CHRISTMAS NUMBER.

THE AUSTRALIAN THEOSOPHIST

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SPECIAL FEATURES:

CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS AND CUSTOMS

GOOD KING WENCESLAS

MOUNT SOLITARY

THE THREE KINGS

CONTINUATIONS:

How Theosophy came to the Editor

The Childhood of Krishnaji

UNDER · THE · AUSPICES · OF · THE · THEOSOPHICAL · SOCIETY ·



THE EPIPHANY



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The Australian Theosophist

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THE EDITOR

wishes all his readers with all his heart

A Happy Christmas and a Joyous New Year

May the Blessing of the Holy Ones rest upon them, and may each receive the dearest wish of his heart, so far as it is good for him.

Before our next issue appears the great Festival of Christmas will have come and gone once more, and we shall have entered upon another of the long tale of years which we count from the first Christmas of all. So I wish to make this a Christmas number, bearing not only my own most cordial good wishes to all my brethren, but also something of the world-wide Christmas spirit of peace and goodwill, something of the old romance of Yuletide which tends to be thrown aside and forgotten in the materialism and commercialism of the world today.

The Rebirth of the Sun-God.

Christmas has many aspects, and writing in a Christian country we must naturally give precedence to its religious significance, though in reality that dates back to a period long before the birth of Jesus. On it men originally celebrated the rebirth of the Sun-God after the obscuration of winter, just as at Easter they celebrate his victory over the powers of darkness. Christianity, like all other religions, was founded north of the equator, and consequently its festivals all fall at inappropriate times of the year here in Australia, because we happen to live in the Southern Hemisphere.

The rebirth of the Sun-God after the eclipse of winter was celebrated on the first day which was definitely longer both in the morning and the evening, immediately after the winter solstice, the point at which the earth turns in its circuit round the sun, and begins to pass away from him instead of drawing towards him. In the same way the victory of the Sun-God over the powers of darkness was celebrated as soon as the equinox had passed—as soon as the day was definitely longer than the night.

These festivals of the Sun-God had

been kept for thousands of years before the birth of Jesus, so that it was quite natural for the early Church to adopt their dates for its celebrations. The actual date of the birth of Jesus is not known, but from various indications it seems probable that it was some time in the spring. The 25th of December was, however, selected early in ecclesiastical history because it coincided with that great Sun-festival, and it was convenient to take advantage of what was already a public holiday.

The Descent into Matter.

We who are Theosophists are little likely to forget all the beautiful symbolism that clusters round the thought of Christmas. Three lines at once suggest themselves. The birth of a body into which the World-Teacher will later descend inevitably reminds us of that other and far greater descent of the Second Person or Aspect of the Logos into matter. Just as in the smaller cycle we owe deep thankfulness to our World-Teacher for His descent into a human body in order to help and to guide us, so should we also feel profound gratitude to the great Solar Deity Himself for that willing limitation of His power and His glory which has brought us into existence. Let us then show that gratitude now at this Christmas season by endeavouring to comprehend His manifestation so far as we may, and to co-operate intelligently with it.

The Christ Drama.

Another most interesting and suggestive line of thought is that which regards the gospel story not as an attempt at a biography of the Christ, but as an allegory of the spiritual history of the progress of every Christian man. Obviously it is not a history in the ordinary sense of the word, but far rather a drama—a collection of episodes, arranged as though for presentation on a stage. Origen, the greatest of the early Christian writers, explains it most lucidly from that point of view. He says that there were in his time (and there certainly are now) two kinds of Christians. There were those whom he called the believers in "somatic" Christianity, which means bodily or physical Christianity. He makes it perfectly clear that by that expression he means those who believe in the story as a story, and he says of their doctrine: "What better could you have for the instruction of the masses ?" But he also makes it abundantly evident that the spiritual Christian holds an altogether higher form of Christianity, in which he understands the inner meaning of these allegories.

Origen holds that, just as the words of the Christ in His parables bear an inner interpretation, so does the whole narrative of the Christ bear an inner interpretation, that can be seen only if we study its similarity to the other presentations of the same great allegory. He insists that all this takes place not in this fleeting world of shadows, but in the eternal counsels of the Most High. He says that so long as we understand the universal truths which are revealed by the story, the story itself is of no importance. Its meaning is clear; it describes the progress which lies before every Christian man.

In this particular line of symbolism the birth of the Christ represents the First of the Four Great Initiations, and therefore this season should remind us of what that step will one day mean for us, for it is indeed a second birth—a birth into the Great White Brotherhood. Not only should we look forward to the time when this wonderful Initiation shall be ours, but we should make this an occasion of grateful rejoicing that for some it has already come. We should thank God for His saints—for the elevation which they have given humanity, not only by the encouragement of the example which they set before us, but by the actual uplift to the whole which each one of them has given in his own attainment. This uplift is

a reality, by no means to be despised or forgotten; humanity is a brotherhood, little as most men recognize that fact, and the unity is so real that whenever one man attains, all the rest are definitely helped and raised by that attainment. So that should be another aspect of our Christmas joy.

The Second Advent.

Again, Christmas cannot but remind us of the second Coming of the Lord, to which His Church has so long been looking forward—the Coming which many of us believe to have already taken place in the occupation of the body of Mr. Krishnamurti. Membership in the Theosophical Society does not involve the acceptance of any dogma whatever, unless we call the belief in the brotherhood of humanity a dogma; so we must not say that every member acknowledges Krishnaji; but a large number of us do. Even of those who regard him as the representative of the World-Teacher, many do not seem to understand his position or his work; and because of this lack of comprehension they are not obtaining from his ministrations the benefit which they might. I feel strongly that it is our duty to try to understand, for we assuredly make his work harder and less effective if we cloud it with misapprehension.

We are surrounded by a great fog of popular superstition, and it is difficult to escape from the distortions which it produces. We often accept a new idea as reasonable, but do not see all its implications. We must realize that the world is steadily evolving, and that the Christ is a mighty Official who is in charge of its religious thought, and either comes Himself or sends one of His pupils as a teacher whenever He thinks that such a visit will help in its evolution. All the great religions have come from the same central source; the World-Teacher and His department are responsible for all of them. He is not of course responsible for the vagaries of the individual believer. Men have corrupted and distorted His teaching, in whatever form it was originally presented. If we will take the trouble to study comparative religion we can see for ourselves that all are fundamentally statements of the same eternal truth.

Unfortunately we inherit a great deal of the ignorance of the period called the Dark Ages in Europe; and as far as religious matters are concerned, many people have not yet even tried to come up out of that darkness. We do realize that to practise the so-called science of the Middle Ages would be ridiculous. We know much more now; we know that to live according to the hygiene of mediæval times would lay us open to the ravages of terrible epidemics; but most people have not realized that the religion of the Middle Ages was equally defective in its statement. Our mediæval ancestors did not understand Christianity; they took it in the narrowest and most bigoted way, whereas it is capable of an interpretation more useful, wider and more tolerant in every way. And that is the interpretation which we try to put upon it today.

The truths of religion are eternal truths; they may be distorted, they may be misrepresented—they certainly have been; but the fundamental basis of them all is an eternal verity, which cannot be changed, though it may be more fully stated; it may be put in some new way, which may appeal to the modern spirit. But the great facts are the same. I do not mean that we must believe in any particular name, or any particular ceremony, but in the real basic facts that in order to progress a man must be a good man, that he must live a high and pure and noble life, that he must practise the virtues which every religion in the world without exception recommends to him—charity, nobility, self-control, temperance, patience and love.

Whatever aspect of the truth the World-Teacher may see fit to emphasize, we may be very sure that he will never contradict these fundamen-

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Whatever aspect of the truth the World-Teacher may see fit to emphasize, we may be very sure that he will never contradict these fundamen-

tal verities; and whenever we find ourselves departing from them, and becoming uncharitable, censorious, unbrotherly, we may be equally sure that we are not following him. Each of us has an absolute right to follow the path which seems best to him; but he has no right to condemn or despise a brother who sees fit to take a different road.

As I said when writing on this subject in our October issue (p. 68), there is always for the determined man the possibility of deserting the broad, easy, winding carriage-road of slow ordinary evolution, and entering instead upon the shorter but far steeper path which aims straight at the summit of the mountain. But this "narrow way" is double; or perhaps it is better to say that there are two twin paths—that of the occultist and that of the mystic. It is quite evident that a new impulse has recently been given along each of these two lines. A few years ago the World-Teacher, in the course of the ordinary work of His office, gave through our great President a definite recommendation that three new lines of work should be added to our Theosophical activities—that we should set before the world an example of (1) what a Christian Church might do in the way of Service, Ritual and Doctrine; (2) what a properly-conducted Masonic Lodge might do for its members and for the world; (3) how the education of children and young people could be most usefully and advantageously managed. Of course it was not expected that every member should take part in every one of these activities, but only that each should work in one or other according to his opportunity and his ability, and that he should show friendliness to all.

What the Lord Maitreya said on that occasion has even already been abundantly justified. Great good has been done through these channels; and their influence, like that of the parent Theosophical Society, is steadily increasing. These new lines of work were not in any way intended to supersede the old-established duty of teaching Theosophy to the world; that duty will obviously remain and be incumbent on us while there is one man whose horizon is unilluminated by the knowledge of the truth; but they did offer us fresh opportunities of utilizing our energies in directions not previously contemplated, by which vast floods of spiritual force could be drawn down and outpoured upon the world.

