; they, too, have grown :  
 Man's tedious pedigree of ' is ' and ' was '  
 Creates God's Absolute."

One thesis more,  
 And I will close this deep-toned homily  
 Scarce risen to song (save that the heavenly theme  
 Is beauty) : " Reason led us to the shore  
 Of Truth's vast ocean, led us to the gate  
 Of Beauty's palace, to the sacred porch  
 Of God's high temple ; but the God Himself  
 Must lead us on." Yet, maxim-like, I'll verse  
 This truth re-told, and frame it with a rhyme :

" Our triune life from one deep root has grown ;  
 No vital power lives to itself alone ;  
 All sense is complex ; even beauty's pride  
 From the full soul cannot itself divide.  
 ' Art for Art's sake ' ? End we that foolish strife ;  
 A part of life, Art is an aid to life.  
 A trinity our being, and bounteous,  
 The Good, the Lovely and the True. Or thus—  
 Art, Science, Conduct, each to each belong,



And each clasps either ; even in proudest song  
Thought blends with colour and with harmony,  
And thought must noble or ignoble be.  
Hence the prime truth by Plato understood—  
‘ The highest beauty is the highest good.’ ”

So ends my homily, and the fair stream  
Seems fairer for my musing, something to love  
As well as look upon, dear to the heart  
As to the eye, a bliss inseparable  
From my full being. Nor alone the stream ;  
This outpoured wealth of summer loveliness  
Enters my soul like that first kiss of love  
In early youth, when the dull body's dust  
Arose a bodiless joy.

In this lone spot  
Spring clasps the hand of summer, and you find  
Unfolded arum and unfolding fern,  
June orchis and the March anemone,  
The last sweet bluebell and the first sweet rose.  
But let us cull these lush forget-me-nots,  
Best loved of all our garland ; seen from far  
They edge the silver ribbon of our stream  
With a long weft of blue. What laboured craft  
Of man could match this artless artistry ?  
Give me these wild ones—not the listless brood  
Of luxury and art ; I loathe to see  
These free fair happy children of the shore  
In plots of prim precision, cramped and stiff  
Like prisoned larks. Such slavelings if you will  
You may admire and pity ; these you love.  
Yea, if my fancy fails not, they shall claim  
An anthem to themselves, where I may hymn  
The tender story of their plaintive sigh.

*Forget-me-not !* It breathes of Paradise,  
The whispered call of love to some still grief  
That kneels at twilight by an open grave.  
Or like that poem-flower, the bounteous  
Song-girdled may, queen of our summer leas.  
The word's a pastoral. Listen, again—  
*Forget-me-not !* 'Tis music, and I bless  
These homely syllables ; let upstart blooms  
Boast of their titled christenings ; sing me these  
Of wood or field or river—cuckoo-flower,  
Speed-well, the traveller's joy : the very names  
Are blossoms to the ear.

One simple flower—  
Itself a song, and matter for a song !  
And I would chant ten thousand. I would trace  
For miles the shore's lonely magnificence,  
Havens where lilies anchor, and the pike  
Is poised in tender gloom ; steep banks that house  
The cray-fish and the deep-secluded eggs  
Of the rare king-fisher ; the alder copse  
That whispers back the lisplings of the wave :  
The sentinel willows where a tinkling brook  
Winds through the yellow meadows till it pours  
Its liquid music in the flood ;—all these  
And myriad myriads more I fain would sing.  
I'd sing those yellow meadows and their brims  
Of luscious blooms that suck the moistening wave—  
Iris and meadow-sweet and marigold,  
And the fair flower of rush. How vain the task !  
Vain even to recall my startled sense  
This earliest dawn, when a sole cuckoo clanged  
Beside my casement ; such amazing peal,  
Clarion, or silver gong, or sudden bell



Never these ears have heard, nor e'er again  
Shall hear. Such moments start like fiery sparks  
From our dull smouldering years. Vain to recall  
The varied orchestra of waking birds  
That followed in the next watch of the dawn.  
And vainer yet to lead you where amid  
Her rounded grasses open to the sky  
The lark can hear her mate's high madrigal,  
And earth lies tranced beneath a heaven of song.  
Vain even to set forth in psalmody  
The wonders of this bank, that hazel grove,  
This dell which hides the late anemone,  
Or just three paces of that shore. I love  
To peer into that unknown world and add  
Its treasures to my sum of things ; to note  
The sudden silver of the trout, or watch  
The tiny elfin forms that float or flit  
Amid the watery groves, till I have dreamed  
Thought into music's ecstasy, and dropped  
My cumbrous weight of flesh, my weight of years.

MORTON LUCE.

## TWILIGHT.

*When, like a lovely lady langorous-eyed,  
Wrapt in a cloudy mantle softly grey,  
Night, with her scented fragrance floating wide,  
Stoopeth from heaven to kiss the slumbrous Day ;*

*Weary, yet full content that so much grace,  
Wooing with velvet touch, should soothe his rest,  
Day, in response to all her shy embrace,  
Gathers her close to pillow on his breast.*

*Wheeling unrestful, like a soul in pain  
Curlews aloft repeat their plaintive cry ;  
Peewits below, a-sentry on the plain,  
Echo in turn a querulous reply.*

*Soon will the lights of fairyland appear,  
Linkboys beguiling little folks to roam ;  
Fireflies to lead the dancing by the mere,  
Glowworms to guide the revellers safely home.*

*Hushed is the eager brood in leafy nest,  
Safe 'neath the sheltering wing each downy head ;  
Low croons the mother to her babe at breast,  
Low droops the lily on her watery bed.*

*Now do the slanting meadows shadowed lie,  
Silence descends upon the clustered fold ;  
Far in the west, from out the purple sky,  
Beacons the last remaining glint of gold.*

*So in the bridal twilight Daylight dies.  
Night, pregnant, keeps her widowed watch till dawn,  
Proudly expectant till the reddening skies  
Speed the pale mother of a Day new-born.*

WYNDHAM DISNEY-ROEBUCK.



## REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

### NUMENIUS OF APAMEA.

The Father of Neoplatonism. Works, Biography, Message, Sources and Influence. By Kenneth Sylvan Guthrie, A.M., Ph.D., M.D. London (Bell); pp. 215; 5s. net.

IN this volume Dr. Guthrie has for the first time gathered together the texts of the fragments of and references to Numenius, translated them and commented upon them at length. Numenius of Apamea in Syria flourished in the reign of Marcus Aurelius; he most probably acquired his education at Alexandria, and was a keen student not only of philosophy but of many mystery-traditions and scriptures; what distinguishes him from the rest of the Greek philosophers is his keen interest in the Hebrew scriptures, though strangely enough apparently not in Christianity.

Numenius has strong mystical tendencies. In speaking of this side of his character, Dr. Guthrie, who throughout his treatise punctures his sentences with elaborate references, writes:

"He was known as the philosopher most greedy of the mysteries; and he studied experiences, even if incredible and unlikely. For what purpose?

"First to reveal them. That was the complaint of the Eleusinian divinities; he expounded Serapistic mysteries [and those of the Brahmins and Magi also]; wrote about the mystic teachings of Plato; about the Initiate or Hoopoe; gives out alleged secrets of Socrates and Plato; desires to become an interpreter of the divinity; wishes to show an unveiled image of matter, and expounds all kinds of mysteries, Egyptian, Homeric, and even Hebraic. He was therefore a genuine enlightener who wishes to put everything into the light.

"Second, Numenius deserves primarily the name of a mystic because he teaches that contemplation is the chief purpose of life. . . . He also teaches the methods of inner tranquillization. . . . The expression of the flight of the alone to the alone should not . . . be credited to Plotinus only; the word flight is

from Empedocles, and the rush or union of the alone to the alone is from Numenius."

With regard to the sub-title 'Father of Neoplatonism' which advertises the main contention of Dr. Guthrie's volume, he argues, following the suggestion of Chaignet, that Numenius is more worthy of such a designation than Ammonius Sakkas, to whom the name has been given for so many years solely because he was the teacher of Plotinus. On the contrary, we know that Amelius, the pupil of Plotinus, knew all the works of Numenius by heart, that they were read in the school, and that Plotinus during his first period was so influenced by Numenian thought that he was publicly accused of being a plagiarist of the Apamean.

If the term Neoplatonism stands simply for a revival of interest in Platonic philosophy then there were many 'precursors' of Plotinus; but if it is to be taken in the narrower sense of a reform of Platonism, with the watchword 'Back to Plato,' then the claim of Numenius to the title of 'Father' is apparently stronger than that of Ammonius. But we must never forget that we know practically nothing of Ammonius beyond the facts that he was the first great formative influence in the mind of Plotinus and that his chief interest was to reconcile Plato and Aristotle on purely philosophical grounds. Numenius on the contrary was strongly mystical and 'gnostic' in his tendencies; syncretism was by no means a temptation which he avoided. Plotinus was strongly opposed to syncretism, and his main object was to keep Platonism free from any immixture of 'orientalism.' Indeed there is evidence that he had to contend strenuously in his own school with those who were strong adherents of the 'gnostic' and 'mystery' elements in the Numenian tradition; and therefore it is probable that the simplicity of philosophic doctrine he strove to establish is to be traced back to the exhortations of Ammonius. It is a difficult problem to solve in spite of Dr. Guthrie's labours to define it more precisely. His own position is summed up as follows:

"The name 'Father of Neoplatonism' really has nothing to do with any eclectic movement which might have operated to heal the bitter Greek feuds. On the contrary, common sense would read into it an attempt to found a new school, on the basis of restoration of the genuine Plato. In this respect Ammonius did absolutely nothing, while this was the chief purpose of Numenius, who wrote his 'History of the Platonic Succession' in order to show: (1) how far the latter Platonists had strayed from their master; (2)



how abortive these newer developments were; (3) that Plato himself was unwillingly the cause of these divergencies; (4) what the 'genuine Plato' had believed; (5) with indications how to return thither. Moreover, Numenius continually expresses reverence and bold loyalty to Plato, who, as he insisted, had collected the best of the best (Socrates and Pythagoras). This Numenius offers to his readers and pupils. This must surely be the chief justification of such a title as 'Father of Neoplatonism'; and it is also the reason why such a title could not yet apply to Philo. Even if the latter taught that Platonism was the representative philosophy, still to him it was no more than an interpretation of Hebrew scriptures, to which he demanded ultimate loyalty. To Numenius alone, therefore, can we allow this title."

THE DOCTRINE OF THE SUBTLE BODY IN WESTERN TRADITION.

An Outline of what the Philosophers Thought and Christians Taught on the Subject. By G. R. S. Mead. London (Watkins); pp. 146; 6s. net.

READERS of THE QUEST may congratulate themselves and their Editor on this timely, profound and eminently interesting little volume.

Replete with scholarly information, it is yet a book which the general reader will peruse and re-peruse, offering him as it does the support of the great Masters of Hellenism for the doctrine of the Subtle Body, yet presenting this testimony in a form whose attractiveness loses nothing by its erudition. Mr. Mead disclaims all too modestly any skill in popular exposition, and is half apologetic lest by references and annotations he may have 'frightened away' those general readers whom the present widespread interest in psychical matters might otherwise attract to his book. We hasten to assure him that his modest apprehensions are ill-grounded. This exposition is calculated to supply what the intelligent reader has long recognised to be a want in the literature of the subject. The shelves of our mystical libraries are for the most part over-stocked with popular books, containing evidence of a superficial character, and lacking the weight of association with first-class names—a fact which offers some plausibility to the criticism of opponents that there is nothing in mystical and psychical thought that is worthy of the attention of sane and balanced minds. By tracing the presentation of the Subtle Body through the teachings of the Great Masters of

Later Platonism Mr. Mead has removed this reproach with regard to one of the central doctrines of mystical psychology at all events, by showing conclusively that those who hold to 'an invisible subtle embodiment of the life of the mind' sin in very good company. In three brilliant essays, 'The Spirit Body,' 'The Radiant Body,' and 'The Resurrection Body,' Mr. Mead has told the unlearned reader how Plato, the authors of the Hermetic Tractates, Plutarch, Plotinus, Porphyry, Damascius, Proclus, Philoponus, Psellus, Synesius, Paul, Origen have regarded this doctrine, and has collated from their writings strong evidence as to the important place it held in Hellenistic thought. Great care has been taken to differentiate between the lower and higher aspects of the Subtle Body, and the first two essays of the three are devoted to this important distinction. In the essay the 'Spirit Body' there is first a careful examination of terms, and we are reminded that the words '*pneuma*' (spirit), and '*sōma pneumatikon*' (spiritual body), though used by Paul and some others in a more exalted sense, are the most general terms for the Subtle Vehicle in its *inferior* aspect. It was also known after death as the 'image' (*eidōlon*) or 'shade' (*skia*).

An important point not always realised is "that, for our philosophers, spirit in this sense is subtle body, an embodiment of a finer order of matter than that known to physical sense, and not soul proper. By body, moreover, is not meant developed and organised form, but rather 'essence' or 'plasm' that may be graded, or as it were woven into various textures. In itself unshaped, it is capable of receiving the impression or pattern of any organised form. The soul proper, on the contrary, is thought of as utterly incorporeal. Psychic life is classified according to its manifestations in body, but is not itself body" (p. 49).

The teachings of the Neo-platonic philosophers on the nature of this spirit-body in its lower and unpurified state are of great interest in the light of present-day speculations, and the quotations from Philoponus, who declares Aristotle's doctrine, should be carefully noted. They make us realise that nearly all the supernormal phenomena of modern Psychical Research were known to antiquity; even thought-transference and telepathy were among the psychic activities explained by reference to the spirit-body as the true sensory. "When a man addresses another from a distance he has to speak more loudly, but if he be near, he can whisper into his ear. If, moreover, it were possible for him to come into close contact with the spirit of his soul, he



would need no uttered speech, but all he wanted to say would reach the hearer by a soundless way" (p. 73). The psychic instrument is said, too, to cause mental derangement by "being out of symmetry," and our continual changes in mood and mentality are often due to changes in this spirit. Our vegetarian friends will read with gratification that the Subtle Body can be "made dense with a heavy diet," while those familiar with the phenomena of 'materialisation' will recognise some of their own cherished conclusions in the statement that "it is probable, when the soul desires to manifest, it shapes itself, setting its own imagination in movement; or even it is probable with the help of daimonic co-operation that it appears and again becomes invisible, being condensed and rarefied" (p. 69). How 'modern' all this is!

We must not, however, linger over the inferior Subtle Body, fascinating though it be; there is a greater mystery, a more glorious Vesture awaiting us in the second essay, of which the Radiant Body, the Augoeides, "filled with Gnostic Light Divine," is the grandiose subject. Mr. Mead quotes from Plato, the Founder of the School, and from Damascius, the last occupant of the Kathedra, both of whom testify to this Radiant Vehicle as being the true Vesture of the Soul, "the prime essence or substance of all bodies and all embodiments." Incidentally we learn that the Augoeides was usually thought to be centred in the head, while its lower aspect, the spirit-body, was diffused throughout the whole gross body and surrounded it.

The bulk of the essay is devoted to quotations from the treatise of Synesius *On Visions*, written about 404 A.D. before he became a Christian and a Bishop. It is by far the most detailed statement on the subject in Neo-platonism. Were there nothing else in this book we should be grateful to Mr. Mead for translating and including this thought-provoking exposition which tells us, in the imaginal language of the School, how the Soul, "if it returns to its native nobility, is a store-house of truth," and how it "takes possession of the land made ready for the higher nature," that "light-wrapped land" which is the Radiant Augoeides' true, essential abode.

The third essay, on the Resurrection Body, passes from the philosophers to the Christian theologians, and concludes with a fine *résumé* of the Gnostic conception of the substantial bringing to birth of the actual 'Body' or Ground of Resurrection in the man who has been spiritually re-born. Mr. Mead answers

the question: What is the 'Perfect' or Resurrection Body?—by reference to the Mystery-ritual of the Mithriaca, with the noble words of which the essay practically closes.

These three essays form the core of the book, but it is impossible to pass over the Proem, which contains among many other interesting things the idea of the Subtle Body as the very soul of astrology and alchemy. Mr. Mead has, in short, in some one hundred and fifty pages, completed an historical survey which goes far towards placing the doctrine of the Subtle Body in a position of credible standing in the world of ideas past and present.

C. E. W.

#### THE ANONYMOUS POET OF POLAND.

Zygmunt Krasinski. By Monica M. Gardner, Author of 'Adam Mickiewicz, the National Poet of Poland,' etc. Cambridge (The University Press); pp. 320; 12s. 6d. net.

READERS of THE QUEST have already learnt something of the mystical national literature of Poland from a number of Miss Gardner's contributions to our pages, and among them they have had the opportunity of making a bowing acquaintance with Zygmunt Krasinski, a name almost unknown in this country. Adam Mickiewicz, Juliusz Slowacki and Zygmunt Krasinski are the three great writers and poets of Poland, who set before their cruelly martyred native land the spiritual ideal of faith in its ultimate Messianistic destiny among the nations. It is their writings especially that have kept the spirit of the nation alive through generations of unrelieved gloom. In the case of Krasinski circumstances were such that he was compelled to disguise his identity and issue his works anonymously or bearing the initials or names of others. They had to be smuggled into Poland, and the penalty for being found in possession of a copy was Siberia or even death.

Miss Gardner has done her work with thoroughness, ability and discrimination and presented us with an instructive, interesting and readable account of Krasinski and his writings. Krasinski's greatest passion, and his was a passionate nature, sinking to depths of depression and rising to great heights of exaltation, was love of Poland. His hope for his crucified native land was that it should eventually be a means of international regeneration. It is



summed up in *Dawn*, which Miss Gardner characterizes as "that most noble pæan of victory over suffering and evil," in the sentence: "The Lord shall be present in the whole political sphere . . . and the instrument of His providence to this end shall be the Polish nation." Poland's sufferings were to prepare the way for the spiritual re-birth of the world; the resurrection of Poland was to be the first step towards that universal victory over political wrong which shall transform humanity. Krasinski, we are told, "directed his principles of political morality entirely by those of individual morality. In the same manner the national spirituality and the spirituality of the unit are with him identical." This is of course a debatable point.

To-day Poland is once more integrated as a political unit and her freedom is restored to her; the material side of Krasinski's dream has come true, but who can hope that the spiritual side is as yet in any observable measure an actuality? Which among the nations will be the first to be born spiritually? In one thing, however, Krasinski was right; he knew that no such beatific inauguration of God's kingdom on earth could take place before the individuals of the nation were purified in their hearts. What he prayed for may be seen in perhaps the noblest of his utterances, in the last *Psalm of the Future*, though the Trinitarian idea spoils its simplicity.

"Oh, Lord, Lord, then not for hope—as a flower is it strewn: then not for the destruction of our foes—their destruction dawns on to-morrow's clouds: not for the weapon of rule—from the tempests it shall fall to us: not for any help—Thou hast already opened the field of events before us: but amidst the terrible convulsion of these events we beseech Thee only for a pure will within us, oh, Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

"Oh, Thou most dear, hidden but visible beyond the veils of the transparent worlds; Thou present everywhere, immortal, holy, Who dwelling in each motion alike of hearts and stars shatterest to nought rebellion of the stars even as thou shatterest the wanderings of the heart—Father, Son and Holy Ghost; Thou Who commandest the being of man that, poor in strength and puny in his birth, he should to an angel grow by might of sacrifice, and to our Polish nation didst ordain that she should lead the nations into love and peace; Thou Who in the tumult of the world's confusion piercest to the sod children of wrath and savest the upright—because that they are upright—from their torment; we beseech Thee, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, we, suspended

between Thy kingdom and the pit, we beseech Thee with our foreheads sunk to earth, with our temples bathed in the breathing of Thy spring, surrounded with the wheels of shattered times and perishing rules, Father, Son and Holy Ghost! we beseech Thee create within us a pure heart, make new our thoughts within us, root out from our souls the tares of sacrilegious falsehood, and give us the gift, eternal among Thy gifts—give us good will.”

His last message to his beloved country is that “in the end there is victory only where there is virtue, resurrection only where there is Golgotha. He only shall make his enemies his footstool who has loved much and suffered much.”

#### QUALITY IN LIFE.

By Percy J. Smith. London (Watkins); pp. 85; 3s. 6d. net.

THESE charmingly written meditations of an art-worker were penned before the War. Returning from the army, the author at first doubted whether they would be in harmony with his present sense of reality after so strenuous an experience, but found on reflection that what seemed true and desirable to him before was even more so now. There is much that is æsthetically suggestive and a felicitous avoidance of exaggeration in this little volume. As an example of the author's manner and matter the following may be selected.

“To know something of life's magnitude and its diversity; to be acquainted with joy, and with regrets which yet hold an after-sweetness because, at least, they do mean experience: to use our senses well; seeing the bewitching wonder of colour and of form, and the interplay of light and dark; hearing the music of storms, the ripple of running water and the song of birds; feeling the wind blow on the skin and through the hair, and appreciating the delicate sense of touch; knowing the scent of the country after rain, and liking the taste of ripe fruit and new baked bread and cakes: to discern the good in humanity and beauty of all kinds; to love, and to be willing to sacrifice; to be learning always and yet to recognise mystery and rejoice in its unendingness; to realise the worth of loyalty and of friendship; to treasure children's faith in us, and the memory of their eyes; to possess imagination as part of our equipment and to win a sense of unity by means of wide sympathy:—this kindles existence into a life fraught with quality.”



## BENEDICTINE MONACHISM.

Studies in Benedictine Life and Rule. By the Right Rev. Cuthbert Butler, Abbot of Downside Abbey. London (Longmans); pp. 387; 18s. net.

THIS is in every way a fine true piece of real work. The author has been for over 40 years himself a Benedictine monk, living the life he loves and which he here pictures from within. For 12 years as Abbot he has ruled in a large monastery. Student and scholar, he has pursued historical research in the quiet of his cloister, but he has also seen and known well all the great Benedictine houses of Europe. Well equipped by his training, knowledge and daily habit, Abbot Butler now comes forward with this notable volume so modestly termed 'Studies in Benedictine Life and Rule.' Addressed primarily to those of his own Order the book should, as he says, appeal "to students of the history of religion and civilization in Western Europe, as an account of one of the most potent factors in the formation of Europe during a long and important phase of its growth."

There is, of course, a vast literature about and around Benedictine monachism; but the author gives only a short list of the modern writers who have dealt with it along his own lines. This includes two well-known works, one by a clergyman of the Church of Ireland, the other by a Wesleyan, thus showing his broad outlook. The book is arranged in 22 chapters, each complete in itself, as for instance 'Benedictine Asceticism,' 'St. Benedict's Rule,' 'Benedictine Polity.' But they are all worked into one harmonious whole, interlinked together, each being lighted up by the pervading and persuasive personality of the man and the monk, student, thinker and writer. It seems to be admitted that St. Benedict did write his own Rule and that it has existed in its present shape since 620. Abbot Butler himself has compiled an *editio critico-practica* indicating its sources. But, though parts may be traced to Cassian and to Pachomius, it may be taken that the main idea of the Rule was substantially original. Referring to earlier views of monasticism as being a "rivalry in ascetical achievement," Abbot Butler says that St. Benedict's idea was a common mode of life and that "the sanctification of the monk was to be found in living the life of the community." This would be in our language a kind of Collectivism in the Spiritual Order, as against the strong Individualism which was the keynote of Egyptian

monachism in all its phases. "This two-fold break with the past, in the elimination of austerity and in the sinking of the individual in the community, made St. Benedict's Rule less a development than a revolution in monachism." No one impartially reading this Rule even to-day can fail to see its wisdom and its firm foundation in philosophy. To those darker days of the Middle Ages it came as a piece of legislation. Apart from any question of special inspiration, we may even now regard it as a statesman-like production. Multitudes of men have lived under it, and up to it, through many centuries, and whole monasteries are still daily doing so.

It is to be specially noted that as to artificial self-inflicted penance there is no trace whatsoever of this in the Rule of St. Benedict, nor in his life as told by St. Gregory. Indeed even the word 'mortification' is never used. The old idea was that corporal austerities were the chief means for attaining the spiritual end of the monastic life. All this was reversed by the Rule, which prescribed for the monks "sufficient food, ample sleep, proper clothing." Through it all we find, not only the guidance of reason, but also a strong and sweet reasonableness. The monk was to sanctify himself by living the common life of the community, as a family, in love and friendship; rising from these things to the higher love and life of God. There were always to be self-discipline, prayer and work. Prayer would be public in the singing of the Divine Office, which St. Benedict called the *Opus Dei*; but there was also to be private mental prayer and contemplation. Then as to work, it was to be real work—toil and strain. As Abbot Butler admits in his straightforward way, there have been times when this duty of work was but poorly fulfilled. In earlier days there was always work in the fields; but changes came, and the question was what work could best be done. The Rule itself simply ordains 'work' with no definition. Originally the monks were not meant to be priests; but the habit of Ordination grew up early and is now common. This also interfered with the original plan as to work. In taking up teaching, as they have done, Benedictines undoubtedly do a vast amount of hard and strenuous and worthy work, as may be seen in their fine schools about England and elsewhere. They are also many of them students and scholars, much given to real historical research.

Cardinal Gasquet, who is the head and leader here of the Benedictine Order, is a living proof of their spirit, and his writings have done much for the truth in history and the removal of



ignorance and prejudice as to monasteries of the past. The chapter on 'Benedictine Mysticism' may be quoted as a fine example of Abbot Butler's clear and cogent writing. To him the word means the "experience of the direct, secret, incommunicable knowledge of God received in contemplation." He goes back for his guides to the great names of Cassian, St. Gregory and St. Bernard. The whole is written in perfectly simple style upon the highest plane of thought and feeling, intellect and heart. Abbot Butler notes that, by a Benedictine, the vow of Obedience is taken with the added words "according to the Rule." This means that he agrees to obey only within the limits of a normal Benedictine cenobitical life. It follows therefore that no Abbot has power to compel a monk to live away from his community. On the other hand, the Jesuit vow of Obedience is practically absolute and individual, and the Superiors can deal with each member as they like in regard to his mode of life. The Jesuit Society is built up on a military model. The Benedictine is based upon broad philosophic principles with a sound polity, and the Rule itself is, at once, its charter and its constitution. So these two are still real rivals in education, both in theory and practice.

We can commend Abbot Butler's book as being a true, sincere and straightforward account of the Benedictine Order. Learned, scholarly, fair, free and full as it is, what will strike many readers is the reasonableness of every statement. As helping towards appreciating and illuminating this fine work we may mention Cardinal Gasquet's *Religio Religiosi* or 'The Object and Scope of the Religious Life.' It is only a small book of 126 pages, published last year (Washbourne), but it is written with both power and personality. It is indeed a masterly argument upon philosophic lines, quite conclusive, if his premises are admitted, in support of what St. Benedict called the *Via Vitæ*, which the Cardinal himself has now lived for over 50 years and is still living happily.

F. W.

#### THE HILL OF VISION.

By Frederick Bligh Bond, F.R.I.B.A. London (Constable);  
pp. 184; 7s. 6d. net.

IN the *Gate of Remembrance* Mr. Bligh Bond, the architect and archæologist in charge of the excavations at Glastonbury, told the story of certain automatic scripts obtained through the hand of Mr. 'John Alleyne,' and detailed so much of their contents as referred to the ancient abbey and its builders. It was a

remarkable story and has created much interest and controversy. The contents of the script were mainly in the form of what purported to be memories from the past,—of long-deceased monks and others, graphically set forth. There is an abundance of automatic script of a similar nature, and in spite of its general interest Mr. Bond would probably never have ventured to publish this particular script but for the fact that it helped him in his difficulties of excavation. Whatever be thought of the provenance of these memories, whatever hypothesis is invoked to explain them, as a matter of fact the precise indications obtained through this interesting psychological experiment led to the discovery of the foundations of the hitherto unknown Edgar Chapel. Other indications were also given for locating still another hidden chapel, and the 'Loretto' script was at the same time published in hope of future verification. Quite recently excavations have been made where indicated and have proved that the script was veridical also in this respect.

But behind this complex of monkish and mediæval ideas and pictures of Glastonbury dressed up in old-time phrasing and faulty Latin, there appeared the play of certain controlling influences treating of matters of wider interest. There was a philosophizing about the nature and destiny of man, a diagnosis of man's present unspiritual condition, with warnings about the future. In this connection there were references to the coming of a great world crisis, of war and social revolution, inaugurating the dawn of a new era for man and the promise of greater glory for the race. These adumbrations of coming disaster and their settings are now collected from the 1908-1912 script and commented on to show their application to the Great War and the present crisis of revolution and reconstruction. Early in 1918, the automatic experiments were renewed, but at first with little success. Mr. Bond then hit on the idea of reading aloud to Mr. Alleyne and discussing with him what he read from various books. The writing immediately began to flow freely. Nevertheless there was no sign of intrusion into the script of what they were discussing or of phrasing from the books read. This guaranteed at any rate the purely sub-conscious nature of the influences at work, from whatever source they emanated. In this way much additional material was acquired dealing with such theories as the psychology of the warring powers, and especially that of the German character, and of a race-type of the future which is expected to emerge out of the present struggle.



There were also references to the future of the War and in particular a prognostication, several times repeated at a time when all seemed very black for the Allies, of a precise date Aug. 24-26, 1918, for the climax which would decide the War in their favour. It was not to be the actual end of the fighting, but the decisive crisis, and was so explained before the event.

All relevant quotations on these points are given from the 1918 script, with dates. Mr. Bligh Bond weaves all together and supplies a helpful and suggestive running commentary. He treats his theme with sincerity and a due sense of the difficult problems it raises on all sides. He has no theory to offer, but is fully persuaded that the scripts did foretell the War and the date of its decisive crisis, quite apart from any conscious intuition or expectation of Mr. Alleyne or himself. He therefore appends to his poetical title *The Hill of Vision* the sub-heading 'A Forecast of the Great War and of Social Revolution with the Coming of the New Race.' In a preface and postscript Prof. R. Adams Cram writes a lucid summary of the whole matter from the standpoint of one who is convinced, and gives his testimony to the priority of dates of the scripts; other attestations are also appended. The book is an interesting sequel to *The Gate of Remembrance*, though of course in the nature of the case not so objectively convincing. The more philosophic side of the general speculative ideas has been well brought out by Mr. Bligh Bond in a paper, entitled 'A New Series of Automatic Scripts,' in our own pages (see Jan. no., 1919).

#### LAST LETTERS FROM THE LIVING DEAD MAN.

Written down by Elsa Barker. With an Introduction. London (Rider); pp. 240; 4s. 6d. net.