In arranging the details of all this new work many questions arose, and the Bodhisattva was so gracious as to encourage us to submit them to Him, and to offer advice on various points, which was naturally accepted with uttermost gratitude. It is to be understood that such advice was given in His own beautiful home in the Himalayas, He being in the wonderful and unique physical body which He there uses, and we who had the honour of visiting Him being sometimes in the *mayavirupa*, but more frequently in the causal body. At whatever level we stood for the moment, at that level He met us, with a power and a fullness quite beyond anything that could ever be possible on the physical plane. Marvellous and gracious beyond words as was His condescension in giving us this help, it is yet clearly part of what we may call his ordinary work as World-Teacher, of His constant effort to encourage reform or advancement in any one of the religions of which He has often spoken as "My many Faiths."

It may be recollected that at a later date He inspired (largely through Krishnaji himself) a similar movement of reform in Hindu worship, arranging a form of *puja* in which the public could take an important part, by which not only were those who were actually present greatly benefited, but also a splendid outpouring of spiritual force over the whole neighbourhood was effected, just as had happened with the corresponding Christian service. Undoubtedly the organization of the Liberal Catholic Church, of the Hindu *puja*, and of Co-Masonry gave an immense

impulse to the occult line of development—the line which employs ceremonial in its work and utilizes the forces of nature.

With His full knowledge and approval yet another line of most useful and necessary work has since then been put before us by our President under direct instruction from that high Official of the Great Hierarchy whom we call the World-Mother. Our help is invited in a mighty effort to uplift the thought of the world on the all-important question of the spiritualization of the idea of motherhood, so that bodies may be provided meet for the occupation of the advanced egos who wait to take part in the development of a new and nobler sub-race.

But now, as a part of this forward step in evolution, and specially in order to assist the unfoldment of the qualities needed for the new sub-race, He is presenting Himself to us in quite another aspect, as a man among men, taking upon Himself a human body like our own (except that it has been very specially prepared), through which of course even His stupendous energy cannot exhibit a thousandth part of His true power and glory. Yet in that body He can move among men of the world as He could not in His own more glorious vehicle, and can make certain contacts which would not otherwise be possible. He appears in the outer world in this way at irregular intervals, His last visit being the incarnation in Palestine in which He occupied the body of Jesus. On each such occasion He has a special message to give, a special point to stress; and this time He is throwing all His energy into giving an impulse to the other line of development—the mystic. Surely it is only fair that each line should have its turn—that help should be given to both types, and not only to one.

Some of our brethren seem to have thought that the World-Teacher, coming thus, would immediately seize upon these latest organizations which He had formed, and do at least the greater part of His work through them. But in regard to that expectation two considerations at once occur to the mind. First, He has already been pouring forth His blessing through the Liberal Catholic Church in the fullest and most wonderful manner, as all who have worked in it know, and that marvellous radiation is still continuing with undiminished effulgence.

The same no doubt is true of the parallel effect of the Hindu *puja*. Secondly, could He, paying such a visit, bearing a special message to the whole world, work through any one of His religions more than another ? Surely to do so would at once detract from the universality of that message, and would make it merely sectarian. However that may be, He has *not* chosen in this physical manifestation to take particular notice of any of these movements, and we may be very sure that He knows His business better than we can tell Him ! But He has in no way withdrawn His countenance from any of those lines of blessing; He still uses all of them to the full.

Are we then to abandon a piece of work which He himself has entrusted to us, which He has already so abundantly blessed, because He has opened up another line to help another class ? Mr. Jinarajadasa explained to us that: "When He starts an impulse, it is also intended to enrol a new type of worker. There are always various types of workers dormant in humanity, and they must be awakened and gathered. New bodies of workers must be gathered, and so each religious impulse has the effect of calling out from humanity a type of worker with a particular quality of work which did not exist before." It is obvious that the Order of the Star, for example, is intended to draw in a new class of workers, not Theosophists alone; and indeed it is already doing so. Assuredly it is well that we should all give to this mighty new impetus any help that we can, but we need not pretermit the work which we are already doing—which in many

ways we have specially qualified ourselves to do.

I heard the other day, for example, of a Priest who resigned his position and work in the Church in order to devote himself entirely to lecturing for the Star; I do not blame him for doing that if he felt it to be his duty, if he felt so strong an inner urge that he knew this to be his destined life-work; but I do consider the action ill-advised and unnecessary, for there is nothing in the least incompatible in the two types of labour. Fortunately, though a Priest may resign his position he cannot divest himself of the sacerdotal power which the Christ has given him, nor can he sever the close link with his Divine Master which was made at his Ordination; these special qualifications still remain to him, and will strengthen and help him in whatever good work he may undertake. Yet it seems a pity that one who has voluntarily accepted "the sweet but heavy burden of the Priesthood" should not use the peculiar and tremendous power which it confers for the purpose for which it was given to him. Cannot a Priest work for the Star as well as anyone else? Does not the saying of his Master the Christ to the Pharisees apply here also: "These things ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone"?

Also it should perhaps not be forgotten that there are those among us (and probably many of other faiths who are not physically known to us) who had attained this liberation and this happiness *before* the descent of the World-Teacher; yet such men continue to carry on unobtrusively whatever piece of altruistic work had previously been committed to their care. Remember, the World-Teacher is not opening before us a *new* line of advancement, a new way of salvation; He is urging us with all His wonderful power and poetry to take advantage of what He and His Predecessor have been preaching from the beginning. In Judæa He taught: "The Kingdom of God is within you," and five hundred years before that the Lord Buddha had said: "Within yourselves deliverance must be sought; each man his prison makes."

Is there really any contradiction between the new teaching and the old? Let us beware lest we create differences where none exist, and if there be any apparent differences, do not let us exaggerate them. Let me at least bear this much of personal testimony. On my visit to India a year ago I have many times seen Krishnaji, and spoken with him long and intimately, and I heard all those of his addresses which were delivered at the Headquarters at Adyar. Neither in those addresses nor in private conversation did he ever speak disparagingly of any of the three lines of activity recommended to us by the Bodhisattva; he spoke evil of no one, he attacked no one, he gave always the impression that his mission was not to destroy but to fulfil, not to interfere with any existing religion, but simply to preach liberation and happiness to all. He did not condemn ceremonies, though he did feel the danger that men should put their trust in them; there is of course a very real peril there for the ignorant, which has been pointed out over and over again by previous teachers.

To trust in ceremonies alone would be a sad mistake, but that does not alter the fact that they have their usefulness, and that through them we may gain the enormous advantage of the co-operation of the Angel kingdom. Indeed, the intelligent employment of ceremonial is one of the methods specially appropriated and advocated by the great Seventh Ray, which is now dominating the world. Our President has told us that we use ceremonies as the scientist makes machinery, in order to dominate the forces of Nature for constructive purposes, because we utilize all means that can give a mother to the orphans of humanity.

Let us remember the noble words which, at the request of the Teacher, she uttered at Ommen—words which,

she has since told me, were directly inspired by her own Master: "I intend to remain linked to the world until all my race shall pass the portals before me; therefore I give all the power which I possess in order to help mankind, and I intend to continue to do so. Am I not to carry the Message in a form which they can understand to those who cannot grasp it in its direct form ? Am I not to give crutches to those who cannot walk, in order that they may take at least a step ? Shri Krishna has said: 'By whatever path a man comes to Me, on that path I meet him; for all the paths by which men come from every side are Mine.' If my own liberation is to make me leave men there where they are, then I refuse that liberation until the moment when all have passed the portals of the Kingdom of Happiness. But it is not thus; to be set free is to be *more* occupied with work in the world; it is to receive new powers to enlighten it, to have new possibilities for the helping of men; and those possibilities are numerous . . . Let us travel along our path, knowing that we also are doing the work of the Teacher . . . . As for me, I choose this path; I do not abandon Theosophy; I welcome the sweet message of the Lord. I do not say that others ought to do as I do; I believe in free thought; I have proclaimed it all my life."

We may well follow her example, for, remember, she who tells us this has for many years been free from all ordinary entanglements of desire and prejudice. Brothers, there is but one truth, though it has many facets, and there may be many presentations of it. When we compare these presentations, let us not carp or criticize, let us not commit the folly of trying to set one against the other or to find differences between them; let us rather take the nobler attitude of endeavouring to synthesize, to understand the agreement between them, to take them both and make the best of them. That surely is the path of wisdom; let that be the line of our thought when our celebration of the first Christmas recalls to our minds the Second Coming at the present day.

Christ in the Heart.

We have by no means yet exhausted the wonderful wealth of association which surrounds the idea of Christmas. We must not forget another and the most important aspect of the Coming of Christ—the coming within the heart of each individual, the development of the Christ-principle within us. To that principle we often give the name of *Buddhi*, which we translate as intuition. Yet indeed it means much more than intuition; it means the wisdom that *knows*, not by process of reasoning but by utter certainty. Its development must come to every man. That Christ-principle is in every one of us; it can be awakened—it is being awakened among us even now, and as it unfolds we realize the true brotherhood of man, because we understand the Fatherhood of God. And the knowledge of that is the supreme bliss. What can we do to bring it nearer to us ?

If Christ is to be born within our hearts, we must be living the life of the Christ; we must show forth His spirit to those around us. And the Christ-spirit is first of all love and brotherhood. The man in whom it is developing will assuredly exhibit love, kindliness, tolerance, comprehension—a general growth all round, an increase of the quality which for want of a better word we call *bigness*. We speak of a man as great when he is just and noble, of wide tolerance, great in his character; and just those qualities are the result of the unfolding of the Christ-principle. Such a man is utterly unselfish, for unselfishness is the key to all, the central virtue which gives birth to all the others. The whole idea of separateness is a vast illusion; we are one in Christ, but we know and realize that fully only when the Christ is awakened within us. Remember how it is written in your scripture: "Christ in you, the

hope of glory." It is precisely the presence of that Christ-principle within us that brings the hope of glory within the reach of every human soul.

Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be born,
But not within thyself, thy soul shall be forlorn.

The Special Outflow.

All great festivals have another aspect, and this Yule-tide has it among the rest—perhaps even has it pre-eminently. They are all special channels of force—occasions upon which an outpouring of Divine power takes place more fully than at ordinary times. There are times when certain energies are more readily available than at others, when the stars are favourable, when the bridges are clear, the channels are open; and Christmas is such a time. There is definitely a greater, a more universally assimilable outpouring on such days as Christmas, Easter, the Ascension, Whitsunday; each of these has its own special character. Heaven and earth are as it were nearer together; and so such a day as this Feast of Christmas is a real opportunity for each one of us, for there is a stronger and more definite outflow of Divine power then, just because the whole world is more prepared to receive it.

The sun is always shining, but he is not always visible to us on earth, because earth-made clouds come in the way and shut him out. When we do not receive the blessing of his rays, it is the earth-conditions that are in fault. Just so, the love of Christ is always flooding the world, but man is not always in a condition to respond to it. Christmas is a time when more men are in the right condition, when man's opportunity is near and vivid; but the extent to which he can avail himself of it depends upon how far the Christmas spirit has entered his heart. If he is filled with the peace and goodwill of Christmas, the goodwill of the Christ Himself can reach him and enfold him.

Christmas Among the Angels.

There is indeed a very good reason for this, which was beautifully given by Miss Dora van Gelder (now Mrs. Kunz) in *The Liberal Catholic*, vol. i, no. 4, p. 16; she writes:

To students of the hidden side of life Christmas is a most wonderful reality—a far greater reality than most of us think, since it involves the whole course of Nature, and not humanity only. With us Christmas is the birthday of our Lord, the anniversary of His physical incarnation upon earth; and because of that we try to make it a time of peace and goodwill towards men, of very close unity and brotherly love. But have we ever wondered how such a unity is possible at Christmas, or why it is at this time of the year alone that men do really feel goodwill towards each other, and think only of giving and not of taking? For the "Christmas spirit" is proverbial; and it is so widespread, so genuine and so real that we must look deeper for an explanation of it than the mere commemoration of the Nativity of the Christ, whom so few today seem really to worship in their hearts.

Those who have awakened the inner vision know that there is a hidden side to Christmas which the ordinary man hardly suspects, although he reacts to its influence. We must remember that the whole earth is thronged with hosts of superphysical beings, Angels and Archangels and all the Company of Heaven, who stand for the most part at a higher level of evolution than ourselves, and are responsible for the guidance and control of the manifold processes of Nature. It is their thoughts and feelings and activities which play so important a part in the creation of that peculiar atmosphere of goodwill so noticeable at Christmas; and at this time of year the whole earth thrills with the wonderful forces outpoured by the Angels and with the mighty Blessing of the Christ which descends in response to their adoration. All through the Advent season, and indeed for many weeks before, preparation is made in the inner worlds in various ways for the celebration of the great Festival; the influences grow stronger and more intense as the days go by, till at length on Christmas Day the culmination is reached, the world opens its heart to the Lord as a flower opens its petals to the sun, and a mighty flood of love and power is outpoured by the Christ Himself as the incarnation upon earth of the Second Person of the Ever-Blessed Trinity.

Its Secular Aspect.

That brings us to the consideration of the final aspect of Christmas as a

season of rejoicing, apart from its religious significance—if indeed anything connected with it can ever be apart from that. This is the aspect which is so prominent in the works of Charles Dickens, who paints it always as the feast of good fellowship. The English-speaking world owes much to Dickens for the lessons he taught about Christmas. I think he did much to make it peculiarly the home and household festival of the English people—the season when our shining hearths, our domestic comforts, our social felicity, are at their brightest; the chosen season of peace and goodwill, of family reunions, of happy visits, of friendly greetings, of interchange of gifts, of kindness to the poor, of mutual esteem and universal joy.

No religious festival has been so enthusiastically and whole-heartedly adopted and observed by the people at large as Christmas, and many quaint and beautiful old customs have gathered round it during the centuries—some, no doubt, peculiar to itself, but most of them inherited from coincident festivals of various older religions. The decking of churches and houses with evergreens is undoubtedly a relic of the Roman Saturnalia, though the prominence given to holly rather than to laurel may well be due to the appropriateness of the prickly leaves and the scarlet berries as symbolizing the crown of thorns.

The use of the mistletoe comes to us from the Druids, who used to cut it from the oak-tree with a golden sickle amid much pomp and ceremony, and ascribed to it all sorts of miraculous virtues. It was not only a specific for every disease but an antidote to every kind of poison. Whoever bore a piece of it was safe from all witchcraft —a matter of vast importance in those days—and it was deemed so sacred that if enemies met casually beneath it in the forest, they laid down their arms and maintained a truce until the following day. Thence arose the custom of hanging a spray over the doorway of a house, implying a pledge of peace and friendliness from each who entered beneath it—a pledge to be sealed and accepted by a kiss of greeting.

In the old Norse mythology Balder, the god of the summer sun, was guaranteed by enchantment against harm from anything on the earth or under the earth; but the evil spirit Loki arranged treacherously that he should be killed unintentionally by the blind god Hœder, "whose feet are shod with silence," with a spear tipped with mistletoe, which grows neither on the earth nor under the earth, but on a tree. When all things in earth and heaven have wept for Balder, he is restored to life by Freya, the goddess of love, the Scandinavian form of the World-Mother, whose tears become the pearls of the necklace Brising, the pearly berries of this fateful plant. Therefore it must neither be laid on the earth nor be buried under the earth, but must always be hung on high. The greenery of the Christmas decorations must be left upon the walls until the Festival of the Purification of Our Lady, forty days later, when the Christ-Babe was presented in the Temple.

The custom of the playing of music by the Waits and the singing of special hymns called carols during the night before Christmas Day is of course in commemoration of the songs sung by the Angels to the shepherds of Bethlehem to announce the birth of the Christ at midnight.

> Midnight scarcely passed and over,
> Drawing to that holy morn,
> Very early, very early, Christ was born.

The joyous ringing of church bells at Christmas is another form of announcing the good news of the birth of a Saviour. Christmas bells in England are popularly associated with frost and snow, but they are as seasonable in an Australian summer as in an English winter. In a book called *Christmas Under the Southern Cross*, published in New Zealand, we find the verses :

No touch of winter's frosty breath,
No snowclad fields 'neath skies that lower;
All Nature thrills with joyous life,
As faintly from the distant tower
Ring out the cheerful Christmas bells.
Hark, how their cadence softly swells
O'er open fields and bosky dells:
"In excelsis gloria !"

'Neath skies of blue the plains lie decked
In thousand varying shades of green;
Soft shadows sweep o'er meadows gay
With many a floweret's brilliant sheen;
While Christmas bells in glad refrain
Sound the glad tidings once again
Which Angels sang in raptured strain—
"In excelsis gloria !"

The carol was originally an especially joyous song accompanied by a dance —usually a ring-dance, such as children sometimes perform even now. Simultaneous dancing and singing were part of religious worship in very early times, and were handed on from ancient temple ritual to the Christian Church. In 1209 the Council of Avignon forbade dancing and secular singing in churches, and it is now practised only in the cathedral of Seville, and perhaps in some churches in South America. Italy was the birthplace of the true carol, and its originator was St. Francis of Assisi—not that, so far as we know, he ever actually wrote any carols himself, but they were devised by some of his comrades and followers.

In his days religion was at a low ebb, and the morals of the period were deplorable. All services were conducted in a tongue unknown to the common people, and preaching was unusual and uninstructive. Francis and his friars brought the gospel within reach of the populace; they preached comprehensible sermons full of homely illustrations. People were thinking of Christ chiefly as the awful Judge, "the King of majesty tremendous"; Francis revealed Him as "The Little Brother of Mankind." Thomas of Celano, one of his friars, writes: "The Child Jesus had been given over to forgetfulness in the hearts of many in whom by the working of His grace He was raised up again through His servant Francis." His followers composed in the common speech of the people bright homely songs on the great events of the gospel story, and so brought it home as a living reality to thousands who before had had only cloudy, vague, remote ideas on the subject.

To him also we owe the institution of the picturesque *Praesepio*, commonly called the Christmas Crib. On Christmas Eve in the year 1224 he arranged a very realistic tableau of the Nativity in a village church at Greccio. St. Joseph and our Lady Mary, represented by peasants suitably attired, watched beside a manger in which a figure of the Holy Child lay upon straw, while a living ox and ass were tethered close by. Mass was celebrated, and St. Francis preached on the topic of the season. This was the origin of the simple object-lesson of the Crib, which with innumerable variations has been reproduced in almost every Roman Catholic church in Christendom, and has even found its way, with divers adaptations, far beyond the limits of the Church of Rome.