THIS is the third and last volume of 'The Living Dead Man' series, automatically written by Miss Elsa Barker, the prior two volumes of which have attracted wide notice. The present script was obtained between Feb. 1917 and Feb. 1918, and deals mainly with America's coming into the War, the part she should play and the outlook she should adopt. It interests itself in the temperament and genius of the new race that is being developed in the New World and how it is shaping and should shape. For those who believe in reincarnation, perhaps the following suggestion is the most noteworthy in the script:

"America has laid up for herself in the region beyond the physical a debt—an obligation that is not by any means a treasure in heaven, but which, when the debt is paid, may be a real spiritual treasure. I refer to the armies of souls who once occupied this land as free owners, and who were expelled and disinherited by the expanding civilisation which grew up in the place of wigwam and hunting-ground. Those souls, many of them, desire to return. Many have already returned, and unless some way is open for them to live again the free life to which they were accustomed in the past, they will tend to become a destructive force. They cannot be eliminated so easily now, when they wear white bodies and claim citizenship with you. They are scattered from shore to shore of this wide land. You can tell them by their eagle eyes and their high cheek-bones, by their free gait and their love of freedom. They are hard to restrain in factory and counting-house. They are clerks with a difference and labourers with a dream. . . . A time may come when these . . . will instinctively rebel . . . will seek to live over again the old life of nature, even though they have to take it as the kingdom of heaven is said to have been taken."

In her Introduction Miss Barker takes her readers into her confidence, and tells them how already before the last block of script was finished an inner impulse was making her more and more restive at the swamping of her normal literary activity by automatic writing. This so grew upon her that she decided to abandon the practice. The publication of her two prior volumes of the series had overwhelmed her with correspondence with people all over the world asking for help, and she was in great distress at the misery with which she thus came in contact on all sides. So great was the emotional strain that she determined to seek relief in some hard mental work. She accordingly devoted herself to a systematic study of psycho-analysis; into this she threw herself so strenuously that it is a wonder she did not break down. She is now persuaded that analytic psychology supplies a stable ground between the extremes of credulity and negation, and should prove eventually to be a valuable corrective to disorderly psychism. "The psychic wave which is sweeping now over the world is accompanied by modern analytical psychology. Truth may lie in the synthesis." As to her own attempt at a synthesis, Miss Barker evidently leans to the conclusion that she has throughout been in intimate psychical contact with the late Judge Hatch and that he is substantially the author



of the Letters, and that it is not the outcome of her sub-conscious activity. Nevertheless she is by no means assertive and endeavours to keep as open a mind as may be in the circumstances, as when she sensibly remarks :

"We must always remember that our personal belief is not absolute evidence of the truth of what we believe—at least until we shall have examined all the psychological roots of the belief, and in the present state of our knowledge this is well-nigh impossible. Our rational belief, if we have formed one for ourselves and have not merely accepted uncritically the beliefs of our predecessors and associates, is merely our individual synthesis. But we must not give an exaggerated value even to our own hard-won synthesis. That also is a moving, ever-changing thing. Otherwise we should not grow. When a man becomes fixed he begins to disintegrate."

#### FROM RITUAL TO ROMANCE.

By Jessie L. Weston, author of 'The Legend of Sir Perceval,' etc. Cambridge (The University Press); pp. 202; 12s. 6d. net.

FOR upwards of thirty years Miss Jessie L. Weston has been a persevering student of the Grail texts and all that concerns this body of high romance which in literary form appeared suddenly in the twelfth century and already in competing versions.

In the present interesting study she surveys the various elements which have entered into the main fabric of the Grail Legend and endeavours to discover which is the central and most original. This she finds in connection with the 'Waste Land' *motif*, and is convinced that a proper appreciation of it will give the clue which will safely lead us through the mazes of the various developments of the theme. The oldest core of the legends "postulates a close connection between the vitality of a certain king and the prosperity of his kingdom; the forces of the ruler being weakened or destroyed, . . . the land becomes Waste, and the task of the hero is that of restoration." This leads Miss Weston to enquire into the ancient folk-rituals of fertility and vegetation-renewal cults, and into mediæval and modern forms of nature-ritual. The symbols most closely connected with the Grail—Cup, Lance, Sword, Stone or Dish—are treated as a related group and their life-significance explained. There follows a dissertation on the sword-dance, its ceremonial origin and the

protection of the life-source by armed guardians who dance round it; and then a note on the evolutionary sequence—medicine-man, healer, redeemer. Thereafter a very interesting chapter on the mysterious figure of the Fisher-King, and the fish as a life-symbol, with special reference to the Messianic and Early Christian sacramental fish-meals which find an echo in one of the versions. But the most important chapters of the book are those on the Mysteries, wherein the outer folk-rituals were paralleled with rites of a more intimate nature. They treated of human generation, of birth and death, and life hereafter. In the higher institutions this was gradually sublimated into a mystical doctrine of spiritual regeneration; the relation of man to the Divine Source of his being as giver of spiritual life was set forth and the Way Above shown as stages of communion and union. Herein we find the most intimate point of contact between some of the Pagan and Oriental mystery-cults and the mystical element in Early Christian teaching. Miss Weston thinks that we must look to some similar development if we would discover the secret of the Grail. It is as impossible to explain it on the basis of Celtic folk-tales as it is to derive it from Christianity alone. The Church knows nothing of the Grail, and what has to be explained is why that vessel, surrounded as it is with an atmosphere of reverence and awe, and equated with the central sacrament of Christianity, yet "appears in no Legendary, is figured in no picture, comes on the scene in no Passion-Play." The hypothesis of a life-cult and a cognate mystery-rite, the symbols of which could be given a spiritual meaning, supplies the natural link between the lower and higher elements and may well account for much that is otherwise incomprehensible in the development of the tradition. Miss Weston thus contends that:

"The exoteric side of the cult gives us the Human, the Folk-lore elements—the Suffering King; the Waste Land; the effect upon the Folk; the task that lies before the hero; the group of Grail symbols. The esoteric side provides us with the Mystic Meal, the Food of Life, connected in some mysterious way with a Vessel which is the centre of the cult; the combination of that Vessel with a Weapon, a combination bearing a well-known 'generative' significance; a double initiation into the source of the lower and higher spheres of Life; the ultimate proof of the final test in the restoration of the king."

This is Miss Weston's main contention and it is indeed a wide-flung and fertile hypothesis. In pursuing the ramifications



of its application she throws much light on details of the complex of texts she knows so well; though here we think she would have been better advised to have given modern renderings of her quotations, for very few can read the originals of these fascinating romances. There is little doubt that it is in some such direction the 'origin' of the Grail must be sought. Miss Weston's labours have opened up a promising field of research, and already a number of elements and of accretions which previously were inexplicable, seem to fall into place or at any rate justify their presence as natural associations.

#### THE INTUITIVE BASIS OF KNOWLEDGE.

An Epistemological Enquiry. By N. O. Lossky, Professor of Philosophy in the University of Petrograd. Authorised Translation by Nathalie A. Duddington, M.A. With a Preface by Prof. G. Dawes Hicks. London (Macmillan); pp. 420; 16s. net.

THIS is the first systematic treatise on philosophy of a Russian thinker translated into English, if we except Solovyof's theodicy, *The Justification of the Good*. It consists of an able criticism of the competing theories of knowledge and the exposition of Professor Lossky's own point of view, which may best be seen summarily from the statement (p. 82): "If knowledge be, then, an experience compared with other experiences, and if the object apprehended be the experience that is being compared, it follows that the object is known as it is in itself. What is present in knowledge is not a copy, a symbol, or appearance of the thing that is to be known, but the thing *as it really exists*." This is the antipodes of the Kantian position.

Professor Lossky thinks his theory is fundamentally of a 'mystical' nature; he is, however, doubtful as to the advisability of using the term, and in revising the text of his treatise for translation into English has practically dropped it. What he means may be seen from the opening paragraphs of the summary in which he treats of the 'General Characteristics of the Intuitional Theory':

"The line of reflection I have been following may fairly enough be described as a *mystical* tendency of thought. Philosophical mysticism, which has hitherto generally possessed a religious tinge, has always insisted that there is no impassable gulf between God and the human soul; that there are, at any

rate, moments of perfect union between the human and the divine—moments of ecstasy when man feels and experiences God no less immediately than his own self. The intuitional theory of knowledge is characterised by a kindred thought—the thought, namely, that the world of the not-self (the whole of that world, including God, if God exists) is known no less immediately than the world of the self. . . . According to our theory . . . the world which is immediately known is the living world in all the inexhaustible fulness of its creative powers—the world which has been deeply felt by the poets in æsthetic contemplation and which is still comparatively speaking but little familiar to science" (pp. 100, 101).

This is an attractive programme, but the treatise itself is occupied almost exclusively with criticism and logic, so that the mystic as such will get little nourishment out of it. As a piece of hard systematic thinking, however, it should take an honourable place in the schools.

Professor Lossky is to be congratulated on finding so admirable a translator of his work. Mrs. Duddington, a Russian by birth, and one of his old pupils, has a perfect command of English, and not only of ordinary English but of the technique of philosophical expression in our tongue. She is herself a graduate in philosophy of the University of London and has achieved a notable success in this pioneer version of a technical philosophical treatise in Russian, in which tongue a precise philosophical language has not yet been developed.

#### VOICES FROM THE VOID.

**Six Years' Experience in Automatic Communications.** By Hester Travers Smith. With Introduction by Professor Sir W. F. Barrett, F.R.S. London (Rider); pp. 108; 8s. 6d. net.

THIS record of experience is worth reading. Mrs. Travers Smith, the daughter of the late Professor Edward Dowden, is a careful and sober investigator, well-educated and herself a considerable automatist. The group of investigators consisted of personal friends meeting regularly and frequently in her own house, and all were keen on conducting the proceedings on scientific lines. The 'autoscope' most generally used was of the 'ouija board' type, but far superior to the ordinary instrument. It is described as being "a card-table covered with green baize, on which the letters of the alphabet, the numbers from 0 to 9, and the words 'yes' and 'no' are laid, cut out separately on small pieces of cardboard;



over this is placed a sheet of plate-glass, the same size as the table. The 'traveller' consists of a small triangular piece of wood, about half an inch thick, shod with thin small pieces of carpet felt."

As a rule this is a wearisome means of experimentation, but we are told "in our own circle the words come through so quickly that it is almost impossible to read them, and it requires an experienced shorthand writer to take them down."

As a test the letters, etc., under the glass were sometimes shuffled, but no confusion resulted, though the automatists were invariably blindfolded.

One or two of the 'cases' have been already made public by Sir William Barrett, who took a keen interest in the work, but there is much else that calls for notice if space were available. The whole is set forth clearly and impartially, with moderation and sobriety. It is therefore instructive to read Mrs. Travers Smith's cautious conclusions on the results of her systematic work and very varied experience. She writes:

"I must confess . . . that having worked more or less steadily at automatism for six or seven years, having started with no theory on the subject, and having been persuaded by turns that I had found this or that explanation of the phenomena which came under my notice—I must confess, I repeat, that for some time past I have been quite clear and decided on one point—in feeling that the subliminal self accounts for much and many things, but not for everything. I am convinced, in fact, that external influences of some nature work through us, using our senses, eyes, ears, brains, etc., their messages, however, being highly coloured by the personalities of their mediums. I feel sure that hardly any of the communications I have had are *entirely* due to subconsciousness. What the nature of these external influences may be is another and a most interesting question, and one still more difficult to answer. I cannot say I have found any satisfactory reply to it so far. I am inclined to think that the communications that reach us come from different sources. In a few cases I have felt almost certain that I had spoken to those I knew who had passed over; they appeared to preserve their earth-memory, and continued to interest themselves in the mundane affairs of those they loved."

Some who read the book may be inclined to think that these conclusions are perhaps somewhat over-cautious, but it is the right attitude in conducting scientific experiments.

## THE TRAINING OF MIND AND WILL.

By W. Tudor Jones, M.A., Ph.D. With a Foreword by Alex. Hill, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.S. London (Williams & Norgate); pp. 69 ; 2s. 6d. net.

A WIDE knowledge of religion, philosophy and psychology and much able exposition have marked Dr. Tudor Jones' work for many years. He had already learned to adapt himself to many varied audiences. But the task which recently fell to his lot was of far greater difficulty. He had mainly to work on what was entirely virgin soil, on those, as he tells us, who seemed never to have been taught so much as that they had *minds*. This helpful little volume is the outcome of two years' wide experience of lecturing to tens of thousands of young soldiers and sailors and munition workers at Army and Y.M.C.A. centres throughout England. In this way Dr. Jones learned to know intimately the needs of his hearers. The task was how to put sympathetically and plainly what would help them in beginning to get a hold on themselves and develop their latent abilities. By illustration after illustration he laboured, first, to convince them of the enormous importance of mind and its vast possibilities; then, when interest was well aroused, he proceeded to give the first simple steps in the training of mind and will. The difficulties with which he was confronted show how terribly education on these lines has been neglected. The first need is of teachers of conviction, men and women whose first object is to get their pupils "to believe with their whole mind and heart that they are more than they know, and can be more than they are." Dr. Tudor Jones' little book shows the right lines on which to work; it should prove of great value, not only to the younger people to whom it is chiefly addressed, but also to all who have an interest in seeing to it that the next generation shall be given a saner and wiser training than the present has received,—a training based on simple but sound psychological principles and directed to fostering natural ability and making the best use of it.

## A FRIENDSHIP.

And other Poems. By V. H. Friedlaender, London (Proprietors of 'Country Life'); pp. 70 ; 3s. 6d. net.

NOW and then among the host of pleasant singers whose verses in these days meet our eyes on every side, a voice is heard that strikes a different note; a note that comes from the depths and rings



flawlessly true. Such a voice sounds in our ears as we turn over the pages of this little volume. Readers of *THE QUEST* will recognize some of the pieces which have already appeared in its pages, and especially the striking poem entitled 'Lazarus,' which finely presents the poet's best characteristics. Her essential qualities are courage and insight. She loses none of her strength in the pursuit of vague visions; but with her feet firmly planted on the earth she probes the depths of human nature with a knowledge that has cancelled self-consciousness. We do not feel the poet; we feel the truth. The following verses, entitled 'A Prayer,' are a vivid expression in the writer's own words of what strikes the reader as the true character of her work.

"Leave not a veil before mine eyes,  
Tear from my mind the shield of lies,  
And from my soul the web of sophistries;  
Yea, though I sicken, shirk and flee,  
God, give me eyes to see.

"Send me no song so honey-sweet  
That I forget the harsher beat  
Of life, the pulsing discords of the street;  
Smite me with sorrow as a spear—  
But give me ears to hear.

"Grant me the will to pay for light,  
For vision overtopping sight,  
And dreams that are not of the passing night:  
Yield, at what price Thou shalt demand,  
A heart to understand."

S. E. H.

#### SERBIAN SONGS AND POEMS.

Chords of the Yugoslav Harp. Translated by J. W. Wiles, M.A.,  
English Lecturer in the University of Belgrade, Serbia.  
London (Allen and Unwin); pp. 80; 2s. net.

WE may be grateful to the translator of these extremely interesting folk-songs of Serbia for preserving so faithfully their character of simplicity and *naïveté*. They are poems of the kind that seem to belong to a race-consciousness rather than to that of any individual, though those here given represent chiefly the emotional and religious side of the national character. There are

in fact, as the translator explains in his Introduction, no examples of the warlike poetry of Serbia, and but one, 'Veryanko's Vengeance,' that suggests the more harsh or virile aspect of the Serbian genius. They have that quality of the true folk-song which, in spite of its immediateness of feeling and conception, enables it to strike the note of universal truth. There are, moreover, some delightful instances of shrewd and playful humour, and one or two of biting sarcasm, as in the story of the Hadja (Mahomedan 'priest'), p. 62. One of the most touching perhaps in its childlike sense of the individual's importance in the universe is 'The Vision before Sleep' (p. 22):

"To sleep I laid me down,  
 Making my prayer to God;  
 I called upon His angels;  
 Heaven was unveiled to me;  
 The Seraphim, they worshipped there,  
 And prayed this prayer to Christ our Lord:  
 'While he doth rest, all through his sleep,  
 From visions dark do thou him keep.'"

S. E. H.

#### MIADOXIA.

A Descant on the Whence? Whither? Why? and How? of Existence. By A. Priest, B.A. (Oxon.). London (Kegan Paul, etc.); pp. 435; 6s. net.

THE writer of this volume, although he does not say so, is strongly imbued with some of the main dogmas of Modern Theosophy, and in his general thesis follows them closely, including the reincarnation doctrine, of the truth of which he claims to be convinced by personal psychical experience. When, however, he comes to deal with the life of Jesus, he parts company with the revelations of Neo-theosophy and repudiates its formal assertion that the historic Jesus lived a century prior to the traditional date. The author is exceedingly outspoken about some of the misunderstandings of popular Christian belief and tries to correct them. There can be no doubt as to his earnestness and enthusiasm for a more vital presentation of religion based on psychical and spiritual experience; but his superabundant use of capitals, small capitals and italics on every page indicates that he is too frequently carried away himself to persuade less adventurous and more prosaic souls that he navigates his boat with sufficient safety for them to accompany him all the way of his voyage.



## PSYCHICAL MISCELLANEA.

Being Papers on Psychical Research, Telepathy, Hypnotism, Christian Science, etc. By J. Arthur Hill. London (Kegan Paul, etc.); pp. 118; 2s. 6d. net.

THIS small volume belongs to a new series called 'Evidences of Spiritualism,' but contains little that is distinctively spiritistic. It is a collection of occasional papers written by Mr. Hill, who is a careful investigator, a cautious believer and well-informed writer. In answering interestingly the question 'Is the Earth alive?' in the affirmative, Mr. Hill writes: "If the earth seems a dead lump, however, think of the human brain. It is a mere lump of whitish filament, *seen from outside*. But its inner experience is the rich and infinitely detailed life of a human being. So also may the inner experience of the earth be incomparably richer than its outward appearance indicates to our external senses. Objectively, our brains are part of the earth: subjectively, *we see in ourselves a part of what the earth sees in itself.*"

## THE SOUL IN SUFFERING.

A Practical Application of Spiritual Truths. By Robert S. Carroll, M.D., Medical Director, Highland Hospital, Asheville, North Carolina, Author of 'The Mastery of Nervousness.' New York (Macmillan); pp. 241; \$2.00.

THIS is a medical man's prescription for the sufferings of the soul, and includes a view of moral philosophy which is virile, wholesome and practical. Action is the keynote of both physical and mental advice, and indeed an activist philosophy appears between the lines as the real basis of the argument. The main points are that externals are to be accepted, and the will strengthened to deal with what fate sends, for life is a contest. Doing is the price of strength. True freedom will be won only when rebellion against the laws of bodily, mental and soul health ceases. Faith in a saving Unseen is however necessary. Only with that practical faith which seeks the best in every work of life can the unknown future be faced without fear. The book is pleasantly written.

S. E. H.

## A CROWN OF LIFE.

A Study in the Hope of Immortality. By H. J. Marshall. London (Methuen); pp. 174 ; 5s. net.

WE have here an account of the development of the doctrine of immortality from early times up to the present day, tracing it along both Greek and Semitic lines of thought. The writer states that it originated in the East, and was first known to history in Egypt, where it was already old when the pyramids were built. He believes it to be practically universal. The account is little more than a summary, and necessarily, in a book meant for popular reading, not a complete one; but it is written in a clear and pleasant style. The reader is taken rapidly on, from the time of the primitive belief in an undifferentiated Hades, a mere land of shades for good and bad alike, through the dawn of the idea of a divine origin for the soul, through the Middle Ages with their superstitious prayers for the dead, paid for in so many pounds of silver money, up to the present-day study of human personality, and the conception of resurrection as an ascent of the soul from bodily to spiritual life. The book is likely to be helpful to those unacquainted with the views held on the subject by the religious teachers of the past. The orthodox Christian standpoint is assumed throughout.

S. E. H.

## A NEW HEAVEN.

By the Hon. George Warren Russell, Minister of Internal Affairs and Public Health, New Zealand. London (Methuen); pp. 248 ; 7s. net.

BEYOND the fact that a man high placed in public affairs fathers this account, there is nothing to distinguish it from the average Spiritistic rumours of the hither hereafter which are so frequent with us just now. The title states that it is by Mr. Russell himself; a note says that the MS. was written in 1902-03; and the book is in the form of the story of a settler's life and of the strange experiences that happened to him when in a trance induced by an old Maori who had been a great *tohunga* or priest skilled in their ancient 'medicine.' We must confess that we are dissatisfied with the manner of this production and at times with the matter. If the MS. was written in 1902, why in a description of 'a British Empire Reunion' in the other world is there mention of Nurse Cavell?



# THE QUEST



## ‘ THE SECRETS OF THE SELF ’ : A MOSLEM POET’S INTERPRETATION OF VITALISM.

REYNOLD A. NICHOLSON, M.A., Litt.D., LL.D.

THE poems of which I propose to give some account are the work of an Indian Moslem, Shaikh Muhammad Iqbál of Lahore, whom I had the pleasure of meeting on one occasion about fifteen years ago, when he was studying philosophy in Cambridge. In the course of half an hour’s conversation with him he struck me as a man of strong personality and original mind ; and my first impression was soon confirmed by the dissertation which he presented for his degree. This was a treatise on the development of metaphysics in Persia : it appeared as a book in 1908 and, although it is only a sketch, some parts of it are as illuminating and suggestive as anything that has been written on the subject. Here Iqbál confines himself to expounding the doctrines of Moslem philosophers ; but on his return to India he came forward with a philosophy of his own which must deeply interest all thinking

Moslems, as well as anyone who considers how much depends on the future relations of this country and of Europe in general with the Islamic peoples, and how necessary it is that we should learn to understand their aspirations and ideals. It has been said of Iqbál that "he is a man of his age and a man in advance of his age. He is also a man in disagreement with his age." We cannot regard his ideas as representative of any section of his co-religionists. They involve a radical change in the ordinary Moslem's view of life, and their real importance does not lie in the possibility that such a change may be nearer than most people think likely. Apart from this, the ideas themselves are striking enough to deserve attention.

In order to make them popular and attractive, the author put them forth in the form of poetry. He says very truly that while the Hindu philosophers, in explaining the doctrine of the unity of being, addressed themselves to the head, the Persian poets, who teach the same doctrine, took a more dangerous course and aimed at the heart. Iqbál is no mean poet, and his verse can persuade even if his logic fails to convince. His message is not for the Mohammedans of India alone, but for Moslems everywhere: therefore he writes in Persian instead of in Hindustani—a happy choice, for amongst educated Moslems from India to Egypt there are many who have some knowledge of Persian literature, while the Persian language would naturally commend itself to a writer who wished to clothe his religious and philosophical ideas in a style at once elevated and charming.

The *Asrár-i Khudí*, or *The Secrets of the Self*, was published in 1915 and was followed, four years afterwards, by a supplement entitled *Rumúz-i Békhudí*, or



*The Mysteries of Selflessness.* The former poem deals with the life of the individual Moslem, the latter with the life of the Moslem community. Iqbál's aim is to bring about the regeneration of Islam, and with this always before him he demands that every Moslem shall reform himself. He is a religious enthusiast, inspired by the vision of a New Mecca, a world-wide, theocratic, Utopian state, in which all Moslems, no longer divided by the barriers of race and country, shall be one. He will have nothing to do with nationalism or imperialism. These, he thinks, "rob us of Paradise": they make us strangers to each other, destroy feelings of brotherhood, and sow the bitter seed of war. He dreams of a world ruled by religion, not by politics, and condemns Machiavelli, that 'worshipper of false gods' who has blinded so many. It must be noted that when he speaks of religion, he always means Islam. Non-Moslems are simply unbelievers, and (in theory, at any rate) the *Jihád*, or Holy War against infidels, is justifiable, provided that it is waged 'for God's sake,' and not for conquest. A free and independent Moslem fraternity, having the Ka'ba as its centre and knit together in spiritual union by love of Allah and devotion to the Prophet—such is Iqbál's ideal. In the two poems already mentioned he preaches it with a burning sincerity which we cannot but admire, and at the same time points out how it may be attained.

The cry 'Back to the Koran! Back to Mohammed!' has often been heard in Islam, and the responses have hitherto been somewhat discouraging. But this time there is behind it the revolutionary force of Western philosophy, which Iqbál hopes and believes will vitalise the movement and ensure its triumph in the end. He

sees that Hindu intellectualism and Islamic pantheism have destroyed the capacity for action, based on scientific observation and interpretation of phenomena, which distinguishes the Western peoples—"especially [he adds] the English." Now this capacity depends ultimately on the conviction that what he calls *khudí*, and what we call self-consciousness, individuality, personality, is real and is not merely an illusion of the mind. Iqbál, therefore, throws himself with all his might against idealistic philosophers and pseudo-mystical poets, the authors, in his opinion, of the decay prevailing in Islam, and argues that only by self-affirmation, self-expression, and self-development can the Moslems once more become strong and free. He appeals from the alluring raptures of Háfiz to the moral fervour of Jalálu'ddín Rúmí, from an Islam sunk in Platonic contemplation to the fresh and vigorous monotheism which inspired Mohammed and brought Islam into existence.

"The pith of Life is contained in action ;  
To delight in creation is the law of Life.  
Life is power made manifest,  
And its mainspring is the desire for victory.  
Gain knowledge of Life's mysteries !  
Be a tyrant ! Ignore all except God !"

Iqbál has drunk deep of European literature, his philosophy owes much to Nietzsche and Bergson, and his poetry often reminds us of Shelley ; yet after all he thinks and feels as a Moslem, and just for this reason his influence on the younger generation of Indian Moslems is likely to be great. "His name," says one of them, "is the synonym for promise and prophecy. He has come amongst us as a Messiah and has stirred



the dead with life." It remains to be seen in what direction the awakened ones will march. They will not, I think, be satisfied with fixing their eyes on a goal which, as Iqbál tells them, lies far away in the future :

" I have no need [he says] of the ear of To-day ;  
I am the voice of the poet of To-morrow."

If his notion of an ideal religious state is a dream, it is a noble dream ; and we must respect the faith of a man who invokes the spirit of modern European philosophy in order to establish an Islamic kingdom of God upon earth. But, obviously, his doctrine of the Self can be adapted to other ends than those which he has in view. The *Asrár-i Khudí* will certainly be drawn into the service of an intellectual and political movement, whose leaders do not agree with Iqbál when he declares that the Moslem's heart has no country except Islam.

Much as he dislikes the type of Súfism represented by Háfiz, he is in full sympathy with the lofty ethical mysticism of Jalálu'ddín Rúmí. In the prologue to the *Asrár-i Khudí* he relates how Jalálu'ddín appeared to him in a vision and bade him arise and sing. The author of the *Masnaví* is to him almost what Virgil was to Dante. Iqbál, however, does not follow the great Persian mystic in his pantheistic flights. For him the world of divine contemplation is unreal. Personality is the central fact of his philosophy.

The *Asrár-i Khudí* does not set forth a philosophical system, but its meaning will be more readily grasped if I give first a brief outline of the author's views on some of the problems raised in the poem. He has been so kind as to write a brief account of

them for me, and I will quote his own words as nearly as possible :

“ All life is individual: there is no such thing as universal life. God Himself is an individual. He is the most unique Individual. The universe, as Dr. McTaggart says, is an association of individuals; but we must add that the orderliness or adjustment which we find in this association is not eternally achieved and complete in itself. It is the result of instinctive or conscious effort. We are gradually travelling from chaos to cosmos and are helpers in this achievement. Nor are the members of the association fixed; new members are ever coming to birth to co-operate in the great task. Thus the universe is not a completed act. It is still in course of formation. There can be no complete truth about the universe, for the universe has not yet become ‘whole.’ The process of creation is still going on, and man too takes his share in it, inasmuch as he helps to bring order into at least a portion of this chaos.

“ The moral and religious ideal of man is not self-negation but self-affirmation, and he attains to this ideal by becoming more and more individual, more and more unique. The Prophet said: ‘Create in yourselves the attributes of God.’ Thus man becomes unique by becoming more and more like the most unique Individual, *i.e.* God. What then is Life? It is individual; its highest form, so far, is the Ego, in which the individual becomes a self-contained exclusive centre. Physically as well as spiritually man is a self-contained centre, but he is not yet a complete individual. The greater his distance from God, the less his individuality. He who comes nearest to God is the completest person. Not that he is finally



absorbed in God. On the contrary, he absorbs God into himself.<sup>1</sup> The true person not only absorbs the world of matter; by mastering it he also absorbs God Himself into his Ego. Life is a forward assimilative movement: it clears away all obstructions by assimilating them. Its essence is the continual creation of desires and ideals, and for the purpose of its preservation and expansion it has invented or developed certain instruments (*e.g.* senses, intellect, etc.) which help it to assimilate obstructions. The greatest obstacle in the way of Life is matter, Nature; yet Nature is not evil, since it enables the inner powers of Life to unfold themselves.

“The Ego attains to freedom by the removal of all obstructions in its way. It is partly free, partly determined, and reaches fuller freedom by approaching the Individual who is most free—God. In one word, Life is an endeavour for freedom.”

The argument of the poem begins with the doctrine that self-consciousness is the origin of the universe and that the continuation of individual life depends on affirmation of the Ego.

“ ’Tis the nature of the Self to manifest itself.  
In every atom slumbers the might of the Self.  
Power that is unexpressed and inert  
Chains the faculties which lead to action.  
Inasmuch as all life comes from the strength of the  
Self,  
Life is in proportion to this strength.

When Life gathers strength from the Self,  
The river of Life expands into an ocean.”

<sup>1</sup> This is a bold saying, but we must remember that it is put forward as an antithesis to the pantheistic (Súfi) doctrine of *faná* (the passing-away of the phenomenal in the Real and of the individual in the Universal).

In order to live, the Self must conceive desires and form ideals. The origin of Life is hidden in desire, and the negation of desire is Death.

“Keep desire alive in thy heart,  
Lest thy little dust become a tomb.”

What is intellect? The child of desire. All that man has achieved in politics, science and art can be traced back to his desire for self-preservation.

Like Jalálu'ddín Rûmî, Iqbál lays great stress on the moral value of love.

“The luminous point whose name is the Self  
Is the life-spark beneath our dust.  
By love it is made more lasting,  
More living, more burning, more glowing.  
From love proceeds the radiance of its being  
And the development of its unknown potentialities.”

The word ‘love’ is used by Iqbál in a very wide sense. Love means the desire to assimilate and absorb. Its highest form is the creation of values and ideals and the endeavour to realise them. Thus love of God, the most unique Individual, ultimately involves absorption of the Divine Individuality by the lover.