In honour of the Christ-Child we recognize Christmas as pre-eminently the children's festival, and special provision is usually made for them in its various entertainments—as, for example, the pantomimes which are generally staged at the theatres at this season. The mediæval Church, on the whole, seems scarcely to have done its duty by children, but nevertheless it had some pretty customs in which it acknowledged their paramount interest. One of the most remarkable of these was the appointment in many cathedrals and collegiate churches of an official called the Boy-Bishop. On December 6th, which is St. Nicholas's Day, the boys elected one of their number to this office, which he retained for three weeks, until December 28th, which is the day devoted to the commemoration of the Holy Innocents, the children who were massacred by order of King Herod, in his mad attempt to slay the rival who "was born King of the Jews."



THE ARCH DRUID CUTTING THE MISTLETOE



THE FIRST NOWELL

THE WORD NOWELL IS DERIVED FROM ANCIENT FRENCH AND MEANS "NEWS"

In *The Catholic Encyclopedia* we find the following article on this subject:

The custom of electing a Boy-Bishop on the feast of St. Nicholas dates from very early times, and was in vogue in most Catholic countries, but chiefly in England, where it prevailed certainly in all the larger monastic and scholastic establishments, and also in many country parishes besides, with the full approbation of authority, ecclesiastical and civil. The Boy-Bishop was chosen from among the children of the monastery school, the cathedral choir, or the pupils of the grammar-school. Elected on St. Nicholas' day (6th December), he was dressed in pontifical vestments and, followed by his companions in priests' robes, went in procession round the parish, blessing the people. He then took possession of the church, where he presided at all the ceremonies and offices until Holy Innocents' day (28th December). At Salisbury he is said to have had the power of disposing of any benefices that fell vacant during his reign, and if he died in office the funeral honours of a Bishop were granted him. A monument to such a Boy-prelate still exists there, though its genuineness has been questioned, and at Lulworth Castle another is preserved, which came from Bindon Abbey.

The Boy-Bishop performed every part of the Church service except actually saying Mass. In several inventories of Church property we find mention of mitres, copes and other vestments of the Boy-Bishop, of just as costly material as those worn by the actual dignitaries. At St. Paul's Cathedral in 1295 there was a mitre embroidered with flowers for the use of "the Bishop of the little ones," with a pastoral staff with copper-gilt curve and pommel. From an earlier inventory we learn that there were twenty-eight copes for his boy-helpers; at Sarum in 1219 there was a gold ring, and at York in 1321 a gold ring with a great stone for "the Bishop of the Innocents." Elsewhere we read of a white mitre with orphreys, another mitre of cloth of gold, of a gorgeous set of vestments in red with lions of silver and birds of gold on the orphreys; of a red cope of tissue, of a rochet, a tunicle, a chasuble, a pontifical mended with silver-gilt, and of gloves to be worn as a mark of dignity.

At Vespers on the Eve of the Holy Innocents (that is, on December 27th) when in singing the *Magnificat* they came to the words "He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek," the Bishop or Dean or Abbot changed places with the Boy-Bishop, and Canons, Archdeacons and other dignitaries similarly exchanged with those of his boy attendants whom he had selected to fill their places. In the recessional the Boy-Bishop came last as of higher dignity, while the real dignitaries acted as thurifers or candle-bearers. The cross-bearer addressed the Boy-Bishop: "Prince of the Church, Shepherd of the Sheepfold, vouchsafe to bless thy people," and then, turning to the congregation, he continued: "With gentleness and charity humble yourselves for the blessing." This strange reversal of the ordinary positions was maintained through all the services next day, and at the end of Complin the Boy-Bishop brought his brief episcopate to a close by pronouncing a final solemn Benediction.

We read that in 1299 a Boy-Bishop sang Vespers before King Edward I.; and reports are still extant of three sermons preached by Boy-Bishops in the discharge of their office.

Another custom associated with Christmas is the casting of the great Yule-log into the enormous open fireplace of the vast baronial hall, and the gathering of young people round it to listen with fearful joy to the recitation of gruesome ghost-stories. In view of what has been already written it is not difficult to see the *raison d' etre* of this particular practice. To tell tales of ghosts, warlocks, demons, sprites and goblins dire was a recreation not without its dangers, for the mention of such fearsome entities was supposed to attract their attention and invoke their presence; but the blessed influence of this holy season, and the hosts of Angels hovering over those who were duly celebrating it, would be amply sufficient to protect both the narrator and his audience.

Even the special food appropriate to Christmas was not without its symbolism. I remember being told in very early days by an old nurse that the conglomeration of miscellaneous indigestibilities in the mince-pies and the Christmas plum-pudding was intended to typify the richness and variety of the presents brought to the Christ-Child by the three Wise Men from the East !

No doubt some of the old Christmas observances were trivial; some of them may even have bordered on the grotesque; yet they were all attempts (some of them clumsy attempts) to express a great idea in the background —the idea that Christmas is a special time, a different time, and that we should try to realize it as such, to rise to its level, to take advantage of its opportunities. If it be a time of peace to men of goodwill, surely at that time we shall all try to be men of goodwill; and it is remarkable how nearly a great many people succeed. It is a wonderful thing, this Christmas spirit of which we have written, this real feeling of brotherhood that is spread abroad on that day. There is a great goodwill, greater kindliness and comradeship, a truer brotherhood on Christmas Day than all the rest of the year. It should not be for Christmas only, of course; we should have that feeling always; but since we are overwhelmed by the noise and tumult of the world, since we cannot yet all of us feel that noble Christmas heartiness all the while, it is at least a good thing that there should be one day when all the world agrees to feel it, when every man tries to come as near as he can to the brotherhood which ought to exist all the year round. Assuredly it is well, too, that we should endeavour to impart our joy to others—that a goodly custom should have sprung up whereby on Christmas Day the poor and the needy are helped towards the realization of the great brotherhood of humanity, for our Christmas joy can be perfect only in so far as we share it with others less fortunately circumstanced than ourselves.

So let Christmas enter into our hearts and into our souls, and let us try, every one of us, to feel then what the Angels sang so long ago—first "Glory to God in the highest," and then no less "peace on earth and goodwill to all men."

C.W.L.

THE MONK FELIX

"One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day";* and again: "A thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday,"† mused Brother Felix; "how may that be ?" and full of doubt over God's word, he went forth to meditate in the forest.

And lo ! he heard
The sudden singing of a bird,
A snow-white bird, that from a cloud
Dropped down.
And among the branches brown
Sat singing
So sweet, and clear, and loud
It seemed a thousand harp-strings ringing.
And the Monk Felix closed his book
And long, long,
With rapturous look
He listened to the song,
And hardly breathed or stirred.

As he thus listened years rolled by, and on his return to the abbey he found all changed—new faces in the refectory and in the choir. Then the monastery roll was brought forth, wherein were written the names of all who had belonged to that house of prayer, and therein he found

That on a certain day and date,
One thousand years before,
Had gone forth from the abbey gate
The Monk Felix, and never more
Had entered that sacred door:
He had been counted among the dead,
And they knew at last,
That such had been the power
Of that celestial and immortal song,
A thousand years had passed,
And had not seemed so long
As a single hour.

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* 2 Peter iii, 8.
† Ps. xc., 4.

How Theosophy Came to Me

By the Editor.

V.

Our interesting stay in Cairo was brought to an end by the news that our steamer, the British India s.s. *Navarino*, was due at Port Said on a certain date. Thither I was despatched as a kind of *avant-courier*, to make arrangements in advance for some special comforts for Madame Blavatsky who, with the rest of our little party, wished to avoid the canal, to have an extra day in Cairo, and to embark at Suez. This small errand I duly accomplished, and I think our Leader was fairly well satisfied with the accommodation provided, though of course it fell far short of the luxury of the larger modern vessels.

We had a full complement of passengers, and I suppose that both they and the officers were about the average crowd that one expects to meet on board an Eastern-bound boat. The Captain was perhaps a trifle unusual, for he was a very religious man, narrow and puritanical, and he not unnaturally regarded Madame with a stern disapproval which seemed strongly tinged with horror. His attitude towards our party was one of icy reserve, and during the whole voyage none of us exchanged more than a very few words with him. His officers, however, were more amenable, and I remember that Mrs. Oakley, who was an indefatigable propagandist, made friends with the third mate, Mr. Wadge, and succeeded in interesting him in Theosophy to some small extent, at any rate sufficiently to induce him to read one or two books, to attend one of our meetings at Adyar, and I think to correspond with her later.

Among the passengers were several missionaries, and they, with one exception, seemed distinctly disposed to regard us as emissaries of the Prince of Darkness. The exception was a young Wesleyan minister named Restorick, with whom I used to play deck-tennis; I found him quite friendly and reasonable, and willing to discuss without acrimony all kinds of religious matters. A very different type was an earnest but quite uneducated missionary from America, named Daniel Smith, who made no secret of the fact that he had been a bricklayer, but found the hard work and the exposure too severe for his health, and so, as he put it, the Lord had called him to preach the gospel to the heathen.

Perhaps because of his ignorance, he was apt to be aggressive, and used frequently to engage in arguments with Madame Blavatsky which were a source of great amusement to the passengers. I am afraid that our Leader took a kind of impish pleasure in entangling him in his talk and inducing him to commit himself to the most impossible theological statements. She knew the Bible far better than he did, and would constantly quote unexpected and little-known texts which drew from him the indignant protest: "That's not in the Bible ! I'm sure that's not in the Bible !"

Then Madame Blavatsky would turn to me with deadly composure:

"Leadbeater, fetch my Bible from my cabin !" and would proceed to confound him with chapter and verse. Once he was so ill-advised as to rejoin: "Well, anyhow, I'm sure it's not in my copy !" But the ripple of amusement which ran round among the audience warned him to avoid such a rash assertion in the future.

As we were crossing the Indian Ocean I remember walking the deck with Madame Blavatsky early one morning in all the glory of a tropical sunrise, when this worthy missionary

appeared at the top of the staircase, and she at once hailed him with the words:

"Now, Mr. Smith ! Look round you ! See the calm shining sea, and the lovely colours ! See how good your God is ! Surely on such a glorious morning as this you can't tell me that I am going to be burnt in hell for ever and ever !"

I must do the Rev. Daniel the justice to admit that he blushed deeply and looked very uncomfortable, but he stuck manfully to his guns, and replied with an evident effort:

"Well, I'm very sorry, Ma'am, but I guess you will !"

Naturally Madame Blavatsky's brilliant and powerful personality impressed itself upon the whole company, officers and passengers alike (always excepting the Captain) and whenever she chose to show herself upon deck in good weather she speedily gathered round her a kind of court of interested auditors, who asked her questions upon all sorts of subjects, and listened fascinated to her stories of experience and adventure in out-of-the-way corners of the world. At night especially they asked always for tales of the weird and supernatural, which she told so well and with such gruesome realism that her audience shuddered with delightful thrills of horror—but I noticed that they had a distinct tendency to herd together afterwards, and that none would adventure into a dark passage alone !

The *Navarino* was not exactly an ocean greyhound, but at long last we reached Colombo, where Colonel Olcott met us and introduced me to the leading members of the Buddhist Theosophical Society there. It was a previous generation of workers, and I suppose hardly any of the Sinhalese gentlemen who were prominent among us then are still upholding the Society's flag on the physical plane. I remember especially the old Mohandiram (an important city official) Mr. William de Abrew (father of the well-known Mr. Peter de Abrew, who has worked so loyally for us for so many years), Mr. Don Carolis of Mutwal, Mr. J. R. de Silva (whom for some reason the Colonel always nick-named the Doctor, though that was not his profession), Mr. C. P. Gunawardana (then the Secretary of our Colombo Branch), Mr. N. S. Fernando, Mr. Wijiasekara, Mr. Hendrik de Silva, and others whose names elude me now, though their faces are still clear in my mind's eye. After all, it is forty-four years ago, half of a long life-time !

Most important of all, I was presented to the great Buddhist leader and scholar, Hikkaduwe Sumangala Thero, High Priest of The Peak and of Galle, and Principal of the Widyodaya Monks' College at Maradana — the most learned and highly respected of the leaders of the Southern Church of Buddhism.

On an earlier visit to the lovely island of Ceylon, both Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky had made public profession of the Buddhist faith and been formally received into that religion; and now Madame Blavatsky asked me whether I was willing to follow their example in that respect. She strongly impressed upon me that if I took that step it must be entirely of my own motion and on my own responsibility, and that she had no wish to persuade me in the matter; but she thought that, as I was a Christian Priest, the open acceptance of a great Oriental religion would go far to convince both Hindus and Buddhists of my *bona fides*, and would enable me to be far more useful in working among them for our Masters.

I replied that I felt the very greatest reverence for the Lord Buddha and whole-heartedly accepted His teaching, and that I should feel it a great honour to enrol myself among His followers if I could do so without abjuring the Christian faith into which I had been baptized. She assured me that no such repudiation would be asked of me, and that there was no incompatibility be-

tween Buddhism and *true* Christianity, though no enlightened Buddhist would be likely to credit the crude theological dogmas which were usually preached by the missionaries. Buddhism, she said, was not a question of creed, but of life; I was not asked to accept any article of faith, but to try to live according to the precepts of the Lord.

To this I was of course entirely agreeable, so it was arranged that I should be presented to the High Priest for admission.

That very title of High Priest is something of a misnomer, though it was universally employed among us in speaking of Sumangala. In strict accuracy some such title as Chief Abbot would come nearer to the truth. There is in reality nothing like a Priesthood in Buddhism; there is no sacrifice to be offered, no public service to be led. The Brethren of the Yellow Robe, who are so picturesque a feature in the life of all Buddhist countries, are best described as monks, and the nearest that they come to leading a public service is when they "give pansil," as it is called, to such of their people as ask for it; that is to say, they recite in Pali the sacred formula of the Three Refuges and the Five Precepts, by which all Buddhists are supposed to govern their lives, and the people obediently repeat the pledges which are dictated to them.

It is the recitation of this very same formula which constitutes the solemn admission to the Buddhist religion; it was this, therefore, that I had to repeat after the High Priest that day in the garden of his College. It is straightforward and simple, but far-reaching. We may say that it opens with an ascription of praise to the Lord Buddha:

I reverence the Blessed One, the Holy One, the Perfect in Wisdom.

The Three Refuges.

This is repeated thrice, and then follows the *Tisarana*—commonly rendered "The Three Refuges." That expression is however not an exact equivalent of the Pali word, which seems to mean much more nearly "a guide." The nearest that we can come in English to the true meaning of this declaration is:

I take the Lord Buddha as my guide.
I take His Law as my guide.
I take His Order as my giude.

The word *Dhamma* (Sanskrit *Dharma*) which is usually translated "law," really bears a much wider signification than that English term. It is not in the least a law or series of commandments ordained by the Lord Buddha; it is His statement of the universal laws under which the Universe exists, and consequently of the duties of men as part of that mighty scheme. It is in this sense that the expressions quoted above are employed by the Buddhist. In pronouncing the *Tisarana* he expresses his acceptance of the Lord Buddha as his guide and teacher; his adherence to the doctrine which the Buddha taught; and his recognition of the great order of Buddhist monks as the practised interpreters of the meaning of that doctrine.

This does not in the least imply the acceptance of the interpretation of any particular monk, but only that of the Order in the most catholic sense; he believes that interpretation to be accurate which is held by the entire Brotherhood in all places and at all times—thus closely approximating to the great Catholic declaration that that only should be believed which has been accepted *semper, ubique et ab omnibus*—always, everywhere and by everyone. But it would seem that in some cases at least a much wider connotation is attached to this idea of the Brotherhood, so that it is taken to include not only the Order as now existing on the physical plane, but the whole Order from the beginning, corresponding to the Christian theory of the Communion of Saints—perhaps even to the Great White Brotherhood itself.

The Five Precepts.

Following immediately upon this

declaration the *Pancha Sila*, commonly called "The Five Precepts" are recited. Again "Precepts" is hardly the right word, although it is a possible translation of *sila;* "pledges" comes much nearer the fact, though hardly permissible as a translation. These are often compared to the Ten Commandments of Judaism; but in reality they differ greatly in character and, though fewer in number, are much more comprehensive. They are as follows:

(1) I observe the precept to refrain from destruction of life.
(2) I observe the precept to refrain from taking that which is not mine.
(3) I observe the precept to refrain from unlawful sexual intercourse.
(4) I observe the precept to refrain from falsehood.
(5) I observe the precept to refrain from using intoxicating liquors or stupefying drugs.

It can hardly fail to strike the intelligent person that, as Colonel Olcott writes:

One who observes these strictly must escape from every cause productive of human misery, for if we study history we shall find that it has all sprung from one or another of these causes. The far-seeing wisdom of the Lord Buddha is most plainly shown in the first, third, and fifth, for the taking of life, sensuality and the use of intoxicants cause at least ninety-five per cent of the suffering among men.

It is interesting to notice how each of these precepts goes further than the corresponding Jewish commandment. Instead of being told to do no murder, we find ourselves enjoined to take no life whatever; instead of being commanded not to steal, we have the more far-reaching precept not to take that which does not belong to us, which would obviously cover the acceptance of praise not honestly due to us, and many another case quite outside of what is commonly called stealing. It will be observed also that the third of these precepts includes a great deal more than the seventh of the commandments of Moses, forbidding not only one particular type of unlawful intercourse, but all types. Instead of being forbidden to bear false witness in a court of law, we are enjoined to avoid falsehood altogether. I have often thought what a good thing it would have been for all these European countries which have taken up the teachings of Christ if the legendary Moses had included in his decalogue the fifth of the Buddhist precepts—the instruction to touch no intoxicating liquor nor stupefying drugs. How much simpler would be all our essential problems if that commandment were observed in England and America as it is observed in Buddhist countries!

It is also very characteristic of the Buddhist faith that there is here no commandment "Thou shalt not do this or that"—no order given by a Deity or a teacher, but simply the quiet promise made by each man that he will refrain from certain actions which are obviously undesirable.

This, then, as I have said, is the formula which I had to recite after the High Priest Sumangala; and at the same time he gave me a short explanation of it and of what it implied. I remember also that before admitting me he asked me whether I fully understood the religion into which I had been born, pointing out that such birth was not by chance, and that I ought to be sure that I had duly learnt such lessons as it had to teach.