Iqbál now turns on his opponents with the following thesis: that the doctrine of self-negation was invented by the subject races of mankind in order that by this means they might sap and weaken the character of their rulers. He dresses it in the guise of a fable, and I may remark that, like Jalálu'ddín Rûmî and many Persian poets, he is fond of introducing stories and apologues which not only relieve the argument very pleasantly but express what he wants



to say with more force and point than would be possible otherwise.

There was once a flock of sheep in a certain pasture. They had increased and multiplied until they feared no enemy, but at last the tigers rushed from the jungle, tore part of the flock to pieces and reduced the survivors to slavery. Amongst these was a crafty old sheep, who devised a plan for liberating himself and his companions. He reflected that while sheep can never be made tigers, it is possible to make tigers harmless as sheep.

The rest of the story is given in the author's words, but less fully.

“This sheep became a prophet inspired  
And began to preach to the bloodthirsty tigers.  
He cried, ‘O ye insolent liars,  
Repent of your blameworthy deeds!  
Whoso is violent and strong is miserable,  
Life's solidity depends on self-denial.  
The spirit of the righteous is fed by fodder;  
The vegetarian is pleasing unto God.  
Paradise is for the weak alone;  
Strength is but a means to perdition.  
Forget thyself, if thou art wise!  
If thou dost not forget thyself, thou art mad.  
Close thine eyes, close thine ears, close thy lips,  
That thy thought may reach the lofty sky.  
The pasturage of this world is naught, naught:  
O fool! do not torment thyself for a phantom.’

“The tiger-tribe were exhausted by hard struggles;  
They had set their hearts on enjoyment of luxury.  
This soporific advice pleased them.

In their stupidity they swallowed the charm of the sheep.

He that used to make sheep his prey

Now embraced a sheep's religion.

The tigers took kindly to a diet of fodder ;

At length their tigerish nature was broken.

The fodder blunted their teeth

And put out the awful flashings of their eyes.

By degrees courage ebbed from their breasts ;

Desire for action dwelt in their hearts no more.

Their strength diminished while their fear increased,

And fear robbed them of courage.

Lack of courage produced a hundred diseases—

Poverty, pusillanimity, low-mindedness.

The wakeful tiger was lulled to slumber by the sheep,

He called his decline—Moral Culture."

As types of self-negation or 'sheepishness' the author takes Plato and Háfiz. The direct influence of Platonism on Moslem thought has been comparatively slight. When the Moslems began to study Greek philosophy, they turned to Aristotle. The genuine writings of Aristotle, however, were not accessible to them. They studied translations of books passing under his name, which were the work of Neoplatonists, so that what they believed to be Aristotelian doctrine was in fact the philosophy of Plotinus, Proclus and the later Neoplatonic school. Indirectly, therefore, Plato has profoundly influenced the intellectual and spiritual development of Islam, and may be called, if not the father of Mohammedan mysticism, at any rate its presiding genius.

To Iqbál the intelligible world of Plato is a mirage. Reality, he thinks, is not to be found in Being, but



only in Becoming; not in changeless calm, but in life and strife.

“ Sweet is the world of phenomena to the living spirit ;  
Dear is the world of Ideas to the dead spirit.  
Our philosopher had no remedy but flight ;  
He could not endure the noise of this world.  
He set his heart on a quenched flame  
And depicted a world steeped in opium.  
He spread his wings towards the sky  
And never came down to his nest again.”

We see that his criticism is directed against those philosophical systems which hold up Death rather than Life as their ideal, systems which ignore the greatest obstruction to Life, namely matter, and teach us to run away from it instead of facing and mastering it.

While he holds that Platonism takes away the incentives to moral energy, he regards the enchanting semi-mysticism of Háfiz as a positive source of corruption. His onslaught called forth angry protests from Súfí circles where Háfiz is venerated as a master-hierophant. Iqbál made no recantation, but, since the passage had served its purpose and was offensive to many, he cancelled it in the second edition of the poem. The next canto draws a contemptuous picture of the fashionable Persian love-poetry and concludes with an appeal to the Moslems of India. Let them try literature on the touchstone of life! Let them turn back to Arabia and the Koran!

“ Thou hast gathered roses from the garden of Persia  
And seen the spring-tide of India and Iran.  
Now taste a little of the heat of the desert ;  
Drink the old wine of the date !

Lay thine head for once on its hot breast ;  
Yield thy body awhile to its scorching wind ! ”

Having demolished the doctrine of self-negation, Iqbál proceeds to inculcate self-development through obedience and self-control.

“ Thou, too, do not refuse the burden of Duty :  
So wilt thou enjoy the best dwelling-place, which is  
with God.  
Endeavour to obey, O heedless one !  
Liberty is the fruit of compulsion.  
Whoso would master the sun and the stars,  
Let him make himself a prisoner of Law ! ”

By obeying God and gaining full mastery over himself, the Moslem reaches the final stage of perfection. This is called ‘Divine vicegerency.’ The name as well as the conception underlying it comes from Súfism. Iqbál interprets in his own way the doctrine of the *Insán al-Kámil* or Perfect Man, which teaches that every man is potentially a microcosm and that, when he has become spiritually perfect, all the Divine attributes are displayed by him, so that as saint or prophet he is the god-man, the representative and vicegerent of God. In a fine passage the poet describes this ideal Man as a Deliverer for whom the world is waiting.

“ God’s vicegerent is as the soul of the universe ;  
His being is the shadow of the Greatest Name.  
He knows the mysteries of part and whole ;  
He executes the command of Allah in the world.  
His genius abounds with life and desires to manifest  
itself ;  
He will bring another world into existence.



- “ When that bold cavalier seizes the reins,  
The steed of Time gallops faster.  
His awful mien makes the Red Sea dry ;  
He leads Israel out of Egypt.  
At his cry ‘ Arise ! ’ the dead spirits  
Rise in their bodily tomb, like pines in the field.  
His person is an atonement for all the world ;  
By his grandeur the world is saved.
- “ He gives a new explanation of Life,  
A new interpretation of this dream.  
His hidden being is Life’s mystery,  
The unheard music of Life’s harp.  
Nature travails in blood for generations  
To compose the harmony of his personality.  
When our handful of dust has reached the zenith,  
That champion will come forth from this dust.
- “ Appear, O rider of Destiny !  
Appear, O light of the dark realm of Change !  
Illumine the scene of existence,  
Dwell in the blackness of our eyes !  
Silence the noise of the nations,  
Imparadise our ears with thy music !  
Arise and tune the harp of brotherhood,  
Give us back the cup of the wine of love !  
Bring once more days of peace to the world,  
Give a message of peace to them that seek battle !  
Mankind are the cornfield and thou the harvest ;  
Thou art the goal of Life’s caravan.  
Receive from our downcast brows  
The homage of little children and of young men and  
old !  
When thou art there, we will lift up our heads,  
Content to suffer the burning fire of this world.”

The poet bids his readers emulate the Caliph Ali, in whom the character of the Perfect Man is portrayed. His Overman is the personification of self-mastery and self-reliance, of moral courage, firmness and energy. All things must shape themselves to his will.

“ If the world does not comply with his humour,  
He will try the hazard of War with Heaven ;  
He will dig up the foundations of the universe  
And cast its atoms into a new mould.”

Weakness—whether it be disguised as unseasonable mercy and humility, patient submission to wrong, acquiescence in disgrace, desire to have one's faults excused, or any sort of self-indulgence—is despicable :  
“ It is the plunderer of Life ; its womb is teeming with fears and lies.”

“ Strength is the twin of Truth ;  
If thou knowest thyself, Strength is the Truth-revealing glass.  
Life is the seed and Power the crop :  
Power explains the mystery of Truth and Falsehood.  
The false claimant, if he be possessed of Power,  
Needs no argument for his claim.  
Falsehood derives from Power the authority of Truth  
And by falsifying Truth deems itself true.  
Its creative word transforms poison into nectar ;  
It says to Good, ‘ Thou art bad,’ and Good becomes Evil.”

Iqbál, I am told, does not admit that he has been influenced by Nietzsche, and it is easy to see why. Although sometimes, as in the passage which I have just quoted, his Perfect Man appears to be closely akin to the Uebermensch of the German philosopher, the



points of resemblance are only superficial. Iqbál says : "Be a tyrant" ; but he adds : "Ignore all except God." The exception is all-important. Nietzsche would not have made it ; he would have said : "Ignore all except thy Will to Power." The Moslem poet acknowledges the authority of law, morality and religion as revealed in the Koran ; he feels that his inner strength is derived from love of God and developed by love of Man.

"Imbue thine heart with the tincture of Allah,  
Give honour and glory to love !  
The Moslem's nature prevails by means of love :  
The Moslem, if he be not loving, is an infidel."

Iqbál's view of the Ideal Man is given in the following words, which I quote from a letter to me :

"He is the completest Ego, the acme of Life both in mind and body ; in him the discord of our mental life becomes a harmony. The highest power is united in him with the highest knowledge. In his life, thought and action, instinct and reason become one. He is the last fruit of the tree of humanity, and all the trials of a painful evolution are justified because he is to come at the end. He is the real ruler of mankind ; his Kingdom is the Kingdom of God on earth. Out of the richness of his nature he lavishes the wealth of life on others and brings them nearer and nearer to himself. The more we advance in evolution the nearer we get to him. In approaching him we are raising ourselves in the scale of life. The development of mankind both in mind and body is a condition precedent of his birth. For the present he is only an ideal ; but the evolution of humanity is tending towards the production of an ideal race of more or less unique individuals, who will become his fitting parents.

Thus the Kingdom of God on earth means a democracy of more or less unique individuals, presided over by the most unique individual possible on this earth. Nietzsche had a glimpse of this ideal race, but his atheism and his aristocratic prejudices marred his whole conception."

I have described the *Asrār-i Khudí*, in one of its aspects, as an attempt to rejuvenate Islam with the spirit of Vitalism. Let me now translate a passage in which Iqbál explains in the Bergsonian sense a saying attributed to a great Moslem theologian, the Imám Sháfi'í—" *Al-wakt saif<sup>un</sup> káti<sup>un</sup>*," "Time is a cutting sword."

"The cause of Time is not the revolution of the sun :  
Time is everlasting, but the sun does not last for  
ever.

Time is joy and sorrow, festival and fast ;  
Time is the secret of moonlight and sunlight.  
Thou hast extended Time, like Space,  
And distinguished yesterday from to-morrow.  
Thou hast fled, like a scent, from thine own garden ;  
Thou hast made thy prison with thine own hand.  
Time, which has neither beginning nor end,  
Blossoms from the flower-bed of our mind.  
To know its root quickens the living with new life ;  
Its being is more splendid than the dawn.  
Life is of Time, and Time is of Life :  
'Do not abuse Time' was the command of the  
Prophet."

This passage requires a commentary, and the author has supplied me with an extremely interesting one :

"As in connexion with the question of the freedom



of the Ego we have to face the problem of Matter, similarly in connexion with its immortality we have to face the problem of Time. Bergson has taught us that Time is not an infinite line (in the spatial sense of the word line), through which we must pass whether we wish or not. This idea of Time is adulterated. Pure Time has no length. Personal immortality is an aspiration; you can have it if you make an effort to achieve it. It depends on our adopting in this life those modes of thought and activity which tend to maintain the state of tension, *i.e.* personality—for personality is a state of tension and can continue only if that state is maintained. Buddhism, Persian Súfism and allied forms of ethics will not serve our purpose. But they are not wholly useless, because after periods of great activity we need opiates, narcotics, for some time. These forms of thought and action are like nights in the days of life. Thus, if our activity is directed towards the maintenance of a state of tension, the shock of death is not likely to affect it. After death there may be an interval of relaxation, as the Koran speaks of a *barzakh*, or intermediate state, which lasts until the Day of Resurrection. Only those Egos will survive this state of relaxation who have taken good care during the present life. Although life abhors repetition in its evolution, yet, on Bergson's principles, the resurrection of the body too is quite possible. By breaking up Time into moments we spatialise Time and then find difficulty in getting over it. The true nature of Time is reached when we look into our deeper self. Real Time is life itself, which can preserve itself by maintaining that particular state of tension—personality—which it has so far achieved. We are subject to Time so long as we look upon Time

as something spatial. Spatialised Time is a fetter which Life has forged for itself in order to assimilate the present environment. In reality we are timeless, and it is possible to realise our timelessness even in this life. This revelation, however, can be momentary only."

The poem ends with a noble invocation to Allah, the God of love, and with a personal appeal for sympathy and understanding. "I am alone," he says; "even to comrades my song is strange." It is indeed a strange harmony of Indian thought and Persian fancy, of the oldest Moslem religious enthusiasm and the latest European philosophy. I do not know whether Iqbál intends to devote himself to poetry. If so, he will presumably write in Persian and address himself to his fellow-Moslems—but may not we hope that such a bold and original thinker will find time to give us a full statement of his philosophical views in English prose?

REYNOLD A. NICHOLSON.

(Read before the Quest Society, Feb. 12, 1920.—ED.)



## SHAKTI: THE WORLD AS POWER.

SIR JOHN WOODROFFE (ARTHUR AVALON).

THERE is no word of wider content in any language than this Sanskrit term meaning 'Power.' For Shakti in the highest causal sense is God as Mother, and in another sense it is the universe which issues from Her Womb. And what is there which is neither one nor the other? Therefore the *Yoginīhṛidaya Tantra* thus salutes Her who conceives, bears, produces and thereafter nourishes all worlds: "Obeisance be to Her who is pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss, as Power, who exists in the form of Time and Space and all that is therein, and who is the radiant Illuminatrix in all beings."

It is therefore possible only to outline here in a very general way a few of the more important principles of the Shakti-doctrine, omitting its deeply interesting practice (Sādhana) in its forms as ritual worship and yoga.

To-day Western science speaks of Energy as the physical ultimate of all forms of matter. So has it been for ages to the Shāktas, as the worshippers of Shakti are called. But they add that such Energy is only a limited manifestation (as Mind and Matter) of the almighty infinite Supreme Power (Mahā Shakti) of Becoming in 'That' (Tat), which is unitary Being (Sat) Itself.

Their doctrine is to be found in the traditions,

oral and written, which are contained in the Āgamas, which (with Purāṇa, Smṛiti and Veda) constitute one of the four great classes of scripture of the Hindus. The Tantras are scriptures of the Āgama. The notion that they are some queer by-product of Hinduism and not an integral part of it is erroneous. The three chief divisions of the Āgama are locally named Bengal, Kashmir and Kerala. That Bengal is a home of Tantrashāstra is well known. It is, however, little known that Kashmir was in the past a land where Tāntrik doctrine and practice were widely followed.

The communities of so-called 'Tāntrik' worshippers are five-fold according as the cult is of the Sun, Ganesha, Viṣṇu, Shiva or Shakti. To the knower, however, the five named are not distinct divinities, but different aspects of the one Power or Shakti. An instructed Shakti-worshipper is one of the least sectarian of men. He can worship in all temples, as the saying is. Thus the *Sammohana Tantra* says that "he is a fool who sees any difference between Rāma [an Avatāra of Viṣṇu] and Shiva." "What matters the name," says the Commentator of the *Shatṭhakra-nirūpaṇa*, after running through the gamut of them.

The Shākta is so called because the chosen deity of his worship (Ishtadevatā) is Shakti. In his cult, both in doctrine and practice, emphasis is laid on that aspect of the One in which It is the Source of Change and, in the form of Time and Space and all objects therein, Change itself. The word Shakti is grammatically feminine. For this reason an American Orientalist critic of the doctrine has described it as a worthless system, a mere feminization of orthodox (whatever that be) Vedānta—a doctrine teaching the primacy of the Female and thus fit for suffragette monists. It is



absurd criticism of this kind which makes the Hindu sometimes wonder whether the European has even the capacity to understand his beliefs. It is said of the Mother (in the Hymn to Her in the *Mahākāla Sanghitā*): "Thou art neither girl, nor maid, nor old. Indeed Thou art neither female nor male, nor neuter. Thou art inconceivable, immeasurable Power, the Being of all which exists, void of all duality, the Supreme Brahman, attainable in Illumination alone." Those who cannot understand lofty ideas when presented in ritual and symbolic garb will serve their reputation best by not speaking of them.

The Shaiva is so-called because his chosen divinity is Shiva, the name for the changeless aspect of the One whose Power of action and activity is Shakti. But as the two are necessarily associated all communities acknowledge Shakti. It is for the above reason a mistake to suppose that a 'Tāntrik,' or follower of the Āgama, is necessarily a Shākta, and that the 'Tantra' is a Shākta scripture only. Not at all. The Shākta is only one branch of the Āgamic school. And so we find the scriptures of Shaivism, whether of North or South, called Tantras, as also those of that ancient form of Vaishnavism which is called the Pañcharātra. The doctrine of these communities, which share certain common ideas, varies from the monism of the Shāktas and Northern Shaivas to the more or less dualistic systems of others. The ritual is to a large extent common in all communities, though there are necessarily variations, due both to the nature of the divine aspect worshipped and to the particular form of theology taught. Shākta doctrine and practice are contained primarily in the Shākta Tantras and the oral traditions, some of which

are secret. As the Tantras are mainly Scriptures of Worship much doctrine is contained by implication in the ritual. For reasons above stated recourse may be had to other scriptures in so far as they share with those of the Shākta certain common doctrines and practices. The Tantras proper are the Word of Shiva and Shakti. But there are also valuable Tāntrik works in the nature of compendia and commentaries which are not of divine authorship.

The concept 'Shakti' is not however peculiar to the Shāktas. Every Hindu believes in Shakti as God's Power, though he may differ as to the nature of the universe created by it. Shākta doctrine is a special presentment of so-called monistic (lit. 'not-two') Vedānta (Advaitavāda), and Shākta ritual, even in those condemned forms which have given rise to the abuses by which this scripture is most generally known, is a practical application of it. Whatever may have been the case at the origin of these Āgamic cults, all now and for ages past recognise and claim to base themselves on the Vedas. With these are coupled the Word of Shīva-Shakti as revealed in the Tantras. Shākta-doctrine is (like the Vedānta in general) what in Western parlance would be called a theology based on revelation—that is, so-called 'spiritual' or supersensual experience, in its primary or secondary sense. For Veda is that.

This leads to a consideration of the measure of man's knowing and of the basis of Vedāntik knowledge. It is a fundamental error to regard the Vedānta as simply a speculative metaphysic in the modern Western sense. It is not so; if it were, it would have no greater right to acceptance than any other of the many systems which jostle one another for our custom in the Philo-



sophical Fair. It claims that its supersensual teachings can be established with certainty by the *practice* of its methods. Theorising alone is insufficient. The Shākta above all is a practical and active man, worshipping the Divine Activity; his watchword is Kriyā or Action. Taught that he is Power, he desires fully to realise himself in fact as such. A Tāntrik poem (*Ānandastotra*) speaks with amused disdain of the learned chatterers who pass their time in futile debate around the shores of the 'Lake of Doubt.'

The basis of knowing, whether in super-sense or sense-knowledge, is actual experience. Experience is of two kinds: the whole or full experience; and incomplete experience—that is, of parts, not of but in the whole. In the first experience consciousness is said to be 'inward-looking' (Unmukhī)—that is, 'not looking to another.' In the second experience it is 'outward-looking' (Bahirmukhī). The first is not an experience of the whole, but the experience-whole. The second is an experience not of parts of the whole, for the latter is partless, but of parts in the whole, and issuing from its infinite Power to know itself in and as the finite centres, as the many. The works of an Indian philosopher, my friend Professor Pramatha Natha Mukhyopadhyaya, aptly call the first the Fact, and the second the Fact-section. The *Īsha Upanishad* calls the Supreme Experience—Pūrṇa, the Full.

It is not, be it noted, a residue of the abstracting intellect, which is itself only a limited stress in consciousness, but a Plenum, in which the Existent All is as one Whole. Theologically this full experience is Shiva, with Shakti at rest or as Potency. The second experience is that of the finite centres, the numerous Purushas or Jīvas, which are also Shiva-Shakti as

Potency actualized. Both experiences are real. In fact there is nothing unreal anywhere. All is the Mother and She is reality itself. "Sā 'ham" ("She I am"), the Shākta says, and all that he senses is She in the form in which he perceives Her. It is She who in, and as, him drinks the consecrated wine, and the wine itself is She in liquid form. All is manifested Power, which has the reality of Being from which it is put forth. But the reality of the manifestation is of something which appears and disappears, whilst that of Causal Power to appear is enduring. But this disappearance is only the ceasing to be for a limited consciousness. The seed of Power, which appears as a thing for such consciousness, remains as the potency of infinite Being itself. The infinite Experience is real as the Full (Pūrṇa); that is, its reality is fullness. The finite experience is real, as such. There is, perhaps, no subject in Vedānta, which is more misunderstood than that of the so-called 'Unreality' of the World. Every School admits the reality of all finite experience (even of 'illusive' experience, strictly so-called) while such experience lasts. But Shankarāchārya defines the truly Real as that which is changeless. In this sense, the world as a changing thing has relative reality only. Shankara so defines Reality because he sets forth his doctrine from the standpoint of transcendent Being. The Shākta Shāstra on the other hand is a practical Scripture of Worship, delivered from the world-standpoint, according to which the world is necessarily real. According to this view a thing may be real and yet be the subject of change. But its reality as a thing ceases with the passing of the finite experiencer to whom it is real. The supreme Shiva-Shakti is on the other hand a real,



full Experience which ever endures. A worshipper must, as such, believe in the reality of himself, of the world as his field of action and instrument, in its causation by God, and in God Himself as the object of worship. Moreover to him the world is real because Shiva-Shakti, who are its material cause, are real. That cause, without ceasing to be what it is, becomes the effect. Further the world is the Lord's Experience. He as Lord (Pati) is the whole experience, and as creature (Pashu) he is the experiencer of parts in it. The experience of the Lord is never unreal. The reality, however, which changelessly endures may (if we so choose) be said to be reality in its fullest sense.

Real however as all experience is, the knowing differs according as the experience is infinite or finite, and in the latter case according to various grades of knowing. Full experience, as its name implies, is full in every way. Assume (as some Vedāntists do not) that there is at any 'time' no universe at all, that there is then a complete dissolution of all universes, and not of any particular universe,—even then the Power which produced past, and will produce future universes, is one with the Supreme Consciousness whose Shakti it is. When again this Power actualizes as a universe, the Lord-Consciousness from and in Whom it issues is the All-knower. As Sarvajña he knows all generals, and as Sarvavit, all particulars. But all is known by Him as the Supreme Self, and not, as in the case of the finite centre, as objects other than the limited self.

Finite experience is by its definition a limited thing. As the experience is of a sectional character, it is obvious that the knowing can only be of parts,

and not of the whole, as the part cannot know the whole of which it is a part. But the finite is not always so. It may expand into the infinite by processes which bridge the one to the other. The essential of partial experience is knowing in time and space; the Supreme Experience, being changeless, is beyond both time and space as aspects of change. The latter is the alteration of parts relative to one another in the changeless whole. Full experience is not sense-knowledge. The latter is worldly knowledge (Laukika Jñāna), by a limited knowing centre, of material objects, whether gross or subtle. Full experience is the Supreme Knowing Self which is not an object at all. This is unworldly knowledge (Alaukika Jñāna) or Veda. Sense-knowledge varies according to the capacity and attainments of the experiencer. But the normal experience may be enhanced in two ways: either physically by scientific instruments such as the telescope and microscope which enhance the natural capacity to see; or psychically by the attainment of what are called psychic powers. Everything is Shakti; but psychic power denotes that enhancement of normal capacity which gives knowledge of matter in its subtle form, whilst the normal man can perceive it only in the gross form as a compound of sensible matter (the Bhūtas). Psychic power is thus an extension of natural faculty. There is nothing 'super-natural' about it. All is natural, all is real. It is simply a power above the normal. Thus the clairvoyant can see what the normal sense-experiencer cannot. He does so by the mind. The gross sense-organs are not, according to Vedānta, the senses (Indriya). The sense is the mind, which normally works through the appropriate physical organs, but which, as the real factor in



sensation, may do without them, as is seen both in hypnotic and yogic states. The area of knowledge is thus very widely increased. Knowledge may be gained of subtle chemistry, subtle physiology (as of the Chakras or subtle bodily centres), of various powers, of the 'world of spirits,' and so forth. But though we are here dealing with subtle things, they are still things and thus part of the sense-world of objects,—that is, of the world of Māyā. Māyā, as later explained, is not 'illusion,' but experience in time and space of Self and Not-Self. This is by no means necessarily illusion. The whole therefore cannot be known by sense-knowledge. In short, sense- or worldly knowledge cannot establish, that is prove, what is supersensual, such as the Whole, its nature and the 'other side' of its processes taken as a collectivity. Reasoning, whether working in metaphysic or science, is based on the data of sense and governed by those forms of understanding which constitute the nature of finite mind. It may establish a conclusion of probability, but not of certainty. Grounds of probability may be made out for Idealism, Realism, Pluralism and Monism, or any other philosophical system. In fact, from what we see, the balance of probability perhaps favours realism and pluralism. Reason may thus establish that an effect must have a cause, but not that the cause is one. For all that we can say, there may be as many causes as effects. Therefore it is said in Vedānta that "nothing [in these matters] is established by argument." All Western systems which do not possess actual spiritual experience as their basis, are systems which can claim no certainty as regards any matter not verifiable by sense-knowledge and reasoning thereon.

Shākta, and indeed all Vedāntik teaching, holds that the only source and authority (Pramāṇa) as regards super-sensual matters, such as the nature of Being in itself, and the like, is Veda. Veda, which comes from the root *vid*, to know, is knowledge *par excellence*, that is supersensual experience, which according to the Monist (to use the nearest English term) is the Experience-Whole. It may be primary or secondary. As the first it is actual experience (Sākshātkāra) which in English is called 'spiritual' experience.

The Shākta, as a 'monist,' says that Veda is full experience as the One. This is not an object of knowledge. This knowing is Being. "To know Brahman is to *be* Brahman." He is a 'monist,' not because of rational argument only (though he can adduce reasoning in his support), but because he, or those whom he follows, have had *in fact* such 'monistic' experience, and therefore (in the light of such experience) interpret the Vedāntik texts.

But 'spiritual' experience (to use again another English term) may be incomplete both as to duration and nature. Thus from the imperfect ecstasy (Savikalpa-Samādhi), even when of a 'monistic' character, there is a return to world-experience. Again it may not be completely 'monistic' in form or may be even of a distinctly dualistic character. This only means that the realization has stopped short of the final goal. This being the case, that goal is still perceived through the forms of duality which linger as part of the constitution of the experiencer. Thus there are Vedāntik and other schools which are not 'monistic.' The spiritual experiences of all are real experiences, whatever be their character, and they are true according to the truth of the stage in which the experience is had.



Do they not contradict one another? In a sense they do, just as the state of dreamless sleep 'contradicts' that of dreaming, or the waking state, the latter. But none are false or illusive on that account. The experience which a man has of a mountain at fifty miles distance, is not false because it is at variance with that of the man who has climbed it. What he sees is the thing from where he sees it. The first question then is: Is there a 'monistic' experience *in fact*? Not whether 'monism' is rational or not, and shown to be probable to the intellect. But how can we know this? With certainty only by having the experience oneself. The validity of the experience for the experiencer cannot be assailed otherwise than by alleging fraud or self-deception. But how can this be proved? To the experiencer his experience is real, and nothing else is of any account. But the spiritual experience of one is no proof to another who refuses to accept it. A man may however accept what another says, having faith in the latter's alleged experience. Here we have the secondary meaning of Veda, that is secondary knowledge of supersensual truth, not based on actual experience of the believer, but on the experience of some other which the former accepts. In this sense Veda is recorded for Brāhmanism in the scriptures called Vedas, which contain the *standard* experience of those whom Brāhmanism recognises as its Rishis or Seers. But the interpretation of the Vaidik record is in question, just as that of the Bible is. Why accept one interpretation rather than another? This is a lengthy matter. Suffice to say here that each chooses the spiritual food which his spiritual body needs, and which it is capable of eating and assimilating. This is the doctrine of Adhikāra. Here, as elsewhere, what is

one man's meat is another man's poison. Nature works in all who are not altogether beyond her workings. What is called the 'will to believe' involves the affirmation that the form of a man's faith is the expression of his nature; the faith is the man. It is not man's reason only which leads to the adoption of a particular religious belief. It is the whole man as evolved at that particular time which does so. His affirmation of faith is an affirmation of his self in terms of it. The Shākta is therefore a 'monist,' either because he has had himself spiritual experiences of this character, or because he accepts the teaching of those who claim to have had such experience. This is Āpta knowledge, that is received from a source of authority, just as knowledge of the scientific or other expert is received. It is true that the latter may be verified. But so in its own way can the former be. Revelation to the Hindu is not something stated 'from above,' incapable of verification 'below.' He who accepts revelation as teaching the unity of the many in the One, may himself verify it in his own experience. How? If the disciple is what is called not fit to receive truth in this 'monistic' form, he will probably declare it to be untrue and, adhering to what he thinks is true, will not further trouble himself in the matter. If he is disposed to accept the teachings of 'monistic' religion-philosophy, it is because his own spiritual and psychical nature is at a stage which leads directly (though in a longer or shorter time as may be the case) to actual 'monistic' experience. A particular form of 'spiritual' knowledge like a particular psychic power can be developed only in him who has the capacity for it. To such an one asking, with desire for the fruit, how he may gather it, the Guru says: Follow the path



of those who have achieved (Siddha) and you will gain what they gained. This is the 'Path of the Great, who are those whom we esteem to be such. We esteem them because they have achieved that which we believe to be both worthy and possible. If a would-be disciple refuses to follow the method (Sādhana) he cannot complain that he has not had its result. Though reason by itself cannot establish more than a probability, yet when the supersensual truth has been learnt by Veda, it may be shown to be conformable to reason. And this must be so, for all realities are of one piece. Reason is a limited manifestation of the same Shakti, who is fully known in ecstasy (Samādhi), which transcends all reasoning. What, therefore, is irrational, can never be spiritually true. With the aid of the light of Revelation the path is made clear, and all that is seen tells of the Unseen. Facts of daily life give auxiliary proof. So many miss the truth which lies under their eyes, because to find it they look away or upwards to some fancied 'Heaven.' The sophisticated mind fears the obvious. "It is here; it is here," the Shākta and others say. For he and every other being is a microcosm, and so the *Vishvasāra Tantra* says: "What is here, is elsewhere. What is not here, is nowhere." The unseen is the seen, which is not some alien disguise behind which it lurks. Experience of the seen is the experience of the unseen in time and space. The life of the individual is an expression of the same laws which govern the universe. Thus the Hindu knows, from his own daily rest, that the Power which projects the universe rests. His dreamless slumber when only Bliss is known, tells him, in some fashion, of the causal state of universal rest. From the mode of his awakening and other

psychological processes he divines the nature of creative thinking. To the Shākta the thrill of union with his Shakti is a faint reflection of the infinite Shiva-Shakti Bliss in and with which all universes are born. All matter is a relatively stable form of Energy. It lasts awhile and disappears into Energy. The universe is maintained awhile. This is Shakti as Vaishṇavī, the Maintainer. At every moment creation, as rejuvenescent molecular activity, is going on as the Shakti Brahmānī. At every moment there is molecular death and loosening of the forms, the work of Rudrānī Shakti. Creation did not take place only at some past time, nor is dissolution only in the future. At every moment of time there is both. As it is now and before us here so it was 'in the beginning.'