Even on this occasion of my first introduction to him I was much impressed by the nobility, the courtesy and the obvious fairness of the High Priest; one felt at once that one was in the presence of a truly great man. I came to know much more of him later, as I was engaged for some years in educational work in Ceylon; and I always found him erudite, able and kindly, and not without a saving sense of humour.

Though it does not belong at this stage of my story, but to a period perhaps two years later, I will include at this point a little incident which seemed somewhat characteristic of him. As the Vidyodaya College was not very far from what was then the principal

railway station in Colombo and well within reach of the stream of sight-seers who landed from the great mail steamers, the High Priest had quite a number of European visitors, and more especially those who were interested in Oriental religions made a point of calling upon him.

I remember, for instance, that on one occasion the Professor of Sanskrit from a great European University appeared on the scene, and Sumangala joyously hailed him with a speech of welcome in Sanskrit, but was much surprised to find that the learned professor could not understand a word of it, since he had apparently never regarded Sanskrit as a spoken language at all ! On the other hand when Sir Edwin Arnold came to Colombo he received a princely ovation; and in that case there was no disappointment, for he was not only able to understand and appreciate the loving welcome extended to him, but to reply to it in a long and fluent Sanskrit speech !

The special incident to which I have referred was of a slightly different character. In this case the visitor was a French scientist of considerable eminence, who came to see the High Priest perhaps mainly out of curiosity, or perhaps to show courtesy to a learned man of whom he had heard something in Europe. This gentleman spoke with respect of the philosophy of the Lord Buddha, but deplored the fact that He had sometimes made indefensible statements on scientific subjects. The High Priest asked him to give an instance, and the Frenchman quoted an assertion that the earth rested upon water, the water in turn upon air, and the air upon empty space. The High Priest listened most politely, and said that he was of course fully aware of the wonderful discoveries of Western science, and was always very glad to learn anything that he could of them. And then he quite innocently enquired from the scientist what were the latest conclusions on that subject from the European point of view. He said:

"Now, if it were possible for us to bore straight down under our feet as we sit here, clear through to the other side of the earth, what should we find at the other end of that hole ?"

The scientist considered for a few moments, and replied:

"Calculating roughly, I think we should come out in the Pacific Ocean."

"Yes," said the High Priest with keen interest, "and if we carried on through the ocean, what should we find next ?"

"Well," said the scientist, "of course we should come out into the atmosphere."

"And if we pushed on through the atmosphere ?

"Well, then of course we should arrive in interplanetary space."

"Then," said Sumangala meekly, "it seems that the conclusions of modern science do not after all differ greatly from those of the Lord Buddha !"

After a day or two in Colombo we resumed our voyage on the *Navarino*, and duly arrived at Madras to find an uncomfortably heavy swell, which made our landing a distinctly unpleasant and even somewhat hazardous business. A breakwater had been erected some years previously, but had not proved strong enough to resist the seas raised by the monsoon, so that all that was left of it were a few scattered heaps of stone. Consequently we had to be taken off the ship in enormous boats of a very unusual type. The planks of which they were constructed seemed to be not nailed together in the ordinary way, but as it were *stitched* together with cable, so that there was a curious collapsibility about the sides; and we were told that this method of construction enabled them to resist the impact of the tremendous surf better than if they had been more rigid.

The boats were of great depth, and the rowers with their long paddles perched themselves somehow on the sides, the very gunwale of the boat, while the unfortunate passengers were

dumped into the central hollow far below the feet of the rowers, in what would have been the hold of the craft if it had been decked. It will perhaps be understood that to descend into such a craft from a steamer which was rolling heavily in the open roads (for of course there was then nothing like a harbour) required great agility, and was indeed a decidedly dangerous feat, as the boat was sometimes level for a moment with the ship's bulwarks and directly afterwards twenty or thirty feet below, for the seas were positively mountainous.

One had to jump at exactly the right moment, and one by one most of the passengers achieved it, though with a good deal of trepidation, mostly bundling ungracefully and ignominiously into the bottom of the boat. Obviously gymnastics of this sort were impossible for Madame Blavatsky, and the only alternative was to tie her carefully into a chair, and lower her by means of the ordinary cargo winch. I need hardly say that she did not appreciate this operation, and I think that her language on the occasion rather surprised even the hardened officers. She was, however, lowered and received with perfect safety, and though the process may have appeared undignified, I think some of the rest of us rather envied her.

Presently we were all safely in the boat, very wet but otherwise uninjured. We have to remember that Madame Blavatsky was returning to India to meet a mass of most wicked and slanderous charges which had been brought against her by the Madras Christian College missionaries, that these so-called missionaries had confidently predicted that she could never return to face these charges, and that consequently the Indian population regarded her as a hero and a martyr, and came down in their thousands to give her such an ovation as might have been accorded to a victorious general.

The students of Pachiappa's College were taking a very prominent part in the reception, apparently as a demonstration against the rival Madras Christian College; and it may have been they who were responsible for the appearance of a band of performers upon various weird Indian musical instruments, mostly, so far as I can remember, of the flute or flageolet order, though there were also some drums. Whoever was in charge of the proceedings made the fatal mistake of sending this band out to the ship in that terrible *masuli* boat, and as they were tossing about for at least twenty minutes in that boat in a very heavy sea while arrangements were being made to put Madame Blavatsky and other passengers on board, they were absolutely prostrate with seasickness, and instead of receiving our Leader with joyous strains as her chair swung down, they were simply lying groaning and helpless in the bottom of the boat.

We were brought alongside a pier on which we landed only with very great difficulty—in fact, some members of the band had to be lifted on shore by their friends. Along that pier ran a tramway-line, and there was a single and rather primitive car, which under ordinary circumstances was drawn by a horse; but about a dozen of the most enthusiastic students had harnessed themselves to this car, and insisted on drawing Madame Blavatsky to the shore in triumph amidst a huge cheering crowd. Quite a number of Europeans had also come down to see the fun, and were seated in their carriages at the end of the pier. I think that the Oakleys felt distinctly conspicuous and uncomfortable, and I must admit that I was a little embarrassed myself, as the whole proceeding was, to say the least of it, unconventional; but Madame Blavatsky accepted all this homage with great dignity as a matter of course, and indeed seemed rather to enjoy it.

A comical touch was added to the scene by the fact that the unhappy bandsmen, still desperately in the throes of *mal-de-mer*, were marshalled

in front of the car and instructed to walk *backwards* before it, not only playing hard all the time, but bowing towards the car as they walked. Words fail me to describe that amazing pageant; if the reader's imagination is sufficiently powerful he can perhaps make a mental picture of those heroic bandsmen, still green and staggering from sea-sickness, walking or rather stumbling backwards, bowing profoundly and constantly, but struggling nobly to get out a few notes from their various instruments between the spasms of acuter discomfort. And this weird procession tunnelling its way through a closely packed and wildly uproarious crowd, all waving flags and yelling at the top of their voices. That pier seemed very, very long, but at last we reached the shoreward end, and found that some sympathetic Maharaja had sent down a carriage to meet Madame, and to carry her off to Pachiappa's Hall, where she was to receive an address of welcome from the students.

We were hustled on to a platform, where Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky were accommodated with two big arm-chairs. The hall was crowded to excess, and the tumultuous cheering made it quite impossible to speak for many minutes. Of course we were all loaded with garlands according to the kindly and picturesque Indian custom; and an attempt was made to read the address of welcome, though irrepressible outbursts of cheering made it difficult to follow it. Then the Colonel rose to reply on Madame Blavatsky's behalf, and one might have hoped that his speech would be allowed to terminate the proceedings; but there were many other Indian brothers who wished to express their sympathy, and their flaming indignation at the atrocious wickedness of the missionaries.

There was an insistent demand for a speech from Madame Blavatsky herself, and though she did not usually speak in public she at last consented to do so on this especial occasion. Naturally she was received with thunders of applause, which lasted so long that she had to sit down again and wait until it was over. When at last she was allowed to speak, she began very well by saying how touched she was by this enthusiastic reception, and how it showed her what she had always known, that the people of India would not accept tamely these vile, cowardly, loathsome and utterly abominable slanders, circulated by these unspeakable —but here she became so vigorously adjectival that the Colonel hurriedly intervened, and somehow persuaded her to resume her seat, while he called upon an Indian member to offer a few remarks.

I remember especially an exceedingly brilliant speech made by a young lawyer, Mr. Gyanendranath Chakravarti; I had had previously no idea whatever of the eloquence and faultless diction of the highly-educated Indian speaker. The proceedings at Pachiappa's Hall seemed to me almost interminable, but eventually we were allowed to depart for Adyar, and I had my first glimpse of the Headquarters which I afterwards came to know so well, which even now seems to me more truly home than any other spot in the world. Here of course was yet another reception for Madame Blavatsky, and I think that even her iron determination must by this time have been approaching its limit, for the rest of us were almost too exhausted to be able to appreciate the wonderful scene.

(To be continued.) C.W.L.

Life is not mean, it is grand; if it is mean to any, he makes it so. God made it glorious. It is paved with diamonds; its banks He fringed with flowers. He over-arched it with stars. Around it He spread the glory of the physical universe — suns, moons, worlds, constellations, systems—all that is magnificent in motion, sublime in magnitude, and grand in order and obedience. God would not have attended life with this broad march of grandeur if it did not mean something.

Horus the Beloved

My Beloved is mine and I am His . . . until the Day break and the shadows flee away.

By Evelyn M. Caspersz.

All through the ages man has loved; and the fruit of his love was life—life the beloved. The Egyptian beheld this marvellous power of life in earth's abundance, fructified by a mighty flowing river; in the ever-growing life of his nation, evolving by and through the threefold powers of father, mother and child. Everywhere, every day he saw this earthly trinity operating in unison to bring life to the world, from the Pharaoh on his throne to the peasant tilling the soil; the trinity of husband, wife and child. To him that trinity became all important, the ordered means whereby life was made manifest. He realized how each member of it was necessary to the other, how the son grew into the likeness of his father, yet remained himself.

"Life increased by means of these," said the Egyptian: "therefore the God of Life must fashion the universe in like manner—must be a Trinity." So throughout the length and breadth of Egypt, men worshipped the Trinity. Says an authority: "The Egyptian worshipper could not conceive a deity as existing in isolation. To every deity of either sex there must be a counterpart. As the child is the reproduction of its parents—for the father lives again in his children—the son was to the Egyptian identical with the father. Father, mother and child cannot be conceived except in relation to each other."

The Divine Trinity of Egypt was the Trinity of Osiris, Isis and Horus, each the counterpart of the other, inseparable, yet distinct. The peasant in his field worshipped Osiris the Father, Isis the Mother, Horus the Son, and likened them to himself, his wife and little child. Pharaoh, the Priest-King, worshipped; but to him the names given were but symbols of high and holy wisdom, truths of sacred science. Osiris was the Creator-Light, the One Who became the Many in order that the Many might rise into His likeness. Isis was the heavenly Mother, universal Nature; and Horus was the Divine Son, the life of the world. The end of all striving was union with Osiris the Light. Life, striving to attain that union, was Horus.

Horus is Life, the Life in all and in each; therefore He is the Beloved, for the Beloved is Life. Every day, everywhere, Life is being "stepped down," is suffering and dying, is growing into manhood, and rising into union with Osiris the Father, the One Who became the Many.

In the great ritual of the Mysteries, still existing in part in modern Freemasonry, Horus the Life was shown by means of allegory and symbol as the eternal pilgrim on his age-long journey. Every candidate represented, and still represents, the Life that is Horus the Beloved. In Craft Masonry he is born into the Brotherhood, gains knowledge and usefulness, learns the true craft of life, suffers, rises through suffering to masterhood. He learns to rule his world, the Lodge, to use the powers of Father-Mother, the Wardens of his growing, evolving life. He is Horus of the Dawn, the Rising Sun reigning in the East, the bright and morning Star.

Triumphant over death, Master of Life, he passes onward to a further stage where he rules the universe in co-equal majesty and power with Osiris his Father. As Horus of the Solar Mount he stands at the right hand of Osiris. In the supreme degree of the Holy Royal Arch he reigns, holding in strong hands the balance of the universe. Again he represents the candi-

date, no longer a craftsman but a companion, no longer a learner but a co-operator in the scheme of the building. Horus is ever the Great Example; in the Lodge the ideal to whom the Mason looks; in the Chapter again the ideal, a Master of Equilibrium, of that power of balance essential to every perfect structure.

All through the ages songs have been sung in praise of the Beloved Who is life. The Greeks named Him the child Bacchus, the infant Dionysos; as man Eros, the highest ideal of love. Solomon, wisest King, Initiate of the Mysteries, hymned his wonderful mystic Song of Songs to Life the Beloved: "My Beloved is mine and I am His . . . until the day break and the shadows flee away." Today, amid the noise and tumult of a discordant world, there sounds once again the Voice of the Beloved, the call of Life:

I am the Truth
I am the Law
I am the Refuge
I am the Guide, the Companion and the Beloved.
I am all things because I am Life.

The message of Life is ringing, as in Egypt it rang through the Mysteries down the centuries of Time. And for many, weary and heavy-laden, the Day will break, the shadows flee away.

E.M.C.

The Epiphany

By the Editor.

This feast of the Epiphany is one of the most picturesque in the Christian year. It is in the description of the event commemorated by it that the words first occur which are so well known to us all: "We have seen His Star in the East and have come to worship Him." The story is but briefly told in the gospel; we hear simply that there came Wise Men from the East to Jerusalem asking where that child was to be born who was to be the King of the Jews. Since the Jewish prophets had selected for the birth of the Messiah the town of Bethlehem, the Wise Men were directed to go there; and it is said that on the way the Star, which had led them from their distant homes, again appeared to them and indicated the stable-cave in which the child Jesus was lying. And so these Wise Men went in and worshipped the Child, and offered to Him gold and frankincense and myrrh.

But meantime Herod, who for the moment held the position of king of the Jews, was somewhat disturbed to hear of another claimant to that office; and so when the Wise Men did not return to describe their adventures, he sent down soldiers to Bethlehem, and tried to ensure the removal of his prospective rival by killing all the children under the age of two. Meantime the Wise Men had been warned in a dream to avoid him, and in the same way Joseph and Mary had been warned to remove the Child out of his reach.

This story, so simply told in the gospel, becomes far more gorgeous, though perhaps less credible, in ancient ecclesiastical tradition. The word Magi or Wise Men means what we should now call students of the inner side of things, and this would certainly in those days have included astrology; so in that way their extreme interest in an unusual star is readily explained. According to the tradition these were not merely men of learning, but Kings, each ruling in his own country. The legend is not precise as to the location of the countries; but the names of the three Kings are given as Melchior, Balthazar and Gaspar, and it is the universal tradition that the third

was a black man—a negro from Africa. The suggestion seems to be that Melchior and Balthazar were rulers of Arabian states; but however that may be, it is stated that each King in his own place saw this strange new Star, and decided to set out upon a journey to see what it might mean.

Herodotus says that the Magi were the sacred caste of the Medes, and Strabo tells us that the Magian priests formed one of the two councils of the Parthian Empire; so the Wise Men of our story may have been the offspring of either of these lines. Every point in the tale seems to have been disputed at one time or another—their number, their condition in life, and the time and circumstances of their visit. The mediæval versions were of course frankly impossible (as will be seen from the specimen which follows); and even the simpler form given in the New Testament has its difficulties. I fear we cannot guarantee its historicity in any form, but nevertheless it is a picturesque and beautiful legend; it may not be veridical, but it is unquestionably delightful.

The word Epiphany is Greek for "manifestation," and the feast has been thought to commemorate various manifestations of Christ's glory and divinity. It has been taken at different times as the anniversary of His Birth, His Baptism, and His first miracle at Cana in Galilee. But in modern days we associate it only with the coming of the Magi.

As it lends itself so well to artistic illustration, it has from early days been a favourite theme for the painters; and the representation which we reproduce in our frontispiece is perhaps one of the most remarkable. It is the work of Sir Edward Burne-Jones, a close friend of William Morris and Dante Gabriel Rossetti—a painter who has sometimes been classed with the Pre-Raphaelite School, though really he belonged more to the Mediævalists or Aestheticists.

I append one of the mediæval forms of the legend, showing along what strange lines it developed. The geography leaves much to be desired, for they divide India, as Cæsar divided all Gaul, into three parts, and assign them to their Three Kings; and they substitute for the golden crown which Melchior usually bears, thirty golden pennies which, misled by the fascination of the number, they proceed to confuse with the historic thirty pieces of silver. I do not know whether there ever was such a thing as a golden penny; if there were, one would say that it must have been about the size of a pin's head. Anyhow, here is the story.

The Three Kings of Cologne.

A Mediæval Legend.

The prophecy that a star should arise out of Jacob having proceeded from a heathen prophet, the heathens became interested in its fulfilment; and watch was kept from a tower on a high hill in India, where twelve astrologers observed the heavens night and day. When the time was come, a brilliant Star was seen to rise in the east, which shed a light all over the land, and was as bright as the sun. And the Star bore within it the figure of a little child, and the sign of the cross, and a voice came from it saying: "Today is there born a King in Judæa." And this Star was seen all over India, and the people rejoiced, and no one doubted that it was the same of which Balaam had prophesied.*

India included three regions, each separated from the other by high mountains. One of these was Arabia, the soil of which is quite red with the quantity of gold it contains, and here Melchior was King. The second was Godolia, of which part is called Saba, where frankincense is so abundant that it flows out of the trees, and Balthazar ruled there. And the third India contained the Kingdom of Tharsis, where myrrh hangs so plentifully on the

* Numbers xxii, 17.

bushes, that as you walk along it sticks to your clothes; and here Gaspar reigned. But as they were best known by the gifts they brought, the Scriptures only mention them as the Kings of Tharsis, Arabia, and Saba.

Now each of the Kings saw the Star, and determined to follow it, but no one of the three knew anything of his neighbour's intentions. So each set off with a numerous retinue, and the whole way, though beset with mountains and rivers, was equally dry and level to them; and they neither ate nor drank, nor rested nor slept, neither they nor their servants, nor their horses, nor their cattle, but followed the Star without ceasing. In this manner the whole journey only occupied them thirteen days, though it took them two years to return.