In short the world is real. It is a true experience. Observation and reason are here the guide. Even Veda is no authority in matters falling within sense-knowledge. If Veda were to contradict such knowledge, it would, as Shankara says, be in this respect no Veda at all. The Hindu is not troubled by 'biblical science.' Here and now the existence of the many is established for the sense-experencer. But there is another and Full Experience which also may be had here and now and is in any case also a fact,—that is, when the Self 'stands out' (*ekstasis*) from mind and body and sense-experience. This Full Experience is attained in ecstasy (Samādhi). Both experiences may be had by the same experencer. It is thus the same One who became many. "He said: May I be many," as Veda tells. The 'will to be many' is Power or Shakti which operates as Māyā.

ARTHUR AVALON.

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## THE COMIC.

CLAUDE C. H. WILLIAMSON.

HE that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.—THE PSALMS.

Here comes a fool: let's be grave.—CHARLES LAMB.

It is a fallacy to suppose that as a rule it is a fantastic mind that enjoys escaping into the future and building in advance the castle which it desires shall be occupied by succeeding generations. It is not fantasy but common sense which is offended by the spectacle of the contradictions and anomalies and absurdities which form the fabric of life as it is lived. Fantasy is as likely to feed with zest upon the present as to reject it. But even if it rejects it, this does not imply that it transfers its interest to the future; its interest, on the contrary, is in a world apart from the unwinding chain of cause and effect. The mind which desires to anticipate, is the mind which is intensely interested in actuality, but which cannot cut itself off from the chain of development. It cannot forget the present; it is the very insistence of the present which forces upon it the disquieting questions—Where is it going? Where ought it to go?

The nature of the Comic is intertwined with fantasy; as Isaac Barrow says:

The Ludicrous "is indeed a thing so versatile and multiform, appearing in so many shapes, so many postures, so many garbs, so variously apprehended by

several eyes and judgments, that it seemeth no less hard to settle a clear and certain notion thereof, than to make a portrait of Proteus, or to define the figure of the fleeting air. Sometimes it lieth in pat allusion to a known story, or in seasonable application of a trivial saying, or in forging an apposite tale: sometimes it playeth in words and phrases, taking advantage from the ambiquity of their sense or the affinity of their sound: sometimes it is wrapped in a dress of humorous expression: sometimes it lurketh under a similitude: sometimes it is lodged in a sly question, in a smart answer, in a quirkish reason, in a shrewd intimation, in cunningly diverting, or cleverly retorting an objection: sometimes it is couched in a bold scheme of speech, in tart irony, in a lusty hyperbole, in a startling metaphor, in a plausible reconciling of contradictions, or in acute nonsense: sometimes a scenical representation of persons or things, a counterfeit speech, a mimical look or gesture passeth for it: sometimes an affected simplicity, sometimes a presumptuous bluntness giveth it being: sometimes it riseth from a lucky hitting upon what is strange, sometimes from a crafty wresting obvious matter to the purpose: often it consisteth in one knows not what, and springeth up one can hardly tell how. Its ways are unaccountable, being answerable to the numberless roving of fancy and windings of language. It is, in short, a manner of speaking out of the simple and plain way (such as reason teacheth and proveth things by) which by a pretty surprising uncouthness in conceit or expression, doth affect and amuse the fancy, stirring in it some wonder, and breeding some delight thereto."

Comic processes arise from a comparison between our own person and that of the person at whom we



laugh, especially when the latter shows an over-expenditure of physical output or a lack of mental.

The Ludicrous has a distinct ethical value. Aristotle places decorous wit and humour among the virtues. His view of the Ludicrous appears to be, in fact, something out of time and place without danger, some want in truth and propriety which is neither painful nor pernicious. In this connection the treatment of the Ludicrous by the Schoolmen is worth noting.

Of the great classical masters, after Aristophanes came Menander, the father of the comedy of manners, who through the Latin imitations of Terence has been an example to all the moderns, and whose authority was invoked by Congreve himself when he claimed the right to paint fearlessly the vices and follies of those about him. Perhaps no writer has ever enjoyed at second-hand so splendid a reputation as Menander. He has seemed to engross for many centuries all the virtues of comedy, and now for the first time he hides his brilliance under a cloud. Recent discoveries of fragments of his comedies have not enhanced his fame. We know at once too much and not enough about him. Something of the ancient mystery is dispelled and enough is not yet recovered for a reasonable judgment.

Happily for our delight comedy is of many kinds, from none of which shall pedantry withhold the honoured name. The comedy of Aristophanes, the comedy of Menander, the comedy of Molière and Beaumarchais, of Etherege and Congreve, are provocative, one and all, of thoughtful laughter. The author of *The Clouds* was a critic not only of life but of politics and literature. His incomparable comedies are the vehicle of the views held by a stern, unbending

Tory, an ardent lover of tradition, who walked willingly in the ancient ways. There is something in his plays of the full-blooded humour which later ages have associated with Rabelais. A spirit of raillery, keen and sharp as Lucian's, breathes in them all.

The English drama interwove comedy and tragedy in the same play, and Shakespeare's greatness in the one is of a piece with his greatness in the other. Indeed there are scenes in *King Lear*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Henry IV.*, where tragedy and comedy are overlaid—where the same scene is both tragic and comic, and we laugh and cry at the same time. But for a Greek such intermixture would have been very remarkable. Greek tragedy and Greek comedy represented distinct professions and were totally different in their methods of appeal. A Greek tragedy was a drama of fate, based on a familiar theme of religious folk-lore. The plot was known; the interest lay in the treatment. A Greek comedy was generally a farrago of licentious nonsense, developed in the course of a fantastic narrative-play: it was what we should call a musical extravaganza. Greek comedy is gigantesque buffoonery, interspersed with lyric and choral passages of great beauty, the whole following a traditional model as to its arrangement.

Life is really continuous; we can neither repeat it nor invert it. But the comic writer behaves as if we could, and by the simplest tricks he will turn life into a mechanism which can repeat, reverse or upset itself. Repetition is one of the commonest of these artifices, and Molière employs it nakedly in the well-known scene between Orgon and Dorine in the first act of *Tartuffe*. But how irresistible is the effect, even when we read the scene to ourselves! As Orgon



returns to the charge with his eternal question, "*Et Tartuffe?*" and his eternal comment, "*Le pauvre homme!*" as Dorine flies out each time like a Jack-in-the-Box with particulars of Madame, the image of these two delightful puppets grows upon our vision, the muscles relax, the smile broadens into a laugh, and—Molière has succeeded in his "*entreprise de faire rire les honnêtes gens.*"

To turn to Hobbes, whose sentences have the excellent quality of being useful in ways not intended by their author. Laughter, he says, "is always joy"; and then he goes on to the well-remembered dictum that "the passion of laughter is nothing else but sudden glory arising from some sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves, by the comparison with the infirmity of others or with our own formerly." A sudden heightening of our sense of life, not necessarily to the detriment of others—this surely is a vital element in laughter. In the end it is hard to say more about it than that it is "always joy."

The comedian builds essentially on his observation of other men. Even were he to seek, he would find nothing laughable in himself, for we are only laughable on that side of our personality which eludes our consciousness. But in dealing with others, he can exploit only external conduct, the surface which is common to several individuals. If the comedian penetrated into the inner life of his model, if he attained to the inner movements which take place beneath the surface, and are continually repressed, there would be an end of the sense of comedy. The essence and significance of comedy are in general a reaction against all that is habitual, mechanical, impersonal, in human life. This is why it is not pure art, and has not art's

disinterested character. It always contains an *arrière pensée*; it wants to put right and to explain.

A certain mystery surrounds all human expression. The profoundest truths can be expressed only through the mystery of paradox—as philosophers, poets, prophets and moralists have agreed since the dawn of history. This saying sounds hard; but its meaning is easy. The meaning is that truth can never be exactly stated: every statement is a misfit. But truth can be alluded to. A paradox says frankly: “What I say here is not a statement of the truth; it is but an allusion to the truth.” The comic vehicle does the same. It pretends only to allude to the truth, and by this method makes a more direct appeal to experience than any attempted statement of truth can effect.

When we laugh, it is always at some human characteristic expressed or implied. The other emotions are in abeyance; but laughter has a social background—the laughter is, by implication, one of a group. Wit often consists in making others seem contemptible, and there is awakened a pleasurable consciousness of elation in ourselves by the contrast. But what is it we laugh at? Take the crudest cases, such as the victim of a practical joke or comic ugliness, as in a face which seems to be always blowing an imaginary trumpet. Here the laughable, according to Professor Bergson, lies in the mechanical rigidity (*raideur*) or absent-mindedness (*distraktion*) of the subject. The victim of the joker has gone mechanically on his way and, through lack of suppleness, is brought to confusion. The comic physiognomy suggests an automatic habit in which its owner is for ever absorbed. In each case there has been a victory of matter over



mind; the comic personage seems to be one who has let his attention wander or has been hypnotised by a mechanical action; and society, demanding from its members a continual elasticity and attention, recalls him to his place with the simple castigation of a laugh.

We are indebted to Herbert Spencer for an explanation, which, so far as I can judge—and that is not very far—is probably true. This is the substance of it: "A large amount of nervous energy, instead of being allowed to expend itself in producing an equivalent amount of the new thoughts and emotions which were nascent, is suddenly checked in its flow. . . . The excess must discharge itself in some other direction, and there results an efflux through the motor-nerves to various classes of the muscles, producing the half-convulsive actions we term laughter."

According to Bergson, tension and elasticity are the two complementary forces that life sets in play. What society demands from each of us is attention constantly alert, ready to mould itself upon the actual situation. Rigidity, automatism, distraction, are all forms of unsociability, and are the inexhaustible source of comic effects. Immediately the individual ceases to mould his actions upon the detail of the ever-changing present and, instead, allows himself to be guided by the easy automatism of contracted habits, he is in danger of falling a prey to the comic spirit.

The Comic is the inverse of the Sublime. In the Comic there is a contrast reaching downwards, in the Sublime a contrast reaching upwards. In the one expectation is disintegrated, in the other we are uplifted above ourselves. This is the source of the comic sublimities of Don Quixote, no less than of the nursery joys of Jack-in-the-box. All rigidity of char-

acter or of mind, even of body, is suspect to society, because it is the sign of an activity which is resting upon its past, and which inclines to break away from the common centre about which society gravitates,—an activity, in short, which is or tends to be an eccentricity. The more profound and systematic the distraction, the higher the comedy. Society intervenes to check and punish it through laughter, which is a social gesture of rebuke. Comedy, thus strictly viewed, falls outside the realm of pure art. It pursues a useful and practical end, that of perfecting the general social life. Yet at the same time it participates in some degree in the *Æsthetic*. For the Comic arises only when society and the individual are freed from pre-occupation with the conditions of their conservation and begin to treat themselves like works of art.

According to Dr. Freud, dreams are our subconscious attempts, not always successful, to save ourselves from wakefulness; the residual worries and anxieties left in our minds overnight, and any physical discomforts arising in the course of sleep, are elaborately translated by the subconscious 'dream-work' into images that can be accepted by the bemused dream-consciousness as satisfactory solutions of the trouble. The nightmare that wakes us up is an unsuccessful dream; the dream that we barely remember on waking (and, hypothetically, the dream that we do not remember at all) has to a greater or less extent achieved its purpose.

The purpose of a witticism, according to Dr. Freud's argument, is of a like nature, but positive instead of negative. The dream attempts to short-circuit, as it were, a nervous tension in order to preserve the calm of slumber; the successful witticism



produces a similar short-circuit of mental energy in order to give a definite pleasurable sensation. It creates or utilises a condition of intellectual stress consequent upon an effort of thought, and then 'discharges' this tension rapidly and easily, through an unexpected short-cut. The physical act of laughter is our reflex response to this 'discharge' in its stronger forms.

Schopenhauer examines with some thoroughness the aspect of the Ludicrous as paradox. He even puts a number of typical instances of the Ludicrous into syllogistic shape, to show how, by the use of well-known reasoning processes, amusing incongruities may be analysed, and various species of them be distinguished. For humour only one person is necessary, for comicality two, for wit three: the producer of the joke, the imaginary person against whom it is directed, and the person who listens to it.

"The cause of laughter," he writes, "in every case, is simply the sudden perception of the incongruity between a concept and the real objects, which by means of it we have thought in a certain association, and laughter itself is the expression of this incongruity. Now incongruity occurs in this way: we have thought of two or more real objects by means of one concept, and have passed on the identity of the concept to the objects. It then becomes strikingly apparent, from the discrepancy of the objects in other respects, that the concept applies to them only from one point of view. It occurs quite as often, however, that the incongruity between a single real object and the concept under which from one point of view it has rightly been subsumed, is suddenly felt. Now the more correct the subsumption of such objects under a concept may be

from one point of view, and the greater and more glaring their incongruity from another point of view, the stronger is the ludicrous effect which is produced by this contrast. All laughter, therefore, springs up on occasion of a paradoxical and unexpected subsumption, whether this is expressed in words or actions."

"The first-born of common-sense, the vigilant Comic," says Meredith, "is the genius of thoughtful laughter." These wise words absolve us from the tiresome duty of definition. With 'thoughtful laughter' as a clue to guide us we can find our way among the comedies of the world. New and old, ancient and modern,—all may be tried by this supreme touchstone. For laughter which is thoughtful can never be compared with the crackling of thorns under a pot. It is more closely allied to the smile than to the guffaw. And since we must needs laugh at something, comedy will always aim at a definite object. It will shoot some folly as it flies, or correct with the rod of ridicule a foible of society. Thus it is that comedy excites not the emotions, but the intelligence. We must not mingle tears with our laughter. We must not ask comedy to usurp the place of satire, and lash with fury the human failings which wreath its face in smiles. "In laughter," says M. Bergson, "we always find an unavowed intention to humiliate and consequently to correct our neighbour. . . . The comic appeals to the intelligence pure and simple; laughter is incompatible with emotion. . . . The comic will come into being whenever a group of men concentrate their attention on one of their number, imposing silence on their emotions and calling into play nothing but their intelligence."

The comedian performs a social work. He is



conditioned by social life. There is no laughter but the laughter of a group. The laughable consists in opposition to the habits and ideas of a society more or less extended. And yet it is in great measure society itself which produces the stiffness, the incrustation, which is the object of laughter. Society does indeed demand that certain rules and certain external forms be observed by every one, with the result that personality becomes sluggish. But, from another standpoint, it does not like to see men becoming simply machines and creatures of habit, so that there are no more fresh problems or work in new directions. Thus it is that comedy, in the service of society, is a social instrument.

So far as manners and customs go, nothing can rival good comic description; it supersedes everything else. You can neither write nor preach it down, nor put it down by law. Hogarth has depicted the England of the early Georges in such a way as to convince us. No other vehicle of expression can upset Hogarth.

When empty ceremonies or repetitions produce the effect of laughter, it is because expectation comes to nothing. The best example of this is perhaps the comic situation produced by resemblance between two persons. Pascal had already observed it, and Bergson rightly avails himself of it as an argument in favour of his theory.

"Properly living life," he says, "ought to have no recurrences. Wherever there is repetition, complete similarity, we always suspect mechanism functioning behind the living person. Analyse your impression when confronted by two faces too much alike; you will see that you are thinking of two casts from one mould, of two impressions from the same seal or of

two representations from the same *cliché*, in short, of a process of industrial manufacture. This deflection of life in the mechanical direction is the true cause of laughter."

A man stumbles and falls without seriously hurting himself; those around will find it difficult to repress at least a smile. Why? Because, says Bergson, he has displayed a lack of power of adjustment. Had he been more alert he would have avoided the obstacle which occasioned his downfall. The mirth he arouses stimulates him to exercise, and so tends to sharpen his faculties. In brief, laughter is seen to be an educative agency—unpleasant indeed, at times, but effective. This idea is the heart of Bergson's treatise. He launches out from it on every side, showing the various subtle disguises it can assume, the strange metamorphoses it may undergo. It is drawn along in the creative processes of life, is protean in its manifestations, but always reveals to a penetrating analysis the secret of its origin and its vital function.

To look at the matter from another point of view, it may be seriously maintained that we never really believe a thing until we are able to treat it sportively. The more profound our wisdom, the more lightly we shall wear it. It might then be an advantage if ethical questions were sometimes dealt with humorously even by professors of Moral Philosophy.

But as for the writer of comedy, as Molière said, it is his chief business to 'make honest folk laugh,' at the failings of others or their own, not to improve their morals. He may start an ethical hare if he will, he should not carry the pursuit too far. Of late years a passion of didacticism has consumed the writers of comedies. We have been invited to the theatre, not to



laugh with the moderation of intelligence at stupidity or vice, but to be so profoundly moved by the spectacle of human suffering or human injustice as to rush from the theatre and clamour incontinently for a change in the law. The authors who expose us to this painful emotion are preachers who have lost their way, and mistaken in all the arrogance of virtue the stage for the pulpit.

CLAUDE C. H. WILLIAMSON.

# ROUND THE CRADLE OF CHRISTENDOM.

THE EDITOR.

## I. INTRODUCTORY.

THE most crying need in the present age of dire confusion and loss of faith is a restatement of the spiritual fundamentals of the religious life. What is of real value must be rescued from the mass of unessential accretions of dogma and custom which are choking the free development of religious experience in all the traditional forms of the world-faiths. This applies to all the great religions without exception, and naturally in the West to Christianity in particular as its main interest. They all require drastic reformation, purging, pruning and simplification. The higher their respective pretensions, the more urgently they stand in need of purification.

Whatever exclusive claims are put forth by other faiths, Christianity has ever maintained that its revelation is not only exclusive but uniquely original and absolute. It claims the right of supreme authority over the hearts of all men. Its whole history proves that it can tolerate no rivals; the Gods of other faiths, save of course the Jewish, have ever been for it false Gods, their prophets false prophets. To-day a new spirit of tolerance is coming to birth; the ancient barriers of prejudice are being slowly—very slowly still it seems to some of us—removed as knowledge of the virtues of the other great religions is increased and



attention is no longer focussed solely on their shortcomings.

Now the formal creed of Christendom does not consist of statements of general spiritual principles only; it is largely concerned with what claim to be absolutely unquestionable historical facts, without faith in which salvation is impossible. In this it has ever boasted itself to be marked out in chief distinction from all other creeds. In the face of the continued imposition of these historic dogmas on every professing Christian it is of little purpose to assert, as so many apologists do in these days of seeking for a transvaluation of values, that Christianity is a life and not a creed. Doubtless this should be its spiritual test; but such a criterion applies equally to the vital moral spirit in all the great religions. Spiritual virtues are not the monopoly of Christianity; it is sheer arrogance to call them 'Christian' as a differentiation against those of the righteous of other faiths. *Their* spiritual reality also can be realized only by living it. Their truth too might equally well be claimed to be a life and not a creed.

The undeniable fact remains that you cannot legitimately be a member of any Christian Church unless you profess the creed, and the creed does as a fact consist largely of historical dogmas.

History is thus a matter of vital importance for traditional Christianity. Once these dogmas became crystallized after the long and bitter controversies of the first centuries, the General Church, which had now been cæsarized into a state-institution and could invoke the temporal power to enforce its decisions and wipe out all opposition, tolerated no dissent from its dogmatic rulings. Therewith the Bible became an

infallible library, not only of inerrant revelation of spiritual truth, but also of verbally inspired historical record that could not be questioned save at the peril of a man's eternal salvation.

So it continued till the rise of the modern scientific spirit whose first concern is to verify facts before theorizing upon them. As this spirit of free enquiry and research gained confidence, courageous individuals within the Christian body itself were emboldened to throw off the superstitious fears with which a fanatical bibliolatry had enslaved men's minds for so many centuries, and began gradually to submit the books of the sacred library to minute and finally to microscopic inspection. They defied the ecclesiastical tabu and the anathemas of its medicine men. For some century and a half this sane and saving work has been in progress, and owing to these humanistic labours we are to-day in possession of a huge mass of most valuable knowledge concerning the books of the Bible, both as to their form and content, which for ever makes it impossible for lovers of truth to bow the knee to the image that spiritual ignorance set up for all men to worship. The natural fallible human element, which has played so large a part in the making and remaking of these famous books, has been proved beyond all question, and biblical science, which deals with the genesis and evolution of the sacred texts and the analysis and development of their historic and dogmatic contents, is now established on an unshakable basis. A knowledge of its methods and results is to-day absolutely indispensable for every teacher of religion who would rightly instruct and deal honestly with the difficulties of every intelligent layman, not to speak of the well-read thinker.



Our best encyclopædias and books of reference are filled with the general results of these searching enquiries, and that too from the pens of the enlightened clergy themselves, and the main facts are now very extensively known to intelligent people. In the pulpit, however, the main body of the clergy is still averse from taking their congregations frankly into their confidence. They fear to disturb the faith of the simple-minded, they say. In this, however, they misjudge the people and are out of touch with the best spirit of the age; and the consequence of their still paltering with now patent facts is disastrous in the extreme. There is no longer in reality any secret to keep; it is out of the hands of any conspiracy of silence. This ingrained spirit of obscurantism, inherited from long centuries of blind defence of vested interests, is no longer tolerable; indeed it is bitterly resented. In their crudest and most garbled forms the facts have now spread far and wide even among the proletariat; so that, not only are the clergy in general regarded with distrust and suspicion as lacking in honesty and frankness by the intelligent laity who have the best interests of religion at heart, but religion itself is proclaimed with strident voices by the many millions who would bolshevize the world to be nothing but 'chloroform,' 'opium' and 'dope.'

The clergy must now as a body speak out, if they would save what is spiritually vital in their faith. The course of events has decreed in answer to the claim of bibliolatry: "To history thou hast appealed, to history shalt thou go; and first of all we will begin with the documents." The verdict has been given; and the magical mechanistic theory of inspiration, that for so long usurped the empery over men's minds which

belongs to spiritual freedom alone, is driven from the field. For all who are spiritually alive to-day the dogma of plenary inspiration is dead. Nothing, however, is lost, but much is gained; the way is paved for the onward march of a new age of spiritual freedom and progressive inspiration. The moral courage and love of truth which have animated the men of profound learning and reverent reason who have been fighting this fateful battle for the right, constitute one of the most striking and hopeful signs of the spiritual virility of what is best in Christendom. They have proclaimed their unshakeable faith that spiritual truth has nothing to fear from the disclosure of factual truth; indeed that the disclosure of the latter is part and parcel of the revelation of the former.

More than a generation ago I became convinced that the positive facts of the few months of the public activity of Jesus—for of a life there is not even a pretence to give a record—were too deeply buried, to be recovered with really objective precision, beneath the mass of contradictory statements and conflicting traditions revealed by a critical study of the literary remains of the compilers and editors of the evangelical documents. And to-day it is still true that no one has succeeded in unearthing such indubitable traces of the earliest deposit of facts as to make it possible to reconstruct them into an organically coherent whole. At any rate no attempt at reconstruction which has yet been ventured, and well-nigh every possible selection, permutation and combination of the critical literary data has been tried, can stand the test of further critical inspection. We are left with contending probabilities at best.

What is unquestionably manifest is, not only that



the documents without exception view the whole matter subjectively through the spectacles of the later dogmatic developments of the days when they were respectively compiled, but that the various traditional materials, both in the original Aramaic and in Greek, before it reached the hands of the several editors had already undergone a considerable process of manipulation from prior differing points of view. This is no longer a question of probability, but a demonstrated fact.

If then world-history and world-religion have for so many centuries been vitiated by being envisaged through the arrogant pretensions of a single race as set forth in the literature of the Old Testament, equally so has the religion of the historic Jesus been disfigured by being looked at solely through the eyes of the writers of the documents of the New, and therewith contemporary religious history also has been obscured or violently depreciated.

The traditional convention that Christianity suddenly descended from heaven as a deposit, compact in all its parts, of hitherto undreamed of and infallible truth miraculously revealed by its founder, into the midst of a world utterly plunged in spiritual darkness, is now found to be false to the known facts of the history of the times and of comparative religion.

A generation ago this was not so clearly known; but even then it was abundantly manifest that no real understanding of the matter could be had without a profound study of the surroundings, and especially the religious—psychical, mystical and spiritual—environment, in which Christianity was conceived, came to birth and was encradled, if it was to be viewed in any way approaching to a truly historic perspective.

In those days comparatively little really critical work had been done on this very important side of the subject. With the ignorance and enthusiasm of youth I dreamed foolishly of some day writing a book in several volumes to be called 'Round the Cradle of Christendom.' I had not then realized the enormous difficulties of the task and the high equipment required for even the spade-work. Since then I have done a little rough turning of the soil here and there, and have followed with keenest interest the labours of those who have with far finer equipment been tilling the field with skilful industry.

During the last thirty years an enormous amount of work has been done, and to-day we are in possession of a mass of valuable information that was previously either unknown or which had not been submitted to critical investigation. The necessity of taking these facts into consideration is now recognized by every scholar who would treat objectively, without the prejudice of *à priori* assumptions and blind subservience to the interests of present-day theological apologetics, any of the many inescapable problems which confront the student of the origins of the faith of the West.

Two important works, which have just been published, strikingly exemplify this new order of the day. At the end of last year Loisy's *Les Mystères païens et le Mystère chrétien*<sup>1</sup> saw the light. These important lectures, delivered at the Sorbonne, were set in print in 1914, but the War held up their publication. This year Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake, aided by other distinguished scholars, have given us

<sup>1</sup> Paris (Nourry); pp. 368; 12s.



the Jewish, Gentile and Christian Backgrounds of *The Acts*.<sup>1</sup>

Loisy, as all know, excommunicate from the Roman communion owing to his fearless love of truth in New Testament research, was presented with the chair of Comparative Religion at the University of Paris. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake are two of our most brilliant liberal English scholars. The former has been called to a chair at the Union Theological Seminary, New York; the latter to one at Harvard, after enjoying the quite exceptional distinction of occupying a chair at Leyden.

Both these arresting volumes set the beginnings in their natural organic environment, in their proper perspective. We are no longer called upon to deal with a host of fictitious problems created solely by the old bad habit of arbitrary abstraction of the subject-matter from the concrete reality of history, but are placed at a standpoint whence the real problems can be seen as they emerge in the process of becoming.

## II. THE PALESTINIAN ENCLOSURE.

Christianity began as a Palestinian Jewish sect or heresy. So much is certain. Its primitive elements were drawn from the Jewish beliefs of the day, however these were combined and interpreted in the mind of its prophet-founder. It drew breath and first stirred in a tense atmosphere of Jewish aspirations and expectations. That atmosphere was surcharged with prophetic and apocalyptic hopes, and especially with the speculations of a very distinctive eschatology, a

<sup>1</sup> *The Beginnings of Christianity, Part I., The Acts of the Apostles*, edited by F. J. Foakes Jackson, D.D., and Kirsopp Lake, D.D., Vol. I., Prolegomena I. London (Macmillan); pp. 480; 18s. net.

cosmic doctrine of the last days. Not only the most primitive Christianity but the whole of later New Testament thought is fundamentally conditioned by this expectation of the near approach of the end of the world. First century Christianity swims in the full current of the apocalyptic movement, and its canonical books are part and parcel of apocalyptic literature. No New Testament writer is without this belief. Jewish apocalyptic literature precedes the New Testament writings by at least 250 years (200 B.C. to 50 A.D.), accompanies it in its main formative period (50-120 A.D.) and extends beyond its close. The Christian apocalyptic outlook differs from the Jewish only in the claim that part of its expectations was fulfilled in Jesus. Christian editors over-wrote Jewish apocalyptic books and Gnostic Christians added much to this scripture-industry. Jewish apocalyptic literature fills up the gap between the Old and New Testaments and links up closely *Daniel* with *Revelations*.

It is seldom realized what a tremendous driving power for propagandist purposes was liberated by this fearful hope, which for long was a daily expectation of the impending terrible but beatific great event, the miraculous catastrophic consummation of the world-order.

The modern apologist, who would fain find in the sayings of Jesús only such doctrines as are entirely suited to the spiritual needs of the present age with its totally different world-view, tries to escape from the dilemma by asserting that the disciples ignorantly misunderstood the master on this burning subject. But there is no escape for the historian by so arbitrary an assumption, which sacrifices a large number of



the most critically authentic sayings. If the chasm between the teacher and those most intimate pupils who knew him in the flesh, is so great in this regard, what other gaps can possibly be bridged in other respects?

Is it absurd to think that a proclamation of what are in some respects hypersensitive and exaggerated moral requirements, beyond the compass of the normal righteousness of a naturally developing social order in a continuing world-process, could very well have been made by one who at the same time lived in tense expectation of the catastrophic end of the age, and prayed daily for its consummation by the direct action and miraculous manifestation of the Divine sovereignty? Surely, on the contrary, it is this very vividness of the belief which most naturally explains the stringency of the moral rule. It was a case of all or nothing. 'The Day' was at hand, half measures would no longer serve. Genuine inner moral nearness to God would alone stand the test, the searching trial of the heart, that was impending, and enable the righteous to escape the Woes,—that grievous outer physical testing, escape from which the faithful petitioned in their daily prayer: "Bring us not into trial."<sup>1</sup> All outer pretence of piety was worse than useless. It was more reprehensible than overt sin, for it was an attempt to deceive God.

There was, however, to be no abrogation of the Law; it was to be spiritually deepened and perfected. Indeed the most primitive tradition would have it that not a single jot or tittle of the Law should pass away till the present order was brought to an end on Judgment Day.

<sup>1</sup> The original for 'trial,' erroneously and confusingly rendered as 'temptation,' is a technical term for the time of the Woes.

It has been asserted times without number that Jewish piety had hitherto taught exclusively a severely transcendental view of the Divine nature and that Jesus came to reveal the immanence of the fatherhood of God; that the former taught the fear of God, the latter the love of God. But this is not true to history. Majesty and mercy were co-equal Divine attributes for fearer and lover of God alike in Jewry. Love of God and neighbour was an integral part of the Law, and the loving nearness of God in the heart of the righteous was a reality asserted by prophet and psalmist and all subsequent piety. Among the Pharisees there were seven classes of holiness, and of the two highest the Pharisee from love was accounted above the Pharisee from fear. Rabbinism delighted to contrast two traditional types of teachers and interpreters of the Law, those who leaned to severity and those who favoured leniency; the ideal mean was sought after in this contest of piety.

Jesus was a great lover and strongly upheld leniency in outer observance. He detested the mechanical ultra-brahmanical conventions of ceremonial purity. In this he saw clearly into the heart of the matter and protested finely also against the tyranny of some of the abuses of Legal scrupulosity, as for instance the sabbatical restrictions and tabus. Yet even he left untouched what for spiritual religion must be considered the primitive survivals of circumcision and blood-sacrifice. Jesus worshipped and taught in the national Temple; the primitive Christian church continued to worship there with assiduity as long as it was possible. There is not a sign of a breath of protest against or even of distaste for the chief rite of the ritual. It is true that blood-sacrifice was common



also to all the popular forms of religion of the surrounding peoples. But Christianity boasts itself to have been always from the very beginning and in every respect superior to every other cultus. Now, not only were blood-sacrifices offered as an essential part of their Covenant by those who claimed to be the chosen folk of God and to possess a higher moral and spiritual consciousness than the rest of the world, but they were offered on a vaster scale than in any other religion. The Temple of Jerusalem, as rebuilt by Herod the Great and his successors, was exceedingly magnificent; it was one of the acknowledged wonders of the world. Normally the population of the sacred city was small, consisting of some 50,000, almost all of whom lived directly or indirectly on the Temple. But Jerusalem was the Mecca of the whole of Jewry scattered throughout the nations, the so-called Diaspora; and Josephus tells us that on the days of the great festivals, of which there were five a year, as many as a million pilgrims assembled to offer sacrifice. He even speaks of the colossal number of over a quarter of a million victims! This seems a gross exaggeration; but divide it by ten and enough remains to turn the place into the greatest sacred abattoir the world has ever seen.

It is recorded that Jesus, in one of the most dramatic moments of his prophetic activity, not only furiously denounced the priestly profiteering which made huge fortunes by trafficking in the Temple meat-market, but proceeded to a physical act of violence against the servants of the sacerdotal company. But there is no hint of protest against the root of the evil. To say nothing of others, five hundred years before, Buddhism in the East and Pythagoreanism in the

West had cut this offence out as incompatible with any form of spiritual worship.

The altar of Yahweh on Mt. Zion continued to be deluged with blood till 70 A.D.; his altar on Mt. Gerizim in Samaria was similarly smothered till 66 A.D. External necessity alone—the destruction of these two fanes by the Romans—put an end to the sacrifices. In the Diaspora, in Egypt, already in the sixth century B.C., a Jewish temple with sacrificial cultus flourished at Elephantine, and from at least 170 B.C. to 73 A.D. the temple of Onias in Heliopolis carried out the blood-rites of the national Covenant. There may have been other similar temples elsewhere. It is true that the synagogue-worship was clean of this cultus, but orthodoxy asserted that without national sacrifices the Law of the Covenant could not be fully kept. Priestly conservatism overbore prophetic liberalism to the end.

As to the Palestinian sects of the day, it is difficult to say with certainty whether the ascetic Essene communities and groups (the 'practical' Therapeuts of Philo<sup>1</sup>) entirely refrained from sacrificing in the Temple; they certainly sent offerings. Their origin is one of the problems of history. We know that there was an organized association, assembly or synagogue, of the Pious or Assidæans (*Hāsīdīm*) as early as the days of Judas the Maccabee, who ended his heroic life in 160 B.C.; they were strict and willing observers of the Law, but abandoned Judas when they found that his aims were political and not purely religious. They were called the Righteous, the Poor, the Sinless, the Holy. According to Philo the last title was a synonym

<sup>1</sup> The 'contemplatives' apparently were to be found solely among the Diaspora.



of Essene. During the Maccabæan struggle we find no mention of the *names* either of Essenes or even of Pharisees; and it has been conjectured that these distinctive Hasids may have been the parent source (1) of both these streams of tendency or (2) of either one of them, the other having an independent origin. We do not know; but they probably both go back to earlier days. As to the Essenes, if Pliny's exaggerated statement about their great antiquity is divided by ten, so that we read hundreds instead of thousands of years,—even on this very conservative estimate they would be pre-Maccabæan. Schools of the Prophets, Rechabites and Nazirs we know to have existed of old, and these strongly separative tendencies of holiness must have continued both in communities and among individuals. The testimony of the *Book of Daniel*, written about 164 B.C., witnesses to the claimed superiority of the then existing holy ones of Israel, prophets, seers and ascetics, over those of the 'Chaldæans'—that is, the followers of the dominant religion of the Hellenistic Perso-Babylonian kingdom of Antiochus Epiphanes. As to individual ascetics in Palestine, there were doubtless many; but we hear by name of only one such solitary, called Bannus, personally known to Josephus, who indeed followed his rule for a short time. Bannus, however, was not an Essene. Earlier we find the solitary ascetic John the Baptist proclaiming the near approach of the Kingdom—God's sovereignty on earth—and calling on all to repent if they would escape the impending Judgment, the Wrath to Come, which would precede the establishment of the Divine Kingship.

In the later Maccabæan period, say 100-50 B.C., we find the Sadducees and the Pharisees alternately

gaining the upper hand over one another in political matters. But of the origin of the former we are as imperfectly informed as of the latter. It was hitherto generally supposed that the Sadducees were less rigorous than the Pharisees in keeping the Legal prescriptions and tabus; but recent research has shown that, on the contrary, the former were stricter than the latter in a number of observances.

A word may here be said of the Scribes or Writers and of the Lawyers, very general terms descriptive of the *literati* and learned in the Law. It was an arduous and life-long task for a *man* to become acquainted with the niceties of the Law. Of women in this connection we hear nothing. Both Sadducees and Pharisees were Lawyers, but scribism was more highly developed by the latter. The Law was studied with immense ardour, but under very strict conditions. In its study ordinary folk could have no part. They were thus classed as the ignorant, the so-called 'people of the land.' Hence a formidable barrier was erected between them and the learned Jews, for whom such knowledge was an indispensable part of religion. A man might be very poor, but yet a great scholar and held in the greatest respect; and as a fact many of the greatest teachers were poor. It was an aristocracy of pious learning and not of wealth. John the Baptist and Jesus set this barrier at naught. Both appealed to and taught the people, much to the scandal of the learned and Legally pious.

Doctrinally, however, the difference between the Sadducees and Pharisees was very important. The Sadducees accepted as authoritative scripture the five Law-books only; with the traditions based on the subsequently canonical Prophets and other Writings



as supplementary to the Law they would have nothing to do. The Pharisees on the contrary held the latter in deepest reverence. Consistently and logically, therefore, the Sadducees accepted no doctrine that could not be substantiated by the words of what was held by both parties to be the original Law-code of Moses himself. The 'Five Fifths' said nothing about Messianism or life after death, much less about a very special doctrine of resurrection, bodily or otherwise, and the approaching end of the age. With the Pharisees, on the contrary, all these matters were of supreme interest. For an understanding of this all-important complex of belief the historian of religion has to scrutinize most carefully, not only the canonical prophetic but also the post-prophetic, the apocryphal and apocalyptic literature.

The earliest Legal 'philosophy of history,' if we can so call it, was based on a very simple theory. The corporate faithfulness of Israel brought earthly prosperity; unfaithfulness plunged the nation into adversity. In keeping with the primitive sense of tribal solidarity, the individual was swallowed up in the community, and there was no question either of reward or of punishment after death for him. The continuance and prosperity of the tribe on earth alone counted. The old-time prophets held this theory very firmly; but many of their predictions, made on the strength of it, remained unfulfilled in history.

"Therefore there arose a school of writers who took up and reinterpreted the more picturesque of the unfulfilled predictions of the prophets, especially such passages as *Isaiah* xxiv. to xxvii., the last chapters of *Ezekiel* and parts of *Zachariah*. To these they added new and gorgeous imagery of their own, much of which

is probably drawn from Babylonian and Persian sources. In this way, just as the study of the Law produced the Mishna, the study of the history of unfulfilled prophecy produced the Apocalyptic Pseudepigrapha."<sup>1</sup>

These two developments continued alongside of one another for centuries and intermingled far more thoroughly than the Mishna, the later oral 'Teaching' or 'Instruction,' which was first reduced to writing in 200 A.D., and dealt chiefly with rules for observing the Law (*halāchoth*), would lead us to suppose. The apocalyptic literature was, on the contrary, in writing from the start.

The apocalyptic books proper are concerned chiefly with visions and revelations; but they are closely bound up with semi-apocalyptic writings of a legendary and didactic nature and the whole body of apocryphal literature,<sup>2</sup>—that is to say 'withdrawn books,' in the primary sense of books deemed too precious for public circulation, and hence 'esoteric.' It was for long an epithet of value; subsequently it came to be used in a depreciatory sense.

The whole of apocalyptic literature is pseudepigraphic; as is also a number of the books of the Old and New Testaments. By pseudepigraphic, or falsely entitled, is meant that they are falsely ascribed to or set forth in the name of ancient worthies, bygone seers and prophets; the general convention was that the books had been 'sealed up' or hidden away and

<sup>1</sup> Jackson & Lake, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> The Jewish apocryphal literature consists of compilations and writings that may be distinguished as: historical and legendary (such as stories and folk-tales of ancient worthies and heroes, filling up gaps in the canonical narratives, known as *haggadoth*); prophetic and apocalyptic (especially visits to heaven, hades and hell, and such-like other-world romances); and didactic. The Christian apocryphal literature is equally varied, embracing similar interests and distinguishable into: gospels; acts; epistles; apocalypses and didactic writings.



rediscovered, or written in the heavens or recovered by the help of angels. This literature was once very extensive; and even the extant specimens and fragments of it are not inconsiderable. Looking back over the whole period of this very distinctive activity of Jewish scripture-making, at a time when the Palestinian O.T. canon had been securely determined, the *Apocalypse of Ezra*<sup>1</sup> (c. 100-120 A.D.) will have it that during the Captivity the books of the Bible were lost. After the Return Ezra the Scribe (c. 444 B.C.) was inspired by an angel to rewrite them.

“So in forty days were written ninety-four books. And it came to pass when the forty days were fulfilled, that the most High spake unto me saying: The twenty-four books thou hast written, publish, that the unworthy may read therein; but the seventy last thou shalt keep, to deliver them to the wise among the people. For in them is the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the stream of knowledge.”

Thus in the days of the writer or editor, according to the view of his circle or movement, there was not only a canon of twenty-four public rolls, but also an authoritative collection of no less than seventy ‘withdrawn,’ secret or esoteric volumes, largely of an apocalyptic, sapiential and gnostic nature. There were also unquestionably many others that did not come up to his standard.

The whole of the extant apocalyptic books are primarily interested in the approaching end of the age. The burning questions they seek to determine are the When and the How. They are specially preoccupied with the time-problem, with theories of cycles,

<sup>1</sup> Known as *IV. Ezra*, the technical title of chapp. iv.-xiv. of *II. Esdras* in the Apocrypha.

astronomical and astrological computations and predictions. Theories of the relation between forces and events in heaven and generally in the invisible world and the fate of the empires and kingdoms on earth were devised,—theories which took into consideration both physical and psychological principles of determination. Every nation had its angelic or dæmonic representative or counterpart in the invisible. The outcome of the inner or supermundane strife between the latter determined the outer or earthly fate of the former. The course of the invisible conflicts could be observed by the seers and deductions or predictions made as to when the results would be worked out on earth, based on the 'writings in the heaven.'

It must be remembered, however, that of the extant apocalypses not one has a genuine literary unity. All are compilations from earlier works having the same type. Sources can be distinguished and dates frequently determined. We have thus for instance an Enochian and a Baruchian literature, and not a *Book of Enoch* or a *Book of Baruch* simply.

For the student of Christian origins there can be no more fascinating and instructive work than in comparing the various visionary pictures presented of the times which were believed immediately to precede and to follow this apocalyptic End,—an End which was envisaged not as the final consummation of all things, but as the completion of the present world or age; it was only after this world-order had reached its appointed and catastrophic end that the heavenly New Age or World to Come would be inaugurated.

The general features of these apocalyptic pictures are somewhat as follows. First there must be a period of terrible sufferings and trials—the Woes—before the



earthly good time of happiness and prosperity destined for the chosen race comes; for of course it is Israel who is destined to be lord of all the rest of the nations. This golden age for the elect will be succeeded by the last desperate onset of the angelic forces of evil, the princes and rulers of 'this world,' who will assail the righteous with utmost ferocity and malignancy. But in the end they will be utterly destroyed. Then will take place the general resurrection, with the final judgment of Yahweh, who will thus terminate the old world-order. Thereafter begins the New Age, the World to Come, the Heavenly Kingdom, the universal Divine Sovereignty.

There were naturally many variations of this general theme, many permutations and combinations of its elements. Materialistic and spiritualistic interpretations jostled one another side by side, or strove with one another and alternately gained the upper hand. There was, for instance, no agreement even about the Messianic expectation.

"The days of prosperity which succeed the Woes are sometimes pictured as the reign of that anointed prince or Messiah [Gk. Christos] whose coming was foretold by the prophets. Sometimes the Messiah does not appear at all, and the custom of nevertheless referring in such cases to this period as Messianic, though general, is to be deprecated. Similarly the judgment is sometimes carried out by God, sometimes by his representative."<sup>1</sup>

The whole subject requires, and doubtless will receive, a closer scrutiny than has yet been accorded it, in spite of the very valuable work of analysis and summary that has been already accomplished. It is

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 184.

questioned as to whether this apocalyptic picture is an outcome of Judaism at all. It certainly for long was a matter of intense interest to Jewry. 'Judaism,' however, in this connection is presumably to be understood as restricted within the compass of the later orthodox Palestinian canon — with the arbitrary exclusion of the Danielic writings !

Both during the Captivity and after the Return, when that great activity of scripture-writing began which was so enthusiastically carried on for centuries, Jewish thought was in constant sympathetic and conflicting contact with Babylonian and Persian and other religious conceptions. As the late editor of the *Encyclopædia Biblica* (see Charles' art. 'Eschatology') remarks in a parenthetical note :

"Some excellent introductions to 'Biblical Theology' are based, consciously or unconsciously, on the principle that the movement of religious thought in Israel was completely independent of external stimulus. Students of Jewish religion can no longer avoid acquainting themselves with Babylonian-Assyrian, Egyptian, Zoroastrian and Greek religions, and using any further collateral information that they can get."

With this same fundamental principle of comparative religion Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake are in complete agreement when they write in reference to the apocalyptic picture we are considering :

"In its main characteristics Persian influence is very marked. The religion of Zoroaster is based on the great strife in heaven and on earth between the powers of good and evil, ending in a spectacular triumph of righteousness. Ormuzd and his angels strive with Ahihman and his angels, just as Michael does with



Satan. In the end a Saviour comes, in the person of Shaosyant, and executes judgment, bringing about a new order. This is the essence of Apocalyptic revelation, heaven and hell crowded by angelic and demonic hosts, a Saviour interfering in the cause of right, the final judgment, the End, and the World to Come. In reality it is in contrast with the Jewish conception of Messiah, an anointed king vindicating (for in this sense the word 'to judge' is employed) and establishing a kingdom in which the Law is supreme. Nevertheless, the Persian eschatology as a whole was taken over by Jewish thought, and the question naturally arose of its relationship to the prophetic doctrine of an anointed king of the house of David. It would have been possible to identify the new world with the kingdom of the anointed prince of the house of David, and in the end that identification was possibly made in some Jewish circles, but, in the main, Jewish thought followed a different line of development. The days of the anointed king, when they were not omitted altogether, were kept as the closing period of this age, which the Resurrection was to follow rather than precede. His reign was to precede the End, and he, like all other men, would die, even though an extremely long life was granted him. [Some said 400, others 1,000 years—the famous millennium.] After his death and that of the rest of mankind would come the resurrection and the judgment, which would settle whether men should or should not pass on into a life of happiness in the new world.”<sup>1</sup>

The apocryphal literature in general and the apocalyptic class of it in particular contain much of interest also for the student of psychical, mystical and

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 134, 135.

spiritual experience; but so far few have dealt sympathetically with it from this very important point of view, or understandingly in keeping with the now abundantly known data of the psychology of general religious experience.

And here we must break off and bring to an end this part of the present survey—concerning the Palestinian enclosure round the cradle of Christendom—reserving for future consideration the Gentile surround in connection with both the Jewish Diaspora and Christian propaganda.

G. R. S. MEAD.

(The substance of this paper was given as a lecture before the Quest Society, June 10, 1920.—ED.)



## IN DEFENCE OF DAY-DREAMERS.

MADELEINE J. KENT.

ALTHOUGH more serious study has been directed during the present age than ever before to the psychology of the dreams and nightmares that haunt sleep,—day-dreams and illusions, like fairies, are certainly out of fashion. They began to fall into disrepute far back in the last century when text-cards and Darwinism came in and did so much disastrously to destroy the faculty of wonder in a race already slow to admire. Such as survived were pilloried by Wilde in the eighteen-nineties; it needed but the cynicisms of Shaw and his Continental masters, and their reputation was gone entirely. The part played by the religious revival in all this was purely negative. Insisting, true to Semitic traditions, on questions of profit and loss, it simply reiterated the ancient warning that poetry and romance are but the glory of this world and foredoomed to pass away. But Rationalism, albeit unconscious of the incongruous partnership, took the unlovely work of conventional morality a step further and, with the confidence bred of a possibly wider experience, declared that boasted splendour to be after all no more than

“the rarest dream that e'er dull sleep  
Did mock sad fools withal.”

With the destructiveness of all reformers, it has laid waste the fool's paradise, pulling down conjugal dove-

cotes, rooting up parasitical ivy and tearing away the decent veils of hypocrisy.

Mephistopheles is always most witty when he thus rails. But it needs a Celt to appreciate mockery and a pure Teuton to benefit by it. We English with our Gallic love of action take his literary pranks too seriously. Instead of regarding them as wholesome antidotes to what 'Elizabeth,' amid the sentimental conventions of her 'German Garden,' called the Teutonic instinct for 'slush,' we discover in their vagaries a profound directing purpose, and forthwith are ashamed of our former naïve enthusiasms. With an eagerness that denotes a lively appreciation of the sensational, we accept the implication that our life here is a nightmare produced by former existences that have not agreed with us, barricade our souls against the chance entry of a wayward joy, and try with grim conscientiousness to prevent its securing the welcome of persons more easily deluded than ourselves.

But the crazy reasonableness which has thus dulled the brightness of joy, fails miserably to lighten our sorrows. Although we have learnt to doubt happiness, we are not yet sufficiently selfish to be insensible to grief. A literature therefore that, after the modern fashion, regards pain and sorrow as primitive because elemental, and introduces them only in awkward parentheses interrupting the gracious flow of a diction modelled on de Maupassant, is as artificial as the old pastorals whose aim, after all, was to delight rather than to enlighten. Its creators are but the offshoot of the Victorian primness that, knowing not how nobly 'to give sorrow words,' taught its sons and daughters to avoid emotion and to regard deportment rather than sincerity as a sign of good breeding. By



reiterating a single line of Shakespeare they may have taught us not to wear our heart upon our sleeve and given us the outward semblance of stoicism, but the child in us still demands some consolation, however illusory. As that search is the purpose of this paper, let me be old-fashioned enough to set forth the charms whereby those older and gentler scholars, questioning not the sincerity of grief and the reality of happiness, sought with much labour to reconcile man to his inconstant fortune.

Is it the all-pervading influence of the Dictionary which makes the eighteenth century so didactic an age? It is as fertile of panaceas as a conjuror of half-crowns, and indeed there is something magical in its ready answers to life's most baffling problems. Steele and Addison knew nearly as well as Pepys how to reconcile the conflicting claims of love, patriotism, religion, morals, self-advancement and a due humility to 'men of rank.' But the secret of their somewhat un-English *savoir vivre* was that they accepted conventions. They hardly apprehended the force of Chance that in so many particulars has framed society as it is. To them the arrangement of the world was so inevitable that to put up with it became merely a matter of common-sense. They approached, therefore, the elemental facts of tragedy with a superficial benignity which would be as impertinent as modern cynicism, were it not for its engaging union of worldly wisdom with an ignorance of human nature that almost raises their platitudes to the level of idealism.

"When," says *The Tatler*, discussing the deportment proper to affliction, "the mind has been perplexed with anxious cares and passions, the best method of bringing it to its usual state of tranquillity is, as much

as we possibly can, to turn our thoughts to the adversities of persons of higher consideration in virtue and merit than ourselves. By this means all the incidents of our own lives, if they are unfortunate, seem to be the effect of justice upon our faults and indiscretions." Alas! such questions of relative merit are but too apt to become two-edged swords in our pharisaical hands, and our dutiful attempts to follow the workings of obscure justice but a means of strengthening our first consciousness of ill-used virtue.

Goldsmith's estimate of the possibilities of human nature is less lofty but more discerning. He realises that the mind, to retain its health, must be turned away from the contemplation of its own grief. Speaking not of difficulties which should be overcome by resolution, but of misfortunes from which there is no escape, he says :

"Let the world cry out at a bankrupt who appears at a ball; at an author who laughs at the public which pronounces him a dunce; at the general who smiles at the reproach of the vulgar, or the lady who keeps her good humour in spite of scandal; but such is the wisest behaviour that any of us can possibly assume; it is certainly a better way to oppose calamity by dissipation, than to take up the arms of reason or resolution to oppose it: by the first method we forget our miseries; by the last we only conceal them from others."

He would, then, oppose misfortune with a species of good humour that refuses even to admit disappointment; and, so doing, he expresses the unimaginativeness of his age. Yet when, proceeding, he analyses the foundations of good humour, or, as he calls it, 'happiness of temper,' he vindicates mag-



nificantly the power of imagination. Happiness, he maintains (and is apparently unperturbed by a discovery that has shocked modern reason into cynicism), depends simply and solely upon illusions; either the illusions of ignorance—he says of a happy slave that “no reading or study had contributed to disenchant the fairyland around him”—or the illusions of inexperience which, impatient of monotony, calls calamity ‘seeing life.’ Of these the former kind characterise especially the childish, the latter the youthful, mentality. Goldsmith, remembering his own childhood, says that then :

“All nature seemed capable of affording pleasure ; I then made no refinements on happiness, but would be pleased with the most awkward efforts of rustic mirth ; thought cross-purposes the highest stretch of human wit ; and questions and commands the most rational way of spending the evening. Happy could so charming an illusion continue.”

I have quoted this passage, not only as an example of childish illusions, but because it reveals in Goldsmith's own mind another species of illusion, more complex and more touching than the former kind. It depends on the contrast between present suffering and the memory of a happiness that, barely appreciated at the time, is now exaggerated. ‘Peter Ibbetson’ in prison remembered only the triumphs of his childhood, the tea-parties in his mother's drawing-room, the excursions in a Bois de Boulogne where lilac and laburnum seemed to bloom eternally, like the trees on Keats' Grecian Urn. So with Goldsmith. As a wanderer, he was peculiarly sensitive to the glamour of a serenity far past. As something of a rake, he was inclined to be sentimental about it.

But do these pitiful, ignorant illusions shelter us from anything yet sadder than boredom? I think they do. Oscar Wilde remarks of one of his heroines that "no one had ever returned her passions, so she retained all her illusions." It is undeniable that we always exaggerate the worth of what we have lost or what we desire but cannot obtain. "How can Love's eyes see true," asks Shakespeare, "that is so vexed with watching and with tears?" Thus one of the most tragic figures is the man who, having realised all his ambitions, finds them to be Dead Sea fruit. It follows that an unattainable ambition secures paradoxically that satisfaction of which achievement is wont to deprive us. In a world where reality thus crumbles at the touch, illusions or, as they may be called in this connection, ambitions become the only solid things. The goal itself is accidental, but the ambition can be a constant, essential part of us. Yet the world is very slow to appreciate an ideal until it has become commonplace and real; perhaps because it is to others rather than to ourselves that it matters if our ambitions are realisable or no, whether their object is to discover an America which does exist or a North West Passage which does not. To ourselves the consciousness of something with a potency to thrill us, some end to strive for with an enthusiasm which, however inconstant, can in a moment re-create us, some one to idealise, produces an exaltation of joy which, because independent of material foundation, resembles surely the vivid happiness of the Gods. It is to the inner satisfaction which so potent an emotion produces, that we owe that supreme, unreasoning self-confidence whose presence can, as Goldsmith says, oppose calamity more successfully than reason and



resolution. In the old fairy-tales evil spells are in the end impotent because the prince is supported by the knowledge that such ignominy is not his just environment. We ourselves may be only 'in sleep, a king'; but the glamour of that dream interpenetrates the soul and, so protected, it can never be completely overwhelmed by external sordidness and meanness. But if our dreams leave us, we lose not only our faith in ourselves but the faith of others.

It is significant that a cautious Government places under restraint those with illusions of their own magnificence rather than those who exaggerate that of others—perhaps a less permanent affliction. Yet the man who, believing himself a hero, has failed to live up to that belief, is gentler and more tolerant than the man who has been disappointed in other people and, losing all sense of proportion, falls into delusions as exaggerated as his former sentimentalism—the course so often pursued by those who are more emotional than intellectual. Rousseau and Dickens, for example, were temperamentally prone to illusions concerning nature; women, the home; everything, in short, that may be so magnified. And when experience bereft them of these, it took too their slender store of real idealism, and left them railing. The chief difference between them is that Rousseau expressed the egotism of his era by delusions regarding conspiracies against himself, Dickens the sentimental philanthropy of his by delusions as to the tyranny of those in authority. The real humourist can never be thus disillusioned; for his finely-balanced judgment discriminates between man's superficial acts and the Divine element within him. Thus his delight is to caricature alike the illusions of sentimentalism and the delusions of

disappointed egotism ; for he is the natural foe of the ignorance inspiring them. Aware of his own limitations, he does not expect too much either of other people or at the hands of a discerning Fate. The charm of that great humourist, Cyrano de Bergerac, is that he jeers not at Destiny or mankind but rather at himself. He appreciates his own ridiculousness without losing his inner sense of ideal beauty :

“ Look well at me—then tell me, with what hope  
This vile protuberance can inspire my heart !  
I do not lull me with illusions. . . .  
. . . Think, how vilely suited  
Adown this nose a tear its passage tracing !  
I never will, while of myself I'm master,  
Let the divinity of tears, their beauty,  
Be wedded to such common ugly grossness !  
Nothing more solemn than a tear—sublimer ;  
And I would not by weeping turn to laughter  
The grave emotion that a tear engenders.”

Such a sense of the fitness of things is far removed indeed from the hysterical cynicism with which such as Strindberg meet an ungentle Destiny, a cynicism that, not appeased by the vision of itself as the chosen prey of a malign Fate, must needs proclaim that malignity a universal law. The humourist, indeed, is uniformly kind to those fool's paradises which the disillusioned sentimentality of these egotists would destroy, because he knows their insecure perfection is upheld by an imaginativeness that has perhaps seen below the surface of things into their essential romance. Cervantes introduces into his merry tale the authentic touch of tragedy when he causes the Knight, brought low by physical weakness and disappointment, to



forswear his originally bright conception of the worth of valour, constancy and altruism, and with it the idealism that, by a marvellous alchemy, can transform the sordid inn into a castle and the wooden horse into a Pegasus. For the humourist caricatures, not the imaginative idealism that seizes intuitively upon whatever is beautiful, but the sentimentalism that, unable through lack of insight to face prosaic reality, blurs it by obstinate, ignorant illusion.

The surest protection against the consciousness of misery would seem, then, to be the faculty of romance inherent in the poet and appreciated by the humourist. Nor is it a protection only; it is a positive source of well-being, as cynicism and pessimistic morality can never be. It is finer than blind illusion, because independent of the quality of self-assurance. It is not produced by an ignorance that barely appreciates woe, but by an intellectual courage that, refusing to be obsessed by so melancholy an aspect, creates beauty out of ugliness. Its magnificent sanity is Shakespearean in quality, and Shakespeare is its greatest exponent:

“Look, what thy soul holds dear, imagine it  
To lie that way thou go'st, not whence thou com'st.  
Suppose the singing birds musicians,  
The grass whereon thou tread'st the presence strew'd,  
The flowers fair ladies, and thy steps no more  
Than a delightful measure or a dance;  
For gnarling sorrow hath less power to bite  
The man that mocks at it and sets it light.”

Such poetic morality, compact as it is of humour and imagination, of gaiety and mysticism, is, rather than mental acumen or emotional frankness, the keynote of the noblest English literature, and as such

is the truest expression of a national character suspicious of extravagance in any form. Practical persons, it is true, regard day-dreaming as a rather ineffectual game, and would certainly scorn it as an antidote to misfortune, not realising how rich it is in those glimpses which 'make us less forlorn' because they satisfy the universal craving for romance of which all beautiful things are begotten. To materialism poetry itself is mere illusion; and certainly those poets whose 'illusions' have been complete and abiding, have alone written as if veritably inspired. Before the triumphant recklessness of songs such as:

"She walks in beauty like the night  
Of cloudless climes and starry skies,"

how pitifully inane is the caution of:

"She is not fair to outward view  
As many maidens be."

With most of us our eyes only "make pictures when they are shut." Even so those pictures can solace us for a while. But to the vision of the mystic and the dreamer the world throngs with those faëry "shapes that haunt Thought's wildernesses," shapes that can be so much more real and intimate than the external world of concrete things. Stevenson says of the theatre that it never produces complete illusion. So with the world. As long as over its most solid perfection there hangs the shadow of the 'curtain,' we shall continue to find in hopes and memories our most substantial happiness. And if in addition to these we have that temperamental imaginativeness which sees into the essential splendour of the lilies of the field and recognises the music of the spheres, then we shall



exult on the frailest occasion and rejoice in the merest suggestion of joy. Outwardly life may be solitary and empty ; but inwardly it will glow with the reality that is thought. And when, oppressed in spite of ourselves by a melancholy environment, we grow impatient of the wistful pretence, can we not be comforted by a greater dream than all, a dream of the era when, as Carlyle says :

“ It shall be light and man will awaken from his lofty dreams, and find his dreams still there and that nothing is gone save his sleep ” ?

MADELEINE KENT.

## THE CASE FOR A WORLD-RELIGION.<sup>1</sup>

CLOUDESLEY BRERETON, M.A., B. ès-Lettres.

1. THE PSYCHIC RENEWAL. Spirit knows neither land nor sea frontiers. I find myself therefore unable to treat this subject except from a world-aspect.

The late War has shattered many material and temporal theories—notably the Chauvinistic idea of the Absolute State. Hence the growth of a spirit of Internationalism and Pan-humanism, as illustrated by the movement in favour of the Society of Nations and the international linking up of Labour. This revolution in the temporal sphere finds its parallel and counterpart in the spiritual. The monopolistic claims of the various religions, denominations or sects to be each the one and only way of salvation are slowly breaking down throughout the world. The *reductio ad absurdum* of such monopolistic claims becomes indeed glaringly evident, when put forward by (say) some small sect of a few hundred people *vis-à-vis* the thousands of millions in the world. Common-sense revolts against such a conception. Irresistibly one thinks of the pastor in Sark praying for the adjacent islands of Great Britain and Ireland! The gradual breaking down of rigid barriers between Church and Church is illustrated by the growth of the Free Church Union, while the impending *rapprochement* between religion and religion is indicated by the slowly changing attitude of Christian

<sup>1</sup> Will appear later in a symposium 'arranged by Mr. Huntley Carter' entitled *The Present-day Meaning of Spiritualism*.



missionaries towards Hinduism, Mahommedanism, Confucianism, etc., for until recently each religion has regarded itself as self-contained and as absolute as the Absolute State, with no link or tie with the others. Yet one is confident that the ruthless competition hitherto existing between them in the soul-market of the world will slowly give place to a growing sense of co-operation, as the still largely sub-conscious element of Pan-humanism emerges more fully into consciousness, accompanied as it is by the growing disbelief in dogmas that, for all their merits, have proved themselves unable to ward off the greatest catastrophe that the world has ever seen.

In place of a set of highly *centralized* and isolated churches and religions there is already slowly rising within the collective consciousness of humanity the idea of a *federation* of churches and of religions, beginning in this country with an *entente* between the Free Churches and the State Church, itself a step towards a further *entente* with the Roman Catholic and Greek Churches. One believes that the movement will not stop there, but will ultimately lead to a mutual understanding between this re-organized Christendom and the other great world-religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Mahommedanism, and the like, till the way is paved for the slow realisation of a world-religion embracing and comprehending them all, yet neither effacing nor destroying even the smallest of them; for the world-religion, when it comes, will not come to destroy but to fulfil.

I am well aware that the claim to such a religion is made by the followers of Modern Theosophy, who have done much for spreading the doctrine of the brotherhood of man, but personally I regard their creed

as a short-cut to an objective which can be fully attained only by a process of gradual incorporation of every diversity of belief and creed, just as full Internationalism can come to pass only by the internationalization of nations and not by cosmopolitanism simply. It is by recognizing differences, not ignoring them, that the *pax mundi* must come.

For this gradual interweaving of all creeds and religions does not mean the complete absorption or obliteration of even the tiniest sect in this majestic world-religion, but rather its due location in the sphere of the spirit, be it but the equivalent to a San Marino or Andorra on the physical map. Has not the tiniest stream its appointed place in the contributory system of the mighty Amazon? Those who wish to profess the tenets on which it lays particular stress, will have full liberty to do so: for do not those tenets, if they have any meaning, represent what is nearest to their heart? Are not those who profess them the world's expression for some tiny element of truth it desires to put forth? Are they not indeed the Word made flesh? Only instead of being, as they were in the past, cut off and isolated like some lost flora on an Alpine summit, they will henceforth know that they are but one of the many flowers of the field, whose deepest glory is to reveal the glory of the Creator without reflecting on His glory as revealed by other flowers. They are in fact a contingent in that innumerable throng worshipping the Unknown God under the ritual they prefer. If all roads lead to Rome in the physical world, so all spiritual paths lead to the City of God.

A more difficult question of course will be man's attitude towards those lowlier religions in which animism, totemism, fetishism, predominate,—stages



through which the great world-religions have passed, and which being as it were museums of all these stages still contain certain elements of them. Here again the sense of a common humanity and of universal brotherhood should convert scorn into sympathy, and make us tolerant of those who are still in the childhood of mankind, and of their somewhat childish efforts to explain the mysteries that surround them. Such a tolerance does not preclude us from trying to lead them from these conceptions to something higher. It was indeed on these lines that the early Christian missionaries in Europe worked.

2. THE TRANSFORMATION. And in this work of toleration we find ourselves unexpectedly helped by the more recent conception of dogma and its relation to myth. *La foi est éternelle*, as the French say, but *la croyance* (the outward and visible form) *est passagère*. For God fulfils Himself not only in many ways, but also in many *successive* ways. Creeds are indeed more or less imperfect embodiments of the Divine, but they are only in part eternal because we know only in part. Dogma, whether in the world of science or of religion, is embodied in words which change, alter and decay. Again, the meaning of these words can be given only in words which are in a similar state of solution and dissolution, so that even if, *per impossibile*, the words alone could be as it were petrified and crystallized, the ideas that they embody, being subject to modification and decay, would finally make them as unintelligible as some forgotten script. But this does not mean that any really true experience, whether stated as a natural or a spiritual law, - is necessarily here and now unreliable, useless or even harmful. What it does mean is, that it is true within certain limits and certain

conditions, whether of time or space. In fact these limits may be so vast that the truth embodied may apparently remain unchanged not simply for our own time but for epochs. Yet the day must come, if humanity is to progress, when the widest-spread dogma, like that of Newton's law of gravitation, must find its long uncontested absoluteness limited by the new theory of some Einstein. On the other hand, at the basis of every great dogma there lies a core of imperishable truth, ready to blossom out again and again into myth, when the dogma in which that core of truth is incarnated, decays. In this sense dogma, like reproductive life in the person of the individual mortal man, is at once mortal and immortal. In fact, the fundamental truths of no great religion can ever pass away, however much it may change with the ages or become absorbed in other great religions. Myth indeed is eternal, ever ready to spring up anew when the crop of dogma has failed.

What then is myth? If dogma be the scientific statement of religious beliefs, myth is their poetical expression, of which dogma, as history shows us, is often but the scientific re-statement. Or in other words, myth comes from the heart of man and dogma from his head. Necessarily, like every poetic definition, myth is incomplete, but contains always an aspect of the essential and, by its very nature, unlike dogma, allows of *allegorical* interpretation, and therefore is always open to interpretation in every age. It possesses the elasticity and adaptability of life itself. But science deliberately strives to exclude allegory though ultimately in vain, and states what it believes to be facts. Its laws have hitherto had the same massiveness and inertness as matter.



Their very inertia seemed to be their strength, though the recently formulated doctrine of relativity threatens in the long run to undermine this conception. Modernism is an attempt to treat dogma as allegory, to re-convert dogma into myth, taking for its motto the necessity of becoming once more a little child, in order to secure entrance to the Kingdom.

If this view of dogma and myth be correct, then we shall henceforth look on the beliefs of the humblest savage with more sympathetic eyes; we shall see they are but human myths in the making, the lowly beginnings of those immortal imaginings which alone can lead mankind at long last to a world-religion.

3. I pass to the third question: What is the most powerful argument for human survival? If I may put it in a paradox, I believe in immortal life, because I believe that life is immortal. But one may say: How can I prove that life is immortal? My answer is very simple, if not conclusive. It seems to me infinitely more probable that life has in some form or state always existed than that it appeared one day and will disappear another. It is almost as difficult for me to disbelieve in the eternity of life as in the eternity of matter or of God. *Omne vivum ex vivo*. Life put in a sensible appearance when the conditions were favourable, just as water freezes under certain conditions, and weeds will sprout under others. But life has always been there. Matter can no more create life than life can create God. Perhaps in some high and transcendental way God created life and created matter, but they were immanent in Him or He could not have created them. When He takes them back to Himself, then the present cycle will be concluded, and God will be All in All.

Personally, I have been driven of recent years to believe in some form of re-incarnation. Otherwise I do not see how man can really work out his destiny and help to build the cosmos. This conception seems to me to transcend, while also including, the idea of purgatory, which, though it satisfies the individual's instinct for *katharsis*, does not satisfy his equally strong longing that his sufferings may also help creation *as well as* himself. But without the idea of purgatory or re-incarnation our present-day religions do not seem to have sufficient moral sanction against wrong-doing. I know that every man makes to a certain extent his own heaven and his own hell for himself; but when we see the fraudulent millionaire die apparently happy and respected and the criminal statesman apparently pass to his rest without his crimes being expiated here, we are apt to wonder if the 'short service' system of life is really the truer conception, and if man is not always and for ever recurrently liable to perpetual conscription throughout the ages, till the supreme Armageddon has been won. One cannot help feeling that such a conception, if accepted in the Western world, would act as a most powerful deterrent to those in high places, who might otherwise be inclined to believe they can somehow dodge the consequences of their acts.

But, if I incline to the Eastern conception of re-incarnation, I am still enough of an Occidental to believe that even though ultimately re-incorporated in God, the individual will never reach that totally 'unconscious' state called Nirvāṇa, but will preserve somehow a conscious identity, as the Son preserves his identity compared with the Father. And so I suppose I am a believer in human survival to the



very end, for *identity implies at once sameness and duality*.

4. As regards the last question,—the utilization of the present psychic *élan*,—I have left myself but little room to treat of it. But many of my conclusions are implicit, if not explicit, in what has already been said. I have already alluded to the need of deepening our sense of social responsibility and social sympathy, with a view to strengthening not merely national but international solidarity, inculcating thereby a reverence for man, not only as a human but as a spiritual being, and so creating a respect for his religion and desire to comprehend it as the key to his higher self. This sense of social solidarity will be enormously fortified if, as Mr. Benchara Branford has pointed out in *A New Chapter in the Science of Government*, we are able to unite the two main forms of political organization at present competing with one another: the old regional or geographical and the new Guild or professional. Their conjunction should at once strengthen the sense of human solidarity at home and abroad. The more mankind really feel that they are one in kin and one for weal and woe, so will the prospects of a durable peace become more settled. Hence the value of such agencies as the Inter-university *Entente*, the Moral Education Inter-national Congress, the numerous bi-lingual reviews that have been started, the League of Nations, and the Commission on Inter-national Labour. And last, but not least, what would probably be one of the greatest helps to the cause, would be the creation of a world-university on the lines laid down by Mr. Branford in *Janus and Vesta*, to which I would refer.

CLOUDESLEY BRERETON.

## BEAUTY.

Rev. H. L. HUBBARD, M.A.

THE mystic life has been described by a modern writer, Mr. Horace Hutchinson, as 'a taste of Heaven in daily life.' Its final reward lies beyond the grave and gate of death, and the fulness of joy will be experienced by the mystic only in the Great Beyond. But for all that, the union of his spirit with God will bring not a few pearls of great price to the mystic in this life. A new sense and appreciation of Beauty is not the least of these treasures.

What is Beauty? Does it exist objectively or only in the mind which sees or hears it? This is an old controversy. Some have maintained that Beauty actually exists. They have laid down certain canons by which it can be tested. They have dissected it, criticised it, classified it. Others have turned in horror from such a cold-blooded conception of Beauty. They have maintained that each mind makes, as it were, its own Beauty. To different minds the same association may or may not bring the sense of Beauty. From this they deduce that Beauty is subjective and more or less dependent for its existence upon the image which it records or the impression it sets upon the mind at a particular moment.

The truth concerning the nature of Beauty probably lies somewhere between the two. It actually exists, but the senses must be trained to notice and appreciate it. A quickened perception of Beauty is one of the



fruits of the mystic life. How does this come about? Properly to understand how it is that a mystic is one who sees Beauty more readily than a non-mystic, we need to return for a moment to consider what the 'Beauty controversy' mentioned has to teach us. For the mystic can appreciate both sides of the question, and by his appreciation he is able to harmonize two apparently conflicting opinions.

The mystic believes that beauty exists objectively as the revelation of God. He knows that all material objects are the vehicles of the Spirit. He believes all outward appearances to be sacraments of Reality. His experience has taught him that everything which he can touch or see or hear is saturated with a Spirit which is beyond his sense-perceptions. Furthermore he sees that it is the presence of this interpenetrating Spirit which makes a material object beautiful. Beauty is the Reality behind the veil of the senses. In other words, Beauty is God immanent in creation. When we gaze on a wonderful vision in nature or art we are gazing through a veil into the Face of God. To the mystic every bush, every stone, every wave of the sea or breeze on the hill-top is crammed full of Divinity, instinct with God. Nothing to the mystic is ugly save sin, which shuts out the vision of God from his view. Wherever he goes, in town or country, in the crowded streets or along the lonely moors, God is for ever blinding his wondering eyes with a rich extravagance of Beauty.

This leads to the second reason why a mystic is of all men most capable of perceiving and appreciating Beauty. Not only does Beauty exist objectively, but it needs a spirit cleansed and purified to perceive its existence. The soul which is governed by the carnal

mind will see only a material object: the soul of the mystic, because it is led of the Spirit, will reach out and merge itself in the Spirit which underlies and permeates the material object. A man of the world (using the expression in its worst sense) will look at a factory, and will see only a place where men and women toil and money is produced. The mystic sees the Spirit at work striving to express itself through the material surroundings, hampered and thwarted though it be at every turn. He will see the little lives of men and women caught up into the great stream of Becoming—the never-ceasing ebb and flow of all human existence—and seeing this he will see the Spirit of God at work, and where God is he will find Beauty.

This perception of Beauty is something which none but a mystic or an artist (and all true artists are mystics, and mystics are artists) can fully understand. To them it is almost overpowering in its effects. It staggers them to see Reality at every turn. The flood of Beauty, the great sacrament of the Spirit of God, pours itself into their hearts, inebriates them with a wild and almost delirious joy. Again and again they plunge into the limitless depths of Divine Beauty. Action and reaction, Beauty poured out upon man, man plunging his whole life into Beauty,—such is the experience of the mystic. It is beyond words to describe it.

The finer perceptions of our human nature so easily become blunted. Men are tempted to steel themselves against any great emotion, whether of joy or sorrow. Especially does this seem to be so with the English. We are so terribly afraid of betraying outward feeling that we frequently succeed in damaging, almost beyond repair, our powers of feeling altogether.



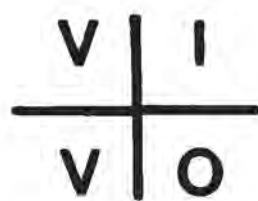
The mystic must avoid this result. However much he may decide not to shew his emotion, he must take great care not to blunt his powers of feeling. If this latter happens to him, he may perhaps escape any great suffering, but he will never be able to rise to the sublime heights of Divine Bliss. If he is prepared to suffer he will attain to such an appreciation of Beauty as is quite beyond description. If he turn away from suffering, pain and all the so-called ugly things of life, he will not experience its Beauty. To explain this apparent contradiction is not the purpose of this paper; but it cannot be too strongly insisted on that, not by avoiding pain is Beauty to be found, but only by treading deliberately along the highway of the Holy Cross.

H. L. HUBBARD.

## THE LAND OF THE TIME-LEECHES.

GUSTAV MEYRINK.

IN the churchyard of the secluded and out-of-the-world little town of Runkel my grandfather's body is laid 'to eternal rest.' His gravestone is thickly overgrown with moss and the date well-nigh obliterated; but below it, standing out in gilt<sup>1</sup> and as fresh as though they were cut yesterday, are four letters ranged round a cross, thus :



‘VIVO’—‘I live.’ Such was the meaning I was told, when as a boy I read the inscription for the first time. The word at once impressed itself as deeply on my soul as if the dead had uttered it from underneath the sod.

‘VIVO’—‘I live,’ a strange watch-word for a tombstone! Even to-day it re-echoes in my heart; whenever I think of it, I feel as I felt long since when first I stood before that grave. In my imagination I see my grandfather—though I had never known him in the flesh—lying there, untouched by decay, with folded hands, eyes open clear as crystal, motionless; like one who has escaped corruption in the midst of the realm of mould, with silent patience awaiting resurrection.

I have since visited many a churchyard of many a town; ever have my steps been directed there by a

<sup>1</sup> Cp. the Golden Gate of the Osiric Garden, end of *Der Golem*.



vague desire, for which I could not account, to read once more that word on some chance stone. Twice only have I found it—that cross-encircling ‘VIVO’—once in Danzig, once in Nuremberg. In both cases Time’s finger has rubbed out the name; in both the ‘VIVO’ shines out fresh and untouched as if instinct with life.

I had been told in my youth, and had always believed, that my grandfather had not left behind a single line in his own writing. All the more excited was I then when one day I discovered in a secret drawer of an old writing-desk—an ancient family heirloom—a packet of notes which had evidently been written by him. They were enclosed in a book-cover, on which I read the strange sentence :

“How shall man escape death if not by ceasing to wait and hope?”

At once I felt light up within me that mysterious ‘VIVO,’ which had ever throughout my life accompanied me with a faint shimmer, dying away a thousand times only to revive without any apparent outer cause in dreams or waking moments. If I had at times believed some chance had put that ‘VIVO’ on his tombstone—a parson’s choice perhaps—now, with this sentence on the book-cover before me, I knew for sure and certain the ‘VIVO’ must have had a deeper meaning for him; must doubtless hint at something that filled the whole life of my father’s father. And indeed, as I read on, page after page of his bequest to me confirmed my first intuition.

Most of the notes are of too private a nature to have their contents revealed to other eyes. It must suffice if I touch lightly on those details which led to my acquaintance with Johann Hermann Obereit.

It appeared from these memoirs that my grandfather was a member of a society called the 'Philadelphians,' an order claiming that its roots go back to ancient Egypt and hailing as its founder the legendary Hermes Trismegistus. Even the secret grips and signs of recognition were given. The name of Johann Hermann Obereit frequently occurred. He was a chemist and apparently an intimate friend of my grandfather's; indeed he seemed to have lived in the same house with him at Runkel. I wished naturally to learn more about the life of my extraordinary ancestor and about that hidden world-renouncing philosophy the spirit of which spoke out of every line he had written. I accordingly decided to go to Runkel to find out whether by chance any descendants of Obereit were still there and if they had any family records.

One can scarcely imagine anything more dream-like than this tiny little town of Runkel, slumbering away in spite of the screams and cries of Time, like some forgotten relic of the Middle Ages, with its crooked streets and passages, silent as the dead, and grass-grown, rugged cobble-stones, beneath the shadow of the ancient rock-built castle of Runkelstein, the ancestral seat of the Princes of Wied.

The very first morning after my arrival I felt myself irresistibly drawn to the little churchyard. There the days of my youth woke again to memory, as I stepped from one flower-carpeted mound to another in the sweet sunshine and read mechanically from the stones the names of those who slumbered beneath. Already from afar I recognized my grandfather's with its glittering mystic inscription. But on drawing near I found I was no longer alone.

An old white-haired, clean-shaven man of sharp-



cut features was sitting there, with his chin resting on the ivory handle of his walking-stick. As I approached he glanced at me with strangely vivid eyes, as of one in whom the likeness to a well-remembered face had awakened a host of memories. He was dressed in old-fashioned clothes, high collar and stock—one might almost have said like a family portrait in Louis Philippe or early Victorian style.

I was so astonished at a sight so out of keeping with present-day surroundings, moreover my brooding thoughts were so deeply sunk in what I had gathered from my grandfather's writings, that scarcely knowing what I did I uttered half-aloud the name 'Obereit.'

"Yes, my name is Johann Hermann Obereit," said the old gentleman without showing the least surprise. I nearly stopped breathing. And what I learned from the conversation that followed was even less calculated to diminish my astonishment.

It is indeed not an every-day experience to find oneself face to face with a man to all appearances not much older than oneself yet who had lived so long—some century and a half, he said! I felt like a youth in spite of my already white hair, as we paced side by side, while he spoke of Napoleon and historic persons he had known long years ago, as one would speak of people who had died the other day.

"In Runkel," he said with a smile, "I am believed to be my own grandson." He pointed to a tomb we were passing and which bore the date 1798. "By right I should be lying there," he continued. "I had the date put on to avoid the curiosity of the crowd for a modern Methuselah. The 'VIVO,' " he added, as if divining my thought, "will be put on only when I am dead for good."

Almost at once we became intimate friends; and he soon insisted on my staying with him. A month thus passed; and we sat up many a night engaged in deep discourse. But always when I would have asked the purport of the sentence on the book-cover that contained my grandsire's papers, he deftly turned the conversation. "How shall a man escape death if not by ceasing to wait and hope?" What could it mean?

One evening—indeed the last we passed together—our talk had turned on the old witch-trials. I was contending that they must all have been highly hysterical women, when suddenly he said: "So you do not believe a man may leave his body and travel, say, to Blocksberg?" "Shall I show you now?" he asked, looking sharply at me.

I shook my head. "I admit only this much," I said, laughing. "The so-called witches got into a kind of trance by taking narcotic drugs, and were then firmly persuaded they rode through the air on broomsticks!"

He remained sunk in thought. "You will perhaps say that I too travelled only in imagination," he murmured half aloud, and relapsed again into meditation.

After a while he rose slowly, went to his desk and returned with a small book.

"Perhaps you may be interested in what I wrote down here when first I made the experiment many long years ago. I must tell you I was still very young and full of hopes."

I saw from his indrawn look that his memory was going back to far-off days.

"I believed in what men call life, till blow after



blow fell on me. I lost whatever one may value most on earth—my wife, my children—all. Then fate brought about my meeting with your grandfather. It was he who taught me to understand what our desires are, what waiting is, what expectation, what hope is; how they are interlocked with one another; how one may tear the mask off the faces of those ghostly vampires. We called them the Time-leeches; for like blood-suckers they drain from our hearts Time, the very sap of life. It was here in this room that he taught me the first step on the way towards the conquest of death and how to strangle the vipers of hope. And then . . .”—he hesitated for a moment. “And then I became like a block of wood that does not feel whether it be touched gently or split asunder, plunged into water or thrown into fire. Since then there has been, as it were, a certain void within me. No more have I looked for consolation; no more have I needed it. Wherefore should I seek it? I know *I am*. Since then only is it that *I live*. There is a fundamental difference between ‘I live’ and ‘*I live*.’”

“You say that so simply; and yet it is terrible,” I interrupted, deeply moved.

“It only seems to be so,” he assured me smilingly. “Out of this heart-stableness there streams a sense of beatitude of which you can scarcely dream. It is like a sweet melody that never ceases—this ‘I am.’ Once born it cannot die—neither in sleep, nor when the outer world wakes our senses for us again, nor even in death.

“Shall I tell you why men now die so early and no longer live for a thousand years as it is written of the patriarchs in the scriptures? They are like the green watery shoots of a tree. They have forgotten

that they belong to the trunk, and so they wither away the first autumn. But I wanted to tell you how I first left my body.

“There is an old, old doctrine, as ancient as mankind itself. It has been handed on from mouth to ear until this day; but few know it. It teaches how to step over the threshold of death without losing consciousness. He who can rightly do so is henceforth master of himself. He has gained a new self, and what till then seemed his self becomes henceforth a tool just as now our hands and feet are organs for us.

“Heart-beat and breath are stilled as in a corpse when the newly rediscovered spirit goes forth,—when we go forth as once did Israel from the fleshpots of Egypt, and the waters of the Red Sea stood as walls on either side.

“Long and oft had I to practise, nameless and excruciating were the tortures I had to undergo, before I succeeded finally in freeing myself consciously from the body. At first I felt myself, as it were, hovering—just as we think ourselves able to fly in dreams—with knees drawn up yet moving quite easily.

“Suddenly I began gliding down. I found myself in a black stream running as it were from the south to the north. In our language we call it the flowing backwards of the Jordan. There was a roaring of waters, a buzzing of blood in the ears. In great excitement many voices—though I could not see their owners—cried out on me to turn back. A trembling seized upon me, and in dumb fear I swam towards a cliff that rose from the waters before me. Standing there in the moonlight was a naked child. But the signs of sex were absent, and in its forehead it had a third eye, like Polyphemus of old. It stood stock



still, pointing with its hand to the interior of the island.

"I advanced through a wood on a smooth white road, but without feeling the ground beneath my feet. When I tried to touch the trees and shrubs around me I could not feel them. It was as though there were a thin layer of air between them and me which I could not penetrate. A phosphorescence as from decaying wood covered every object and made seeing possible. But their outlines seemed vague and loose and soft like molluscs, and all seemed strangely over-sized. Featherless birds, with round staring eyes, swollen like fattened geese and huddled together in a huge nest, hissed down at me. A fawn, scarce able to walk yet as big as a full-grown deer, lay in the moss and lazily turned its fat pug-dog-like head towards me.

"There was a toad-like sluggishness in every creature I happened to see.

"By and by the knowledge of where I was dawned on me—in a land as real as our own world and yet but a reflection of it, in the realm of those unseen doubles that thrive upon the marrow of their terrestrial counterparts, that exploit their originals and grow into ever huger shapes, the more the latter eat themselves up in vain hoping and waiting for happiness and joy. If the mothers of young animals are shot off and their little ones waste and waste away longing in faith for their food until they die in the tortures of starvation, spectral doubles grow up in this accursed spirit-land, and like spiders suck up the life that trickles from the creatures of our world. The life-powers of all that thus wane away in vain hopes, become gross shapes and luxurious weeds in this Leech-land, the very soil of which is impregnated by

the fattening breath of time spent in vain waiting and wasting.

“As I wandered on I came to a town full of people. Many of them I knew on earth. I reminded myself of their countless vain and abortive hopes; how they walked more and more bowed down year after year, yet could not drive out of their hearts the vampires—their own demonic selves that devoured their Life and their Time. Here I saw them staggering about swollen into spongy monsters with huge bellies, bulging eyes and cheeks puffed with fat.

“First I noticed a bank which displayed in its windows the announcement:

FORTUNA  
LOTTERY OFFICE  
EVERY TICKET  
WINS  
THE FIRST PRIZE

Out of it came thronging a grinning crowd carrying sacks of gold, smacking their puffed lips in greasy contentment—phantoms in fat and jelly of all who waste their lives on earth in the insatiable hunger for a gambler's gains.

“I entered a vast hall; it seemed like a colossal temple whose columns reached the sky. There, on a throne of coagulated blood, sat a monstrous four-armed figure. Its body was human but its head a brute's—hyæna-like, with foam-flecked jaws and snout. It was the war-god of the still savage superstitious nations who offer it their prayers for victory over their foes.

“Filled with horror and loathing I fled out of the



atmosphere of decay and corruption which filled the place, back into the streets, but only to be dumb-founded again at the sight of a palace which surpassed in splendour any I had ever seen. And yet every stone, every gable, mullion, ornament, seemed strangely familiar; it was as if I had once built it all up in fancy for myself. I mounted the broad white marble steps. On the door-plate before me I read . . . my own name—JOHANN H. OBEREIT! I entered. Inside I saw myself clad in purple sitting at a table groaning with luxuries and waited on by thousands of fair women slaves. Immediately I recognized them as the women who had pleased my senses in life, though most of them but as a passing moment's whim.

“A feeling of indescribable hatred filled me when I realized that this foul double of mine had wallowed and revelled here in lust and luxury my whole life; that it was I myself who had called him into being and lavished riches on him by the outflow of the magic power of my own self, drained from me by the vain hopes and lusts and expectations of my soul.

“With terror I saw that my whole life had been spent in waiting and in waiting only—as it were an unstaunchable bleeding to death; that the time left me for feeling the *present* amounted to only a few hours.

“Like a bubble burst before me whatever I had hitherto thought to be the content of my life. I tell you that whatever we seem to finish on earth ever generates new waiting and hoping. The whole world is pervaded by the pestiferous breath of the decay of a scarcely-born present. Who has not felt the enervating weakness that seizes on one when sitting in the waiting-room of a doctor or lawyer or official? What we call life is the waiting-room of death!

"Suddenly I realized then and there what Time is. We ourselves are forms made out of Time—bodies that seem to be matter, but are no more than coagulated Time. And our daily withering away towards the grave—what is it but our returning unto Time again, waiting and hoping being but the symptoms of this process, even as ice on a stove hisses away as it changes back to water again?"

"I now saw that, as this knowledge woke in my mind, trembling seized upon my double, and that his face was contorted with terror. Then I knew what I had to do; to fight unto the death with every weapon against those phantoms that suck our life away like vampires.

"Oh! they know full well why they remain invisible for man, why they hide themselves from our eyes—those parasites of our life!—even as it is the devil's most foul device to act as if he did not exist. Since then I have for ever rooted out of my life the two ideas of hoping and waiting."

"I am sure," I said, when the old gentleman fell to silence, "I should break down at the first step, if I tried to tread the terrible way along which you have walked. I can well believe that by incessant labour a man may benumb the feeling of waiting and hoping in his soul; but . . .

"Yes, but only *benumb* it," he interrupted. "Within you the waiting still remains alive. You must put the axe to the root. Become as an automaton in this world, as one dead though seemingly alive. Never reach out after a tempting fruit, if there is to be the shortest waiting for it. Do not stir a hand; and all will fall ripe into your lap. At the beginning, and for long perchance, it may be like a



wandering through desert plains void of all consolation ; but suddenly there will be a brightness round you and you will see all things—beautiful and ugly—in a new and unexpected splendour. Then will there be no more ‘importance’ and ‘unimportance’ for you ; every event will be equally ‘important’ and ‘unimportant.’ You will become ‘horned’ by drinking the dragon’s blood, and be able to say of yourself : I fare forth into the shoreless sea of an unending life with snow-white sails.”

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These were the last words Johann Hermann Obereit spoke to me. I have not seen him again.

Many years have passed since then and I have tried as well as I could to follow his doctrine ; but waiting and hoping will not wane from my heart.

I am too weak, alas ! to root out these weeds ; and so I no longer wonder that on the countless gravestones so very seldom does one find the legend :

V	I
v	o

GUSTAV MEYRINK.

(Rendered from the Original.)

## THE DAWN CHORUS.

THE junior thrushes of the garden were at school or, perhaps more correctly, college; for the month was December, and nursery days were long since forgotten. These would be the soloists of next year's chorus.

Suddenly there was an uproar in the class, which was held in the upper branches of the shrubbery. Manners and customs were flung aside, and all, excepting the teacher, an elderly bird, shrieked and chattered at once.

"Our berries, our berries!"

"They're going!"

"They're being taken!"

"Stop, thief! Stop, thief!"

"They're ours, ours, ours!"

The teacher waited patiently for the clamour to subside, and said nothing until everyone was seated again on the branches of the thick yew tree.

"Our best berries," grumbled the last young anarchist. "We were keeping them for the January frost."

"Now, young people, explain your unseemly conduct, if you please," rapped out the teacher, shaking his feathers and looking sharply about him.

"Don't you see him, teacher? He's down there, on the path, one of those two-legged so-called Christians. He is cutting all our best berries."

"I see him distinctly. What of it?"

"We shall want them when it freezes; we left that holly tree on purpose; we knew we should be hungry later on."



"Perhaps we shall," said the teacher, "and perhaps not. In any case you are lacking in knowledge. That two-legged Christian has good intentions; he is going to decorate his church for Christmas. It is the intention that counts."

"But those berries were put there expressly for us; and now, who will care if we are hungry? They were ours by right."

"Your very remark proves that you have no right whatever to those berries."

"How so, teacher? You may be as hungry as anyone, you know." The young anarchist was forgetting himself in his indignation.

"Simply because you have no right to anything unless you are willing to give it up at a moment's notice. That is the only valid test of personal property, or indeed of any sort or kind of property."

There was silence in the yew tree for the space of half a minute.

"But, teacher, if the worms weren't ours, and the berries weren't ours, where should we be?"

"Does it matter in the smallest degree *where* you are as long as you *are*?"

"We thought it did matter; because if we were too hungry for too long together, we should soon all be dead; then where should we be?"

"Where you will be depends entirely upon what you have done. Does it matter if you die, as long as you have sung one perfect song?"

After this question there was silence in the yew tree for several moments. The last sound heard by the two-legged Christian as he went his way with his bunch of holly was the teacher's voice calling out clearly:

“Now then, young people, all together please, all together; or it will be next year before you know the Dawn Chorus.”

BRIDGET MORDAUNT.

## OUR GLORIOUS DEAD.

### INSCRIPTION FOR A WAR MEMORIAL.

THERE is no death for these, they cannot die;  
Deep in our memories yet, they live and lie;  
Bound to all hearts by an eternal tie.  
They move among us here, with unbowed head;  
The ever-fighting, ever-living Dead.

They toiled amid the shadows and the shoals;  
Nor were they Flesh, but proud immortal Souls;  
And they are marching on to grander goals.  
They move among us here, with unbowed head;  
The ever-fighting, ever-living Dead.

They found themselves in others then at last;  
Theirs is an endless present, and no past;  
Adventure still, adventure yet more vast.  
They move among us here, with unbowed head;  
The ever-fighting, ever-living Dead.

We honour them, not that their bones are dust;  
But that they are our honour, and we must;  
Because they showed the world a splendid trust.  
They move among us here, with unbowed head;  
The ever-fighting, ever-living Dead.

They are our glory still, and now we give  
To them this tribute, that by them we live;  
A royal and Divine prerogative.  
They move among us here, with unbowed head;  
Our ever-fighting, ever-living Dead.



Soldiers of Duty, service was their pride ;  
 They laid them down at the dear Saviour's side,  
 Upon the Altar, crowned and crucified.  
 They move among us here, with unbowed head ;  
 Our ever-fighting, ever-living Dead.

F. W. ORDE WARD.

## THE LAMENT OF ISIS.

### THE BEGINNING OF THE LAMENTATIONS OF ISIS AND NEPHTHYS.<sup>1</sup>

COME to thy house! Come to thy house! O pillar!<sup>2</sup>  
 Come to thy house! Thy enemies are not.  
 O beautiful kinsman! Come to thy house! Behold  
 me! I am thy sister, thy love. Thou hast not  
 ceased for me?  
 O beautiful youth! Come to thy house now! now!  
 For I see thee not.  
 My heart mourns thee; my eyes seek thee; yea I seek  
 thee to see thee with<sup>3</sup> these [eyes] of mine;  
 To see thee, to see thee, beautiful prince! with<sup>4</sup> these  
 of mine; to see thee, glorious one! to see thee, to  
 see thee, glorious pillar! to see thee!  
 Come to thy love!  
 Come to thy love! Onnophris true of voice! Come to  
 thy sister! Come to thy wife! Still of heart!<sup>5</sup>  
 Come to thy consort!

M. W. BLACKDEN.

<sup>1</sup> See Mead's *Thrice-greatest Hermes*, i. 294.

<sup>2</sup> IôN—pillar, column, stone; same word as the city of 'On.'

<sup>3</sup> & <sup>4</sup> Lit. 'by'; iN NôN Nôî means 'by these of mine,' not 'in the form of the Nai.'

<sup>5</sup> WêRDôW iêB.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

### LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

**Studies in Japanese Confucianism.** By Robert Cornell Armstrong, M.A., Ph.D., Kwansei Gakuin, Kobe, Japan. University of Toronto Studies: Philosophy. Toronto, published by the Librarian of the University; pp. xv. + 326.

THIS is a valuable piece of work, breaking new ground. Though Dr. Armstrong is engaged in Mission work, and the title-page contains at its foot the imprint 'Forward Movement Department of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Church,' there is a minimum of intrusion of Missionary comment. Of course the supreme hope of the propagandist body to which the writer is attached, is that eventually Japan will be Christianised; but the difficulties of the problem with which it is faced are regarded in a far more chastened spirit than used to be the old bad habit. This marked change may be seen in the final sentences of the Rev. Danjo Ebina's 'Appreciation of Confucianism,' which he contributes to Dr. Armstrong's 'Conclusion.' This Japanese Christian minister writes: "Japan would have been Christianised sooner if the Western antitheistic science and the deistic conception of God through older missionaries had not obstructed the way. Yet the way was not entirely destroyed. The grand synthesis of the deistic and the pantheistic tendencies is still awaiting accomplishment in the higher conception of divine and human personality which modern Christianity endeavours to attain. Confucianism is dead in its form, but the seed sown by it is still awaiting its transformation" (p. 293). But indeed, judging from the rest of the book, the spirit of Confucianism seems to be still a potent factor in the training of the nation, and it is very doubtful how eventually Japan will vote religiously. In Dr. Armstrong's pages appreciation is frequently generous, as for instance when he tells us that these Confucianists "are interested in the same spirit of righteousness and truth" as ourselves, and "many of them have suffered and even died for their convictions"; and for the most



part we are presented with page after page of information. It is doubtful whether any Orientalist could have written such a book by his own unaided industry. The main body of the work bears the marks of minds steeped in the tradition, and Dr. Armstrong is to be congratulated on the way he has reproduced the material for which, he tells us, he is indebted to many Japanese teachers.

As in our own early Middle Age the younger nations of Europe were entirely dominated by the higher culture of the Roman tradition and by Christianity, and for centuries were unable to move freely and think out their own thoughts amid the wealth of the new formulæ presented to them, so was it with the Japanese. Confucianism and Buddhism played a similar rôle in their cultural development. But in spite of their extraordinary receptibility and adaptability they were not swamped with the flood of new learning and belief; and little by little the native spirit of the race and the peculiar genius of the people reasserted themselves. So much so that, as Dr. Tetsujiro Inouye, Professor of Philosophy in the University of Tokyo, tells us, "Confucianism was, during the Tokugawa age, almost entirely Japanised, and in that way it was made far more vigorous and efficacious than in China and elsewhere." But the Confucianism that was Japanised was not the old Confucianism, except in so far as there were attempts made by the Classical school to revert to the simple ethics of the earliest teaching of the sages in China. It was a Confucianism that had already been through a long development, and from an ethical discipline had become a metaphysic by contact and friction with Taoism and Buddhism. It was a long process, which reached a climax in the New Confucianism dating from the revival of learning, in the China of the 12th century, and the subsequent founding of the two great rival schools of Shushi and Yomei, which may be roughly characterised as the Intellectualists and Intuitionists. Thus Dr. Armstrong divides his work into five chief parts, dealing with (1) Japanese early Confucianism from 750-1250 A.D.; (2) the Japanese followers of the Shushi school; (3) those of the O-Yomei school; and then with (4) the Classical and (5) the Eclectic school, which last selected and combined features from the four preceding movements.

The view of Confucianism commonly presented to us in the West in our manuals and books of reference gives us little or no idea of its development and what it stands for to-day. It confines its attention almost entirely to original Confucianism with some reference to Mencius. But this is equivalent to confining our view



of Christianity to the books of the New Testament and ignoring its subsequent literature and development. The interest of this development as it manifested itself in China, and then also in further modified forms in Japan, may be seen from a rough glance at the main moments or stages in the process of development that transformed Confucianism from a series of moral aphorisms into a metaphysical or philosophical system, the fruitage of at least eighteen centuries of struggle and adaptation. The first was the union of Taoism with Confucianism; the second was the introduction of Buddhism (67 A.D.); the third was the introduction of the Zen learning; and the last stage was the reaction from these teachings to the more practical morality of Confucius. Taoism is not dealt with even in summary by Dr. Armstrong. This rival philosophical school to earliest Confucianism was based on the two great doctrines of going the Way of the Universe and of the original goodness of the heart of man. But such a cursory reference to a great system of thought and life is almost worse than saying nothing. The 'Zen learning' was one of the contemplative (Zen = Dhyāna) forms of Mahāyāna Buddhism, and was introduced into China in 526 A.D. It was a reaction against the doctrine of merit through works, which in some phases of older Buddhism had become very exaggerated in a formal way. It accordingly, we are told, "emphasised the necessity of mere heart-culture, and discredited the possibility of any merit being stored up by works. All men possessed the perfect heart for wisdom. This heart was the perfect essence of Buddha, and there was no need to follow or obey anything else" (p. 300). This of course only slightly indicates the spirit of Zen Buddhism; indeed Buddhism is not one of Dr. Armstrong's strong points, as may be seen from his superficial Appendix on 'Buddhism in Japan.' But the important point to note is that, though during several of these stages original Confucianism was almost lost sight of, "its simple, practical, moral teaching" nevertheless could not be "crushed by the extreme supramundane doctrines of any of the other sects." And "the result was that Confucianism came out of the process enriched and systematised by ages of conflict" (p. 297).

With regard to this systematised Confucianism it is interesting further to note how the main conflict between the schools centred on the great question of the relation between the 'heart' and the 'contingent disposition' in man, corresponding with the two great principles in the universe whose nature may be to some extent appreciated from the following paragraphs:



"In all existence there are supposed to be two elements always present. These are 'Ri' and 'Ki.' 'Ri' corresponds roughly with the Greek *Logos*, and may be translated Reason or Law. It is that which gives permanence and order to all things. It constitutes virtue and nature what they are, in so far as they may be regarded as having the character of necessity. 'Ki' has been described . . . as equivalent to the Greek *Pneuma*, breath or soul. It is the constantly moving sensible world. . . . The Shushi school held that they could not be absolutely separated, but that even in the Infinite and in man, although the Law, 'Ri,' predominated, 'Ki' was always present" (p. 37).

"In the earlier Chinese thought there were at least two 'Ki,' the terrestrial and the celestial. In the Shushi thought this dual 'Ki' is still present, but is being absorbed by a greater dualism, that of 'Ri' (Reason) and 'Ki.' 'Ri' and 'Ki,' according to the Shushi school, are not separable. In the thought of Yomei this dualism is lost. 'Ri' is identical with the heart, apart from which there is nothing. The heart is identical with heaven and the way" (p. 125).

This 'heart' is of course the mystical heart and not the physical; it is the original or higher nature, what perhaps a Platonist would call mind and a Christian spirit. But in working out his scheme of ethics Yomei uses the term 'heart' in two senses. Thus: "Yomei made intuitive knowledge the basis of his morality. He thought the heart was capable of knowing good and evil. He said: 'Lust comes daily. It is like dust on the ground. If you neglect to sweep it for a day, much dust will accumulate. If, however, you sincerely polish the heart, the way will be limitless. The better you know the way the deeper it is.' . . . 'When the good heart arises you can realise its ideal. But if the evil heart arises, you recognise it and stop it. This realising the ideal and checking evil is the desire of the heart.' . . . 'The heart is one. Before it is human it is the heart of the way. When it becomes mixed with human falsehood it is the heart of man'" (p. 125).

Yet one more quotation out of the very many that could be selected, to give the reader an insight into the high regions into which this metaphysical and moral theorising was carried. It is from the teaching of Ito Jinsai, one of the great masters of the Classical or Conservative school, who flourished in the first half of the 17th century. Just as the whole thought of the Taoist philosophers centred round the idea of Tao or the Way, so was it



with developing Confucianism. As opposed to those scholars who taught that the way of human nature was 'Ri,' Jinsai plainly declared: "The way is benevolence and righteousness"—the two fundamental virtues of Confucian ethics, sometimes translated as charity and duty to one's neighbour. Jinsai in fact found in these highest virtues the nearest approach that man could have to an understanding of the true nature of things. For he continues: "Benevolence and righteousness in man are as the active or male and passive or female principles in the universe. There is no way apart from benevolence and righteousness. Just as the active governs the passive, so Confucianism makes benevolence first and righteousness second. . . . There are many terms used to express the idea of morality, but they are all summed up in benevolence and righteousness. Though a man becomes great and makes a great contribution to the world's progress, if he lacks benevolence and righteousness, he is not worthy of praise from the standpoint of morality. To be called wise, he must know and govern himself according to these two virtues. Propriety harmonises these two. It and other virtues are but the expansion of benevolence and righteousness" (p. 220).

Contemporary with Jinsai, and together with him founder of the Classical school, was Yamaga Soko, whose views should be of peculiar interest to admirers of the Samurai spirit and discipline: for "he combined military tactics with Confucianism, and 'beating them into one ball,' became what we may term the 'Father of Bushido,' the spirit of knighthood in Japan" (p. 198).

We have in this short notice been able to touch upon only two or three points of interest amid a wealth of good things. The whole of Dr. Armstrong's exposition of Japanese Confucianism and the lives and views of its many teachers deserves careful study by anyone who desires to estimate the nature of one of the four most powerful influences in the development of Japanese culture; the other three being of course Shintoism, Buddhism and last but not least Western learning. It should, however, be remembered that Confucianism in Japan has been little popularised directly by scholars. Its influence has been for the most part indirect among the people; for only a few of its great thinkers have written in Japanese, such as Kaibara Ekiken. Confucianism in Japan has been confined for the most part to thinkers who have used Chinese as their medium of expression, just as Latin was used by the learned of the Middle Ages. Nevertheless it has had indirectly an enormous influence on Japanese life and character in all classes.



If we can compare its genius with that of any great moral philosophical movement in the West, we may say that it approaches in spirit and directness nearest to Stoicism. And certainly no student of comparative ethics can afford to remain in ignorance of so important a contribution to the development of the moral idea as we find, not only in Chinese Confucianism, but also in its peculiar development among the vigorous and practical minds of the thinkers of Nippon.

Dr. Armstrong's highly instructive volume is furnished with twelve reproductions of portraits of famous Japanese sages, and also with an English bibliography and a short subject-index.

#### PAGAN AND CHRISTIAN CREEDS.

Their Origin and Meaning. By Edward Carpenter. London (Allen & Unwin); pp. 318; 10s. 6d. net.

"AN honest God is the noblest work of man." This acute and characteristic saying of Butler in *Erewhon* might well have been quoted by Mr. Carpenter on his title-page as a motto; for it sums up with ironic humour and searching sarcasm the whole idea upon which his work is based. His study of Pagan and Christian Creeds, in the modern style, and along the lines of comparative religion, dating back to pre-historic times, taking in all history, dealing with astronomy, magic and mysteries, savage customs, myths and legends, ends in the Consciousness of Man himself. The argument is that Man made all his own Gods and finally rose to make God, as now known. This is at once a large and a luminous idea, shedding light on many dark places and showing the way to a coherent and consistent system of philosophy founded upon human psychology as its broad base. It is claimed here on the wrapper as "a new theory concerning the origin of religious rites and ceremonies from prehistoric times onwards." Its newness may be questioned; but we do not remember having seen this germinating idea worked out so cogently, simply and attractively as in these pleasantly written pages.

In his short chapter xiv., 'The Meaning of it All,' Mr. Carpenter boldly sums up his case for Man as the sole creator of his Gods, and of his God. Simply stated, it is that all the facts and fictions we know of in reference to religion go back for their origin to the Consciousness of Man. In his own words: "Since the dawn of humanity on the earth—many hundreds of thousands

or perhaps a million years ago—there has been a slow psychologic evolution, a gradual development or refinement of Consciousness, which, at a certain stage, has spontaneously given birth in the human race to the phenomena of religious belief and religious ritual—these phenomena always following, step by step, a certain order depending on the degrees of psychologic evolution concerned.” This is a large thought lucidly expressed, and it may fairly be taken as a working hypothesis in this great matter. The main stages of this psychologic evolution are three: “The stage of Simple Consciousness, the stage of Self-consciousness, and a third stage which, for want of a better word, we may term the stage of Universal Consciousness.”

In the first stage of Simple Consciousness Man is here ranked with the higher animals. “He saw, he heard, he felt, he noted.” He was an instinctive part of nature. But the Consciousness of *himself*, as a being separate from his impressions, as separate from his surroundings, had not yet arisen or taken hold of him. During this Animal period of man in the first stage of his Consciousness it is suggested that he had the same wild grace, perfection of form, and freedom of motion which we admire in wild animals now. And this the author would regard as the really Golden Age! It was the time during which the system of Totems arose. The writer’s deduction from all this is that it was also “the age from which, by a natural evolution, the sense of Religion came to mankind.” Mr. Carpenter then goes on to carry his argument a step further. “If Religion in man is the sense of ties binding his inner self to the powers of the Universe around him, then I think it is evident that primitive man, as I have described him, possessed the *reality* of this sense—though so far buried and sub-conscious that he was hardly aware of it. It was only later and with the coming of the Second Stage that this sense began to rise distinctly into consciousness.”

We now come to the second period of growth in the personality of Man. Comparing it with the evolution of a child, in whom he thinks Self-consciousness appears at about the age of three, he says that in the evolution of the race there has been a period, “extending over a vast interval of time,” when on men in general there dawned the “Consciousness of *themselves*, of their own thoughts and actions.” With this development there came quest and questioning. The mind revolved round a new centre. It studied itself and, in that way, it lost touch with the larger life of Nature and of the Tribe. The Self-conscious Man started,



as it were, on his own and lived for himself. As Mr. Carpenter picturesquely puts it, "the Garden of Eden and the Golden Age closed their gates behind him," and man began his doleful pilgrimage, which still goes on to-day. But the effect of this centring round himself was to make him an exile from the great Whole, and so he committed the sin of Separation. From that moment there was upon him a sense of loneliness and guilt. Out of these feelings arose the belief in magic and demons and gods; a complex system of sacrifice and expiation, a whole series of ceremonies of initiation, of eucharistic meals, and of marriage, all based upon the wish to keep within the grace of the Powers and live under the protection of his Tribe and his Totem. This idea of sin and the feeling of fear were at the bottom of all these things that we now call superstition, though that is only another way of describing the rites of religion as practised during many long bygone centuries and, as many think, even down to to-day.

All this part of the book is very clearly and closely written; but needs careful study, for it is a truly enormous matter. It is estimated that some 30,000 years have passed away since the first dim evolution of human Self-consciousness began. We are now living in a new order of mentality, here called the third stage of Consciousness, which holds the present and the future and the hopes of the millennium. Mr. Carpenter, though nearing 76, still writes in his brave old way. He holds that ultimately man will emerge from these terrors and tangles of religion and morality in all things free, familiar with them all and bound by none. "He will realise the inner meaning of the creeds and rituals of the ancient religions and will hail with joy the fulfilment of their far prophecy down the ages—finding after all the long-expected Saviour of the world within his own breast and Paradise in the disclosure there of the everlasting peace of the Soul." Thus eloquently he closes his conclusion.

It is impossible to treat at all adequately the great questions so frankly raised in this vital book. The author takes all Time and Space as the background of his passing pictures, and deals with the origin of Man as well as of his Pagan and Christian Creeds. He suggests a solution which seems scientific in its principle and its methods; but his vast eras leave many blanks to be filled. His pre-historic examples stand out clearly; but the many missing links are also made manifest. Though he has read wisely and well, the authorities quoted are, as it were, second-hand. In a work about origins it would have been better if the

original sources upon which these writers relied could also have been given. Nevertheless we have in these seventeen chapters much interesting matter well and ably brought together. From Solar Myths we go on to Totem-Sacraments and Eucharists, Expiation, Redemption and Initiation, Ritual Dancing, the Sex-Taboo, Ancient Mysteries, the Genesis and then the Exodus of Christianity. If Mr. Carpenter's views were generally adopted there would be an end to Revelation, Inspiration and Religion as commonly understood. But even so, there would still remain the ideas and the ideals of a Divine Philosophy. To take only one of the many examples of Myths and Mysteries here given—the Virgin-Mother Mary. Suppose the old story of Bethlehem and Nazareth no longer to hold the people and the name of Mary to become meaningless, would there not still remain, on Mr. Carpenter's own 'new theory,' a consciousness common to man of an ideal purity, a sweet and deep maternity and a loving humanity that would still live amongst men in their own true life?

F. W.

#### THE SPIRIT.

God and His Relation to Man considered from the Standpoint of Philosophy, Psychology and Art. By Various Authors, edited by the Rev. B. H. Streeter. London (Macmillan); pp. xii. + 381; 10s. 6d. net.

THE doctrine of the Holy Spirit has long needed reinterpretation. Hitherto it has usually been approached either from the theological and philosophical standpoint, or else in a more or less desultory fashion from the side of art and æsthetics. The book under consideration is an attempt to combine these various methods of approach and to re-examine "the conception of the Spirit—considered as God in action—in the light alike of the religious experience and theological reflection of the Christian Church throughout the ages, and of present-day movements in Philosophy, Psychology and Art." To that end a number of experts have met together from time to time for mutual discussion, study and prayer. The result of their labours is a volume of essays wherein each writes of the Spirit from his or her own standpoint.

Professor Pringle-Pattison contributes an essay on 'Immanence and Transcendence.' He shews very clearly the danger of a too close insistence on either of these fundamental issues



of religious philosophy. On the one hand lies the Scylla of pantheism; on the other, the Charybdis of deism. Popular Christianity has tended historically to the latter position and, by emphasizing the transcendence of the Creator and the divinity of Christ, has opened the way to the modern conception of God as the Unknown and Unknowable. The remedy for this half-truth lies in the recognition of the indwelling Spirit as the guiding and formative agency in the world-process of evolution. Miss Lily Dougall has written two essays in this book. In the former—'God in Action'—she attempts to answer some of the questions which are exercising the minds of present-day thinkers. She accepts that view of the Spirit which makes it a co-operator with Nature, and consequently she is led to define 'supernatural' as "the action of God evoking latent powers of the human." She is convinced that the Spirit of God must always work for good and against evil, the supreme task of its working being to lead man to that perfect correspondence with his environment which is the Kingdom of Heaven. In her second essay she writes of the Christian Sacraments and applies the laws of modern psychology in explanation of their power. Dr. Hadfield, the neurologist, approaches the subject from the medical standpoint. He reviews the psychology of power and emphasizes the dynamic force of religion as an influence at once harmonizing and curative in all cases of mental or psychic disorder. Mr. Emmet writes of the psychology of grace and of inspiration. Grace is the influence of God upon man whereby the Divine fortifies the human in times of need. Inspiration is of a like nature. The Spirit of God comes into contact with the human spirit for the purpose of revealing Divine Truth to man. The test of inspiration lies in the truth of the message rather than the method of revelation. Professor Anderson deals with the problem of Pentecost, and defines the Spirit's function as that of a binding force, knitting the many into one. The Editor, Canon Streeter, closes the volume with a chapter on 'Christ the Constructive Revolutionary.' Having described Christ as the 'Portrait of the Spirit,' he shews Him as the critic of tradition and as a constructive thinker. From these considerations, taken together, he deduces the function of the Spirit as 'critic' and 'constructor.'

We have left to the last two essays by Mr. Clutton-Brock, dealing with spiritual experience and the relationship between spirit and matter. Mankind has fought shy of that experience which is æsthetic, and has given itself to that which is scientific.

In other words, it has tended to reject the personal element in religion in favour of the impersonal. This is the dividing line between the mystic and the theologian. The latter is concerned with God as a subject more or less speculative, the former learns to touch God in personal experience. Art is the attempt to express this experience; worship the effort to share it with others. To the soul that surrenders itself to a spiritual experience comes the knowledge of Reality. If it is unhindered by ecclesiastical tradition, it will act upon this knowledge, for to do so is to be 'led of the Spirit.' Matter is that which is perceived by the senses, but all knowledge is not of this kind. There is a spiritual perception in another sphere which is concerned with the apprehension of truth, beauty and righteousness. Mr. Clutton-Brock recognizes fully the value of both matter and spirit, but he pleads eloquently—almost fiercely—against that mental outlook which exalts the function of the former by setting it in opposition to the latter. Use is not the only attribute whereby the value of an object is to be estimated. "God did not make the sun to be our candle; He did not make dogs to be our pets. . . . He made all things not for us but to Himself, that they might more and more attain to that life which is Himself."

To sum up: this book does, in a well-worn phrase, "supply a long-felt want." In the work of reconstruction spiritual forces cannot be left out of account. Mankind must enter into its heritage under the guidance of the Spirit, for only when God and man work in harmony will the world be living its true life. To that end—the fusion of the human will with the Divine—everything must contribute. It may well be that this book will help to guide men's minds and readjust their energies towards the only solution of the world's agony. It may be that the Spirit will once again move upon the face of the waters, and bring to birth a world of light and order, where now is darkness and confusion.

H. L. H.

#### DE L'INCONSCIENT AU CONSCIENT.

Par le Dr. Gustave Geley. Paris (Alcan); pp. 346; 10frs.

THE publisher's announcement of this suggestive but over-confident volume, which is listed under the heading 'Library of Contemporary Philosophy,' tells us that it is an audacious essay in scientific philosophy, based on the analysis and synthesis of all known facts in the domain of the natural sciences, of biology,



physiology and psychology, including the most complex and difficult phenomena such as those of the psychology of the subconscious and of so-called supra-normal psycho-physiology. The author arrives at the following main preliminary conclusions:

The classical modern theories both of evolution and of the individual are false. Evolution is not due essentially either to adaptation or to natural selection, which appear only as subordinate factors. The physiological individual is far more than a complex of cells. The psychological individual is far more than the sum of the consciousnesses of the neurones.

These conclusions are reached after a searching criticism, in which current theories are reviewed, especially that of Bergson, whose theory of creative evolution is found insufficient by our author and replaced by one of palingenetic evolution, in which he adopts the reincarnation-hypothesis in its widest sense. Throughout Dr. Geley claims to be rigorously scientific, but in none of the psychical phenomena to which he appeals is there anything bearing on this subject of reincarnation. It is true that the author is not dogmatic, in so far as he claims that his essentially idealistic conception of the universe and of the individual is no longer based on faith or on intuition but on a rigorous calculus of probabilities; nevertheless some of his speculations have all the dogmatic appearance which he would avoid, in spite of the vigour with which he hurls '*la science*' at our heads. As is known, Dr. Geley has been profoundly impressed with the remarkable so-called materialisation-phenomena produced through the mediumship of Mlle. 'Eva. C.', the adopted daughter of Mme. Bisson, and to the genuineness of which he has courageously borne testimony, after most searching tests reaching over two years of continuous research. But, fully granting the genuineness of these and allied phenomena, we are as yet too much at the beginnings of things to warrant the formulation of a cosmic philosophy, or even to adopt the apparent modus of these puzzling happenings as an integral factor in general evolutionary law.

The two fundamental theses or postulations of Dr. Geley's philosophy are as follows:

i. The essential reality in the universe and in the individual is a unique dynamic psychism (*dynamo-psychisme*), originally unconscious but containing in itself all potentialities; the diverse and innumerable appearances of things are ever and always simply its '*représentations*.'

The author is a convinced Schopenhauerian, who would

correct Schopenhauer's imperfect science and carry out his theories to their logical conclusion. By 'representations' are apparently meant the presentations to *our* consciousness of the activities of the dynamic-psychical evolutionary process.

ii. This essential and creative dynamic psychism proceeds, by evolution, from the unconscious to the conscious (p. 215).

Or to put it again in the author's own phrasing, when treating of the realisation of the supreme consciousness :

What is essential (or real) in the universe is indestructible and everlasting, enduring amid the transitory appearances of things. This reality evolves from the unconscious to the conscious. The consciousness of the individual constitutes an integral part of this essential reality in the universe and evolves, while itself remaining indestructible and everlasting, from the unconscious to the conscious (p. 309).

It goes without saying that the problem of permanence amid change and of change in permanence is not solved by this theory. How what is previously unconscious can become conscious is a temporal question; when applied to the ultimate reality it becomes an absurdity. You cannot get more out of ultimate reality than is in it. The description of modal evolution as being from the unconscious to the conscious does not rescue us from our difficulties as to what is hidden behind this sequence. To all intents and purposes Dr. Geley is a convert to the modern fiction of an evolving God; he stops short at the stage of the one *and* many. Dynamic psychism is a factor, just as is also the vital urge; but the reality transcends both, and a philosophy of the universe should ever bear this in mind. We expected to find careful attention paid to the theories of psychoanalysis; but they are passed over in almost complete silence. Misprints are numerous and there is no index.

#### MATERIALS FOR THE STUDY OF THE APOSTOLIC GNOSIS.

By Thomas Simcox Lea, D.D., Vicar of St. Austel, and Frederick Bligh Bond, F.R.I.BA. Oxford (Blackwell); pp. 127; 15s. net.

THIS is a continuation of the curious letter-number studies first set forth in the volume called *A Preliminary Investigation of the Cabala in the Coptic Gnostic Books and of a Similar Gematria in the Greek Text of the New Testament*. In reviewing this (July no., 1917) we pointed out at length the exceedingly artificial



nature of the whole device, and need not repeat what was then said on its genesis. That the Pythagoreans and some Platonists and Gnostics did use psephology and were fascinated with the strange results they obtained out of such letter-number play is a historical fact; but that there is a sort of buried cypher in the text of the New Testament, on the scale for which our authors contend, is beyond belief. Here and there echoes of mystic numbering may be found, as in the 153 fishes and the 666 of the Apocalypse; but our authors see confirmations of their theory on well-nigh every page of the Gospels and Epistles.

How does Dr. Lea now differentiate between what can be proved as to the existence of this psephology outside the N.T. books and the renewed attempt to apply its method not only to names, words and phrases as before, but even to whole paragraphs taken from these books? How does he save the N.T. text from the charge of as elaborate an artificiality as that which has characterized the proved specimens of the art? He seems now to believe that the phrasing of high inspiration can be shown to work out naturally in this way without any conscious intention on the part of the writers. But this he cannot maintain unless he can first show that there is a *natural* connection between the elements of speech and number and that the Greeks knew of it. But it is manifest that the number-values of the letters are quite mechanically arranged and differ not only for the alphabets of different languages, but also in their application to one and the same alphabet, as with the Greeks who had two systems.

Dr. Lea, however, contends that the 'numerical Gnosis' is by no means 'purely an affair of human construction.' It is inherent in inspiration and therefore apparently most fully displayed in the New Testament. In his Introduction he writes:

"The true evangelical or apostolic Gnosis is a thing apart from all vain human imaginings and has therefore nothing whatever in common with the works of so-called Gnostic teachers and heresiarchs. It is as different as Light from Darkness. The one, the apostolic Gnosis, is to be thought of as a gift of spiritual expression exercised intuitively by the illuminated seer or scribe, through the perfected medium of a tongue which contained all the elements necessary for the great purpose of revelation of the mysteries. The other is merely the intellectual and human adaptation of some of these inspired results, and the artificial construction of others."

Yet what is it but the adaptation of an artifice that confronts

us in the whole of the number-exegesis which is so richly exemplified in the rest of the book? It must be confessed that an enormous amount of labour and ingenuity has been used in the compiling of the present material, and that some of the results are very curious. There are, for instance, no less than 500 combinations of words or of phrases of significance in relation to the Saviour, each totalling 2,368, which is the number of 'Jesus Christ.' Of this number the authors set forth an elaborate analysis and mysticism by resolving it into certain of its factors, for which further significant names or phrases are found; or again the factors are treated geometrically and new meanings discovered. The contention is that such very appropriate and consistent results cannot be due to chance. But there is little doubt that similar industry could produce a like quantity of the most inappropriate words and phrases summing up to the same number-values as result from 'psephologizing' expressions of high thoughts and things.

#### THE SERPENT POWER.

Being the Shaṭ-chakra Nirūpaṇa and Pādukā-pañchaka: Two Books on Tāntrik Yoga. With Introduction, Commentary and Eight Coloured Plates. By Arthur Avalon. London (Luzac); pp. 291+183; 21s. net.

IN the last number the paper entitled 'A Word on Yoga' referred to this valuable piece of work by Sir John Woodroffe, who has devoted so many years to the elucidation of the extensive and puzzling literature generally classed as Tāntrik. In writing that paper my intention was to make it serve as a general introduction to a more detailed consideration of the special form of yoga-practice known as *laya-*, *kundali-*, or *kunḍalinī-yoga*, chiefly as set forth in Sir John's arresting volume. I found, however, that the ordering and proper orientation of the material was very difficult; and the 'where' best 'to stand' so as to obtain a truly impartial standpoint I failed to discover in any way that gave me satisfactorily all the values I needed. The philosophical and religious implications of the Shakti-theory, the doctrine of creative energy, is being set forth by 'Arthur Avalon' himself in the present and following issues, and this will give our readers an insight into the metaphysical concomitants of the psychological processes that are involved in the practice of this special form of yoga, which is surrounded with such mystery and apparently



disguised with so much 'camouflage' in the literature in question. The rousing of this 'serpentine power' is an arduous and dangerous practice. In the West attention has been drawn to it mainly by the propaganda of Modern Theosophy. 'Occultists' are agog about the matter, and they have been busy evolving speculations of their own, and in claiming to correct the traditional Indian location of the 'centres.' We hear much of the pineal gland, the pituitary body and the spleen. Of the other ductless glands we do not hear, and it is very certain that the 'centres' or 'lotuses' of Tāntrik yoga cannot be equated with them without doing violence to the whole tradition. Either the entire scheme of points or knots of the *Merudaṇḍa*, or spinal column, or rather of the parallel subtle psycho-physical processes within the 'cord' and its imaginary prolongations, as set forth in the yoga-treatises, is crudely erroneous, or the modern speculations are off the track. There are doubtless very many physical centres that can be stimulated by the play of intensified psychical force in the subtle body, but they do not fall within the scheme of this special method. The lovers of psychical gymnastics who peruse the treatises under notice in the hopes of discovering the 'dodge' will be disappointed; we are informed that an experienced teacher is absolutely indispensable. For the rest, no one who is ignorant of Sanskrit and who has not made much study of the literature, will be able to follow the exposition even of the externals with understanding. Except for the very rare individual in the West who can feel at home in the extremely complicated symbolism of the traditional Hindu forms, there will be few who will have the patience and determination to penetrate to the essentials beneath the variegated veils. The facile methods of psychical impressionists will here not serve. What is clear is that the whole subject will have to be experimentally tested, revised and reviewed, if it is to be of any service to the new world that is coming to birth. When restated, some of the traditional processes may be found to be of great service for mystical and spiritual purposes; but indubitably there is much connected with these practices that is provocative of anything but the highest impulses and aspirations of our very mixed human nature. The processes of *kuṇḍalī-yoga* stimulate and intensify all the centres, from lowest to highest, and unless a man or woman is pure beyond normal purity, especially sexually, they had better leave this special form of yoga alone. Some knowledge of the subject, however, is indispensable for those concerned in the comparative study of mys-

ticism; and by them the labours of Sir John Woodroffe in this difficult field of research will be appreciated at their proper value. What we miss most is an index. If all the volumes of Sir John's extensive output were indexed, both himself and students would be saved an immense amount of labour. Unfortunately none of them is so equipped.

#### AN ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF OCCULTISM.

A Compendium of Information on the Occult Sciences, Occult Personalities, Psychic Science, Magic, Demonology, Spiritism and Mysticism. By Lewis Spence, Author of 'Myths of Mexico and Peru,' etc. London (Routledge); 4to, pp. 451; 25s. net.

LET it be generously acknowledged in the first place that the writing of an encyclopædia on such evasive topics is one of the most difficult tasks that can be attempted. It is very largely entirely pioneer work, and no author, no matter how highly equipped or widely experienced, has the least chance of accomplishing it single-handed. Like all other work of this order, the articles must be assigned to specialists in their respective fields. Mr. Spence has attempted the impossible, and it is only too easy to criticise his work. There is no proper perspective or apportioning of space according to the value of the subjects. The information is generally drawn from inferior sources, and the bibliographical work is entirely inadequate, and out of date whenever it is supplied, which is but rarely. Mr. Spence says in the last words of his Introduction: "My attempt has been to present to the general reader a conspectus of the Occult Sciences as a whole; and if experts in any of those sciences observe any inaccuracy which calls for correction, I will [*sic*] be deeply obliged to them if they will bring it to my notice." If not only experts but fairly well-read readers were to accept the author's invitation, he would soon have his desk piled high with corrections and observations, and we doubt not with objurgations as well, as far as the faithful of the 'occult' sects are concerned. Of course no scholar expects a student of this chaos of credulity and strange conceits, of this huge mass of pretensions to secret knowledge and the possession of abnormal powers, to pander to the claims of the many traditions and their innumerable 'adepts'; but he does expect historic sufficiency and a general knowledge of frequently used terms and their correct forms. For instance, a writer who



has much to say of the Kabbalah, should certainly not speak of 'a sephereth,' or pluralize that already plural word by writing 'sephereths.' Nor again, when professing to give us information on well-known Sanskrit names and terms, should he present us solely with their frequently erroneous glosses in Modern Theosophy, of which, by the by, the easily accessible main dogmas are very incorrectly given. Why too has Mr. Spence unearthed as a source of information on Hindu mythology an utterly worthless writer, whose transliteration is a curiosity even for Sanskritists; *e.g.* *daiver-logum* for *deva-lokam*, *Ermen* for *Yama*, etc.? And what on earth is *daivergoel*, which is one of Mr. Spence's headings, and said to mean Hindu genii inhabiting the said *daiver-logum*? If the author of this undertaking had confined himself to biography he would have done well, for here he is more at home and interesting. In summaries and historical sketches, however, he is by no means reliable. Surely he might have availed himself at any rate of the latest encyclopædias, such as the *E. Britt.* (11th ed.) and Hastings' most valuable *E. R. E.* The names of the innumerable demons he has collected, instead of being scattered throughout the volume, would more conveniently have been listed under the heading 'Demons, Names of'; so too with the innumerable 'mancies.' Indubitably Mr. Spence has worked hard and read discursively; but, as we have said, he has attempted the impossible, and it is therefore not possible to commend his labours save in a very qualified fashion. His standpoint is moderate and sensible enough; but we want first of all the facts about the fancies before we can get at the facts which the fancies 'camouflage' in so puzzling a fashion; it is also necessary to have some measure of first-hand experience and not to depend solely on books.

#### BYGONE BELIEFS.

Being a Series of Excursions in the Byways of Thought. By H. Stanley Redgrove, B.Sc. (Lond.), F.C.S. With Many Illustrations. London (Rider); pp. 205; 10s. 6d. net.

WE are here given a collection of papers which have for the most part been already published in periodicals. In general Mr. Redgrove has busied himself with alchemical themes—and these as considered from a psychological—psycho-mystical—point of view rather than as exemplifying the embryonic development of modern chemistry. The author is eminently fitted to treat of the latter aspect owing to his technical training, but he has preferred

mainly to dwell upon the former. Alchemical literature is so vast and complicated, so evasively 'camouflaged,' that it requires a stout heart to unwind its tricky outer wrappings, and a persevering courage to attempt the autopsy of the Protean body disclosed. Students of this ancient and puzzling tradition naturally disagree on many points, even when they meet on a common ground of conviction as to the general nature of the inner regenerative process. We therefore do not propose to criticise details—which would take far more space than we have at our disposal. It is far more pleasant to be able to say that in general we are in agreement with Mr. Redgrove's point of view and his way of approaching the problem. As to origins, however, as we have already recently stated,<sup>1</sup> while admitting the strong influence of the Egyptian workshop-recipes on the vulgar chrysopœic side of the art, we are persuaded that its psychical heredity is to be sought mainly along streams that go back to a Babylonian source. One of the most useful excursions of Mr. Redgrove is into the *raison d'être* of the sex-symbolism in alchemical doctrine; he has also a highly appreciative essay on the brilliant group known as the Cambridge Platonists. The book is eminently readable, and the sketches are short and to the point. The fifty-three illustrations are well reproduced, and are of interest, not only because they present the features of a number of ancient worthies of the craft, but also because they revive our memory of a number of plates from rare volumes.

#### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE FUTURE.

By Émile Boirac, late Rector of the Academy of Dijon. Translated and edited with an Introduction by W. de Kerlor. Illustrated. London (Kegan Paul); pp. 322; 10s. 6d. net.

IN the April number of last year we reviewed a translation of M. Boirac's *La Psychologie inconnue*, under the title *Psychic Science*, and pointed out the useful contribution this careful investigator has made during the last thirty years towards a scientific reconsideration of the important psychical phenomena of what used to be called 'mesmerism' or 'animal magnetism.' The idea of a psychic or vital force of any kind has for long been boycotted by the representatives of official and academic science; the hypothesis of Mesmer and his successors has for long been the Cinderella of psychology, both normal and abnormal, treated with

<sup>1</sup> See the Proem of *The Doctrine of the Subtle Body in Western Tradition*.



contempt and contumely by her proud step-sisters, as represented by the rival schools of the Salpêtrière (hystero-hypnotist) and Nancy (mental suggestionist). M. Boirac has proved, by a long series of most careful experiments which reduce to a minute minimum or eliminate as far as is humanly possible both these hypotheses as capable of explaining all the facts, that there is always, even when hypnotism or suggestion or both are present, a third factor which he calls *biactinism*, or the play of a vital radiating energy. This is a fact of first importance, pointing as it does to the presence of a biological element in a vast number of psychical phenomena, which neither physics nor normal psychology can explain. The volume before us is a version of the same author's *L'Avenir des Sciences psychiques*, in which he pleads for a consideration of all the facts without prejudice or apology in the interest of any school or fashion of thinking. The book is well worth reading, though as with the prior volume there is much repetition and a riot of unlovely neologisms. With the over-busy coinage of the latter M. Boirac and other French writers have been frequently reproached; he is well aware of this and tries to defend himself, but, in our opinion, with only a small measure of success. The multiplication of technical terms may be a help in some ways, but as frequently it obscures the main subject-matter; the wood cannot be seen for the trees. It reminds us of the wit who remarked when leaving a certain famous Museum: "It's a very fine collection of labels." M. Boirac is very insistent on positive research and on economy in hypotheses, and this is all in favour of accepting his experiments in 'biactinic' force as being thoroughly reliable. As to the future of psychology, he has many counsels of prudence. Nevertheless he believes, as do many other students of abnormal phenomena, that it will slowly but surely become one of the most productive fields of research in the domain of human knowledge.

## SONNETS AND POEMS.

By Edmond Holmes. Selected and arranged by T. J. Cobden-Sanderson. An Anthology. London (Cobden-Sanderson); pp. 128; 6s. net.

"THE transformed Science of the Universe—transformed into Vision, the Ecstasis of Cosmic Love—is that the coming Æon's Divinity?" asks the Editor in the note that prefaces this collection of some of the most beautiful of Edmond Holmes'

verses—pointing out in these words the inner meaning that runs through, not only the poems before us, but also most of the other writings of this philosopher. In 'The Creed of my Heart,' which appeared originally in *THE QUEST*, reprinted here, as well as in the shorter philosophical verses there is shaped, filled in and coloured in the poet's own manner the conception of the Cosmic Being, Whose presence transfuses both nature and the soul of man; moments of vivid realisation are brought before us in the beautiful flowing verse that he seems to use so easily. Again and again is the lesson impressed upon us that only by losing self can we gain the 'living Whole.' Among the lovely nature-poems included in the Anthology, 'Stepping Stones,' with its restrained feeling and faultless choice of detail, holds a high place; and the description of the river in 'The Message' shows the touch of the true artist in its instinctive realisation of the essential points of the picture.

Mr. Cobden-Sanderson is to be congratulated on the excellent type in which the poems are printed and on the pleasant appearance of the volume.

S. E. H.

#### THE CONFESSIONS OF JACOB BOEHME.

Compiled and Edited by W. Scott Palmer. With an Introduction by Evelyn Underhill. London (Methuen); pp. xxxv. + 153; 5s. net.

THE Publishers' cover informs us that: "'The greatest of the Mystics,' as Dr. Alexander Whyte calls Boehme, left no systematic account of his spiritual growth, but there are 'priceless morsels of autobiography' in his voluminous works. These are collected here for the first time, and constitute a book of 'Confessions.' Dr. Whyte says that such a book should give Boehme a foremost place among the most classical masters in that great field." We hope devoutly that the present volume will do this, and we fully agree with Dr. Whyte that, if the hidden treasures are unearthed, ample materials will be available. If the whole ground were patiently and thoroughly quarried, and the output arranged in the order of the developing life of the man, no better plan could possibly be devised for the purpose. The compilation under notice is stated to have been made from the eighteenth century (incomplete) reprint of the English translation, and to it Miss Underhill contributes an able introduction, as lucid as it is brief. Only a very limited number of the 'priceless morsels,' however,



have been approved; even in their entirety they are deemed presumably insufficient to give a full-length portrait. In their place we have excerpts of a doctrinal order, as "some of Böhme's doctrine is eminently Böhme." But the converse is equally true; and in his "incidental and unstudied utterances about himself . . . , those childlike and heart-winning confidences about his own mental history and his own spiritual experience" (Dr. Whyte), the author is much nearer to us, more like ourselves, than he ever can be when expounding divine mysteries. The autobiographical paragraphs, strictly so called, do not occupy more than a quarter of this small octavo. In place of the choicest threads and strands of human life, deftly woven into a spiritual biography, the result is a collection of excerpts, printed, to all intents and purposes, as they follow one another in the eighteenth century reprint, and divided into seventeen untitled chapters for no apparent reason. The work has thus not been carried out on the lines that the very high claim made for it entitles us to expect; it is neither analytical, discriminative, nor thorough. The editor gives us a picture produced by the convenient up-to-date three-colour process, not a portrait in oils. Yet even such a mechanical substitute for true art is far from being devoid of merit: Böhme is there, and much else besides, and everything is good. It is a beautiful picture, and the wondrously tender spirit of solicitous love in which Böhme ever talks to his 'dear reader,' and seeks to lead souls into the Heart of God, is well displayed. When, however, the work is examined at the level on which it claims to stand, innumerable deficiencies and defects are apparent; the dots of the process block immediately stand out. For popular use it is admirable; for specialized study well-nigh useless. The profound depths of Böhme's *Wesen* are not quite so easily plumbed as the editor seems to imagine. For popular use then we very heartily welcome it as supplying an acknowledged need. But the claim that this 'collection' constitutes the 'Confessions of Jacob Boehme,' in the sense of giving a 'systematic account of his spiritual growth,' is a claim that we cannot by any means endorse; nor do we approve the emendations. The total absence of references again is deplorable. Limited space forbids our giving these in detail, but the following list of chapters may be of use to the student: *Epist.* 2, 3; *A.* 3, 8, 11, 14, 19-23; *T.P.* 7, 9, 10, 14, 16, 24; *T.L.* 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 14; *Incar.* i. 1, 8, 9; ii. 7; iii. 6; *M.M.* 2, 3, 5, 6, 8; *Sig. Re.* 12; *True Rept.*; *Four Comp.* 1, 4; *Super. Life.*

C. J. B.

## DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE.

On the Divine Names and the Mystical Theology. By C. E. Rolt.  
London (S.P.C.K.); pp. 223; 7s. 6d. net.

THIS is a volume—and a very welcome volume—of Series I. of the S.P.C.K.'s excellent Translations of Christian Literature, under the general editorship of Rev. W. J. Sparrow-Simpson, D.D. and Mr. W. K. Lowther Clarke, B.D. Rolt, who passed away at the comparatively early age of 87, was a brilliant Oxford scholar; ill-health unfortunately prevented the fulfilment of his bright early promise. Not only then did his scholarly equipment fit him for translating the important works of pseudo-Dionysius which laid the foundation of scholastic mystical theology, and were the ground-inspiration of so much in the best mediæval mysticism, but, better still, he had also the mind of a mystic and of a philosophical mystic at that. We have long wanted a more accurate version of the four extant pseudo-epigraphic Dionysian treatises to replace Parker's inadequate translation, and it is greatly to be regretted that Rolt left behind him the version of only two of these—'On the Divine Titles' and 'On Mystical Theology.' He was eminently fitted for the task, and our loss is great. His Introduction (pp. 1-49) shows how intimately and with what insight he entered into the mind of the pseudonymous writer whose works appeared in the sixth century A.D. in Syria, and who regards as his immediate teacher Hierotheos (? Stephen bar Sudaili<sup>1</sup>), to whose profounder knowledge he frequently refers with thankful admiration. 'Dionysius' is a difficult author to translate; he is drenched through with Neoplatonic thought and outdoes Proclus in the refinement of his transcendental terminology,—to such an extent indeed as frequently to rob his style of the beauty of expression which the sublimity of his thought deserves. Rolt has done very well with most of these inflated terms. We venture to think however that, in regard to more general expressions, it is an error, for example, to use 'differentiation' when speaking of the Trinity; this should rather be 'distinction.' Again the frequent use of the adjective 'mere' and the adverb 'merely' is regrettable; no words are more poverty-stricken than these all too often used vocables. Rolt is an enthusiastic admirer of Dionysian thought and well brings out

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 'The Book of the Hidden Mysteries by Hierotheos,' in Mead's *Quests Old and New*, pp. 203-225.



the superpersonal nature of the mystery of the Godhead; to such an extent indeed that his old friend Dr. Sparrow-Simpson thinks it incumbent on him to stew the 'strong meat' of mystical theology, as the Dionysian calls it, in the 'milk for babes' orthodox presentment of the Personality dogma, by means of editorial notes, which a John Scot Eriugena, a Tauler and an Eckehardt would have considered a self-limitation of the annotator's thought, rather than a legitimate conviction of the profound mystical insight of one who had enjoyed the Great Experience. Dr. Sparrow-Simpson, however, is to be thanked for his Appendix on 'The Influence of Dionysius in Religious History' (pp. 202-219). The Indexes, we regret to say, are quite inadequate. We may add that we miss in the notes those many parallels that could be adduced from the writings of Plotinus and Proclus. Rolt does not seem to have been adequately acquainted with their masterpieces.

#### THE UNSOLVED RIDDLE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE.

By Stephen Leacock. London (Lane); pp. 140; 5s. net.

PROF. STEPHEN LEACOCK is chiefly known in England as a humourist; but, as *The Spectator* once wrote of him, he is "a happy example of the way in which the double life can be lived blamelessly and to the great advantage of the community." This is a book in the author's more serious vein, but there is a certain humorous flavour about its style, which renders it peculiarly attractive to the reader. The author attempts an analysis of the new social unrest and discusses the transformation of society which it portends. He warns his readers that this transformation may be in reality a catastrophe. He takes a wise and eminently sane outlook upon life; he confesses that there can be no short cut to a remedy for the world's agony. He has little belief in Socialism, which he describes as "a beautiful dream, possible only for the angels." He confesses the sadness of man's present lot, but "prefers the frying-pan to the fire." In spite of these opinions he is not a pessimist. He sets mankind a task to do, and to do at once. "The chief immediate direction of social effort should be towards the attempt to give to every human being in childhood adequate food, clothing, education, and an opportunity in life." Such a task leaves no room for pessimistic fears. The book reveals the author as a clear thinker—witness the chapter on work and wages—and one who is able to clothe the bare bones

of economic facts with the warm flesh of actual life. He contributes an excellent *critique* of Mr. Edward Bellamy's novel, *Looking Backward*, in the arguments of which he detects an incredible number of fallacies. *The Unsolved Riddle of Social Justice* is a book which should certainly be read by all who are interested in social problems or concerned in their solution. In spite of its American background, it should prove of great value to English readers.

H. L. H.

#### THE LOST APOCRYPHA OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Their Titles and Fragments. Collected, Translated and Discussed by Montague Rhodes James, Litt.D., F.B.A., etc. London (S.P.C.K.) ; pp. 111 ; 5s. 6d. net.

IN noticing this most useful little volume, we would specially call the attention of all our readers to the admirable enterprise of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge in supplying students of Christian Origins with an abundance of indispensable material, at a moderate price, bearing all the indications of being the outcome of sound scholarly work, and presented in a convenient and readable form. We refer to their Series of 'Translations of Early Documents,' under the joint editorship of Dr. W. O. E. Oesterley and Canon G. H. Box. This valuable Series includes : (1) Palestinian-Jewish and Cognate Texts ; (2) Hellenistic-Jewish Texts ; (3) Palestinian and Jewish Texts (Rabbinic). There are to be thirty-five volumes in all, of which about half have already been published. The main aim is to furnish translations unencumbered by commentary or elaborate notes, which can be had in larger works ; in this way the needs of the general reader are well catered for. As for the volume under notice, it is unnecessary to say that in Dr. M. R. James we have a past-master in the business of elucidating the Jewish apocryphal and apocalyptic literature. His present summary treatment of the whole matter in general and of the fragments of this once very abundant literature in particular is the result of many years of patient research and the outcome of ripe scholarship. There is little or nothing in the work of his predecessors and contemporaries that has escaped his notice in any language. His essay is most valuable. The importance of the Series may be gauged when it is remembered that without a thorough knowledge of this Jewish Background the Origins of Christianity are incomprehensible.



## TOTEM AND TABOO.

Resemblances between the Psychic Lives of Savages and Neurotics.

By Prof. Sigmund Freud, LL.D. Authorized English Translation, with Introduction, by A. A. Brill, Ph.B., M.D. London (Routledge) ; pp. 268 ; 10s. 6d. net.

AMONG taboos some of the most stringent are those of sex ; here of course Freud is at once in his element. Totemism again is found in some cases, notably among the Australian primitives, closely bound up with exogamy. Exogamy is a social system, sometimes a most elaborate and complex system, of taboos to guard against incest ; and the strange thing about it is that the prohibited degrees are far more widely extended among some of the primitives than among civilized races. Here again Freud is thoroughly at home. Incest, according to his theory, is a fundamental elemental psychical urge ; it inheres in the subconscious infantilism latent or repressed in all men. The Œdipus-complex and all the rest of the complexes of animal sexuality on which Freudism specializes are accordingly expatiated on by the author. How far, however, this throws any real light on the enigma of totemism may be seriously questioned ; for exogamy is a phenomenon quite distinct from totemism, though it is in some instances found with it. It is again true that murder and incest are two of the most fundamental among taboos ; but there is a host of other prohibitions which cannot be derived from them.

While dissenting from this over-accentuation of the sex-element in psychology, we are struck with the lucidity of Dr. Freud's summary of the extensive and puzzling literature of totemism and taboo ; this is an admirable piece of work. Another thing that strikes us is the over-confidence with which the founder of psychoanalysis now states its leading dogmas. The science is one of the youngest, scarce five-and-twenty years old, and is still in an embryonic state. Nevertheless Dr. Freud is continually asserting 'we know,' from analytic psychological research, this, that or the other thing which is still very much *sub judice*.

Certainly there are resemblances between the psychic lives of savages, infants and neurotics ; we all in our lower nature have the same heredity. But the lower does not explain the higher. Dr. Freud is well aware that the contribution of psychoanalysis to the study of the origins of religion, morality and society is not

welcomed with open arms by those who regard the spiritual factor in the life of the mind as of greater value than that of the blind libido of the psyche. When then he says that the synthesis of the whole explanation of these important elements of human life must be left to another, we agree, while dissenting strongly from his added reflection: "But it is in the nature of this new contribution that it could play none other than the central rôle in such a synthesis, although it will be necessary to overcome great affective resistances before such importance will be conceded it" (p. 261 n.). The representatives of the left wing of the psycho-analytic movement have as many affective resistances to overcome as those who are not persuaded that sex (and especially the abnormalities of sex) explains everything.

As to Dr. Brill's translation, it is pleasant to record that this last volume is a very distinct improvement on the previous work with which he has favoured us.

#### THE OFFICIUM AND MIRACULA OF RICHARD ROLLE OF HAMPOLE.

Edited by Reginald Maxwell Woolley, D.D., Canon of Lincoln.  
London (S.P.C.K.); pp. 97; 5s. net.

RICHARD ROLLE was probably born about 1290 and died in 1349. He was one of the natural mystics and, wishing to live his own life, guided as he believed by the Spirit of God, became a sort of unauthorized hermit. He wrote several books which are full of the spirit of mystical religion, which he interpreted through music, and he attended Mass and the Sacraments as a mediæval Catholic. For some years before his death he lived at Hampole in Yorkshire, where there was a convent of the Cistercian Order. It was probably for the nuns there that this *Officium* was prepared and the account of his *Miracula* compiled. As he was never canonized, his Office could not be said publicly, but it is most likely that it was used privately in this convent, together with the story or legend of his miracles as aids to devotion. The full Latin text of both the *Officium* and the *Miracula* are here given, together with three collotype illustrations from the old original MSS. The book is thus a scholarly curiosity and one of much interest to those who like to study the working out of ecclesiastical methods in the Middle Ages.

F. W.



## AFTER-DEATH COMMUNICATIONS.

By L. M. Bazett. With Introduction by J. Arthur Hill. London (Kegan Paul); pp. 111; 2s. 6d. net.

THIS is another of the series of small volumes entitled 'Evidences of Spiritualism,' the main object of which is to supply the public with *bona fide* 'records.' Miss Bazett here furnishes us with a careful and discriminating account of her experiences and brings forward a large number of cases obtained through her own agency during the years 1916-1918. Prior to this the whole field of psychical research had been, she tells us, for her an 'unexplored territory.' The high proportion of evidential cases is the chief value of the record, and it may be safely recommended to the sceptical enquirer as providing a fairly tough morsel to chew upon.

## THE MYSTICAL POETS OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH.

By Percy H. Osmond. London (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge); pp. 436; 12s. 6d. net.

THAT the anthology entitled *The Oxford Book of Mystical Verse*, which we recently reviewed, should so soon be followed by another collection of excerpts, and that too from a narrower field of choice, is a striking testimony to the revival of interest in mystical literature. Mr. Osmond has followed a different plan from that of the editors of the Oxford book; his extracts are prefaced and accompanied by short biographical sketches and notes on the works of the different writers, and in this he shows himself always a painstaking student and generally a discriminating critic. The labours of Prof. Rufus Jones have of late opened up a rich literature of independent mysticism outside the Roman tradition, and now we have a volume devoted to the mystical poetry of the Anglican post-Reformation Church, which most people would consider to have little sympathy with the mystical element in religion. And indeed it may fairly be said that much of this output has been forthcoming in spite of rather than with the avour of the general spirit of that stolid communion. To include some of the writers Mr. Osmond has given a wide meaning to 'mystical' and a generous judgment as to what constitutes 'poetry' in filling out his list; as he himself confesses, some of it is poor stuff and belongs to what Dr. Johnson would have called 'metrical devotions' rather than to genuine poetry and high

mystic inspiration. It is pleasant to notice that with few exceptions the later work is superior to the earlier. The concluding chapter is devoted to the women poets of whom there are very few. "Doubtless," says the editor, "English women did express mystical feelings and aspirations in verse before the nineteenth century; but they seem to have lacked either the desire or the opportunity to give their poems to the world." The three chosen are Emily Brontë, Christina Rossetti and—we are glad to see, for the honour is deserved—Evelyn Underhill.

#### THE SWORD OF JUSTICE.

Or the Christian Philosophy of War completed in the Idea of a League of Nations. By John E. W. Wallis, M.A. With an Introduction by Ernest Barker, M.A. Oxford (Blackwell); pp. 145; 5s. net.

A DEEPLY thoughtful work on a great matter. It is well pointed out that what the centralized Mediæval Church failed to do is hardly likely to be done by our scattered communities of Christians. The Christian philosophy as to war is sound enough; but its enforcement is the difficulty. The modern idea of a League of Nations is, alas! hardly growing stronger by the lapse of time; it is still only a theory on paper.

F. W.

#### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MYSTICAL AND THE SENSIBLE WORLDS.

By Herbert N. G. Newlyn. London (Allen & Unwin); pp. 128; 4s. 6d. net.

"THE main lines of my thought have been determined by experience rather than by study. To me they are truths of life rather than of knowledge." So writes the author in his Preface, and he claims as his aim suggestiveness rather than exhaustiveness. His arguments and illustrations are all based upon what he calls the Cosmic Need, and are what is generally known as an earnest natural mysticism which calls in the help of Christianity as considered without reference to dogmas or doctrines.

F. W.



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On payment of half-a-guinea a *set of eight lecture tickets* may be obtained from the Honorary Secretary. They are available for eight open meetings of the Society, but within twelve months of the day of issue only (beginning at any date and terminable on the same date of the following year) and are non-transferable. Subscribers to *The Quest* or for lecture tickets, in the event of their joining the Society during the currency of their subscriptions, will be credited with the balance.

*Single tickets of admission* to a lecture at an open meeting may be obtained, at a charge of 2s. 6d. each, from Mr. J. M. Watkins, 21, Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, W.C. 2, but not from the Honorary Secretary, or payment may be made at the door. Lectures and Meetings for Members only cannot be attended by guests or visitors.

Forms of application for membership and all particulars may be obtained from  
THE HONORARY SECRETARY, 'THE QUEST SOCIETY',  
Tel.: Park 3830, 47, Campden Hill Road, Kensington, W. 8.





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