But when they were come within two miles of Jerusalem, the Star disappeared, and a heavy fog arose. and each party halted; Melchior, as it fell out, taking his stand on Mount Calvary, Balthazar on the Mount of Olives, and Gaspar just between them. And when the fog cleared away, each was astonished to see two other great companies besides his own, and then the Kings first discovered that all had come upon the same errand, and they embraced with great joy, and went together into Jerusalem.

There the crowd of their united trains was so great that they looked like an army come to besiege the city, and Herod and all Jerusalem were troubled. And the strangers enquired for Him that was born King of the Jews whose Star they had seen in the east, and were directed, as the Scriptures relate, to Bethlehem. And the Star again went before them and stood over a miserable hut. In this hut lay the infant Jesus, now thirteen days old, with His Mother Mary, who was stout in figure and brown in face, and had on an old blue robe.

The Kings were splendidly attired, and had brought great treasures with them. For it must be known that all Alexander the Great had left at his death, and all the Queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon, and all that Solomon collected for the temple, had descended to the three Kings from their ancestors, who had pillaged the temple of Jerusalem; and all this they had now brought with them. But when they entered this miserable hut, it was filled with such an exceeding light that, for fear and amazement, they knew not what they did. And they each offered quickly the first thing that came to their hands, and forgot their other gifts. Melchior offered thirty golden pennies, Balthazar gave frankincense, and Gaspar myrrh; but what the Virgin said to them they quite forgot, and only remembered that they bowed before the Child, and said: "Thanks be to God."

Each of the gifts, however, had a significant history, especially the thirty pennies, which appear to have assisted at all the money transactions in the Scriptures. Having been originally struck by Abraham's father, they were paid by Abraham for the cave of Machpelah; and by Potiphar for Joseph to his brother; and by Joseph's brethren to Joseph for corn in Egypt; and by Joseph to the Queen of Sheba for ointment to anoint the body of his father Jacob; and by a later Queen of Sheba to Solomon; whence, as we have seen, they came into the hands of Melchior, who now offered them at Bethlehem.

Nor does their history end here; for as the Holy Family fled into Egypt, the Virgin tied up the money with the frankincense and myrrh together into a cloth, and dropped it by the way; and a shepherd tending his flock found the cloth, and kept it safe until the time that Jesus was performing His miracles in Judæa. Then, being afflicted with a disease, he came to Jerusalem, and Jesus cured him; and the shepherd offered Him the cloth, but Jesus knew what was in it, and desired him to offer it upon the altar. There the Levite who ministered burnt the frankincense; and of part of the myrrh a bitter drink was

made, which they gave to the Saviour on the cross, and the remainder Nicodemus presented for His burial; but the thirty pennies were made over to Judas for betraying Christ, and he threw them down in remorse at the feet of the high priest, whereupon fifteen were sent to pay the soldiers who watched by the tomb, and the other fifteen bought a field to bury poor pilgrims.

To return to the Kings: After they had made their offerings they ate and drank, and lay down to rest; but, being warned against Herod in a dream, they returned to their own country by the regular way, and with all expedition did not reach it for two years. There they told all the people what they had seen, and the wonders God had wrought, and everywhere upon their temples the people erected the image of a star with the Child and cross in it.

And it came to pass that St. Thomas the Apostle was sent to preach the word in India, and when he saw the star on their temples he was astonished, and asked what it meant. Then the heathen priests told him about the Three Kings, and how they had journeyed to Bethlehem, and had seen the young Child; at which St. Thomas rejoiced exceedingly, for he had heard of the Magi, as they were called, from the circumstance of the twelve astrologers, and he performed so many miracles that his fame filled the three Indies.

Now, the three Kings were very old and infirm, but hearing of St. Thomas, they each determined to see him; and again, as it so happened, they set out on the same day, and without knowing each other's movements, reached St. Thomas at the same time. And first St. Thomas baptized them, and then he ordained them priests, for they were not married men, and never had been. And they built a City, and dwelt together in great joy and love for two years, preaching the Gospel.

Then Melchior died, and was buried in a costly grave; and shortly after Balthazar died also, and was laid in the same place; and at length Gaspar gave up the ghost, and when his body was brought to be buried near his companions, Melchior and Balthazar, who lay side by side, moved asunder, and made room for him between them. And many were the miracles performed at the tomb, but for all that the people forsook the right way, and fell into great heresies, and at length each of the Indies insisted on taking back the body of its King to his own country.

Now came the happy time of the Emperor Constantine and his mother Helena, who after finding the true cross, the four nails, the cloth in which the Child had lain, and the old blue robe of the Virgin, determined on finding the bodies of the Three Kings as well. For this she travelled to India, where, after much difficulty, she succeeded in obtaining all three, and when they were deposited again in one receptacle, there arose such an exceedingly delightful smell as convinced all the faithful not only of the identity of the bodies, but of their great satisfaction at being together once more. By Helena they were taken to Constantinople, where they lay for some time in great honour in the church of Santa Sophia, and were ultimately presented to Eustorgius, Bishop of Milan. From Milan Barbarossa carried them off, and gave witness both of his devotion for the Church and his favour for Cologne by presenting them to that city, where they first lay in the old cathedral of Bishop Hildebrand and now lie in the new one founded by Conrad of Hochstaden, where with God's blessing they will remain until the Day of Judgment.

Equality and democracy are humanity's greatest illusions. They are ideals which, if they were put into practice, would destroy interest, beauty and individuality in life.

Benito Mussolini.

The Childhood of Krishnaji

By Captain Russell Balfour-Clarke.

IV.

From this time onwards, in a more definite way than had previously been the case, Krishnaji became a public character, especially among the Indian Theosophists and of course most of all at the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society at Adyar. Consequently he also became a target for the attacks of the worldly-minded; for an indifferent and uncomprehending world always tends to criticize and eventually to persecute any messenger of the Light, and there were even many among his Theosophical brethren who were not entirely free from that spirit.

The first nucleus of antagonism formed itself round Krishnaji's father, Mr. J. Naraniah. Some of his orthodox friends tried to stir up in him the deeply-rooted pride and prejudice of the Brahman by whispering in his ear that these two foreigners, Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater, were gradually maturing a plan to cause his two sons to break their caste and to forsake Hinduism that they might become converts to some form of Christian Theosophy. They worked so insidiously and persistently upon his mind that finally he quite changed his point of view and grew more and more antagonistic to Theosophical and occult teaching; though before this he had felt it a great privilege to reside at Adyar and to place his two sons under the guardianship of one whom he had then regarded as his *guru* in all things high and spiritual.

Presently he made a complete *volte-face* and demanded that Mrs. Besant should surrender the guardianship of his two sons, although he had previously signed a legal document making them over to her care. This she refused to do, and so he commenced his world-famous lawsuit against her. The two brothers were consulted as to whether they preferred to go back to the old life under their father or to proceed to Europe for their education, and they unhesitatingly elected to remain under the protection of their European guardian, and so at an early date in the year 1912 they embarked for Italy under the care of Mr. G. S. Arundale, previously the Principal of the Central Hindu College, who accepted the position of their tutor.

They settled for a time in a most delightful place called Taormina, in Sicily, where they were surrounded by the most glorious scenery. A considerable group of Initiates assembled there, including our President, our late Vice-President Mr. Jinarajadasa, and Mr. Leadbeater. The latter soon noticed that they were living within the radiation of a very unusual and powerful magnetism, due to the fact that Apollonius of Tyana had buried one of his famous talismans at that place. It was then announced to these Brothers that their Adept Masters had guided them to that spot in order that certain members of the party should there take one or other of the great Initiations, with the help and protection of that wonderfully powerful magnetism. Incidentally we have here a glimpse of the wondrous and romantic methods of the Great Brotherhood; for we perceive that in charging its Initiate Messenger, Apollonius of Tyana, with the task of establishing these powerful talismanic centres, it was planning with a vision stretching over many centuries; and thus it was that our Taormina party, after a period of special preparation, severally attain-

ed those further expansions of consciousness which are called the higher Initiations.

After his stay in Taormina, the next period of Krishnaji's early life was spent in England. A house-party was formed in the beautiful English home of the Countess de la Warr. Our President desired that the brothers should spend a quiet time for a few months in a healthy place where, while surrounded by sympathetic companionship, they might pursue the necessary educational studies and at the same time have the opportunity of plenty of physical exercise. Besides the two brothers our party consisted of Mr. Jinarajadasa, Mr. Basil Hodgson-Smith, Mr. Reginald Farrar and myself.

I remember that it was rumoured that Krishnaji's father, who was still violently opposed to Mrs. Besant's guardianship, was planning an attempt to kidnap them, on the theory that possession was nine points of the law. This seemed highly improbable, but still to be on the safe side we tacitly formed a body-guard by day and by night round the two brothers. It was winter time, and there was often snow on the ground when we went for a run each morning through the pine-forest which forms part of the estate. We usually started at about 6.30 a.m. and returned at 8 to bath and breakfast. We had excellent vegetarian food and obtained all sorts of produce from the model farm which was part of the establishment. Study, chiefly under the ideal tutorship of Mr. Jinarajadasa, occupied our time until half an hour before lunch, and we usually had some form of vigorous exercise in the afternoons, interspersed with motor drives to various places of interest in the district. This arrangement lasted for eight months, after which the party broke up and its various members went their several ways.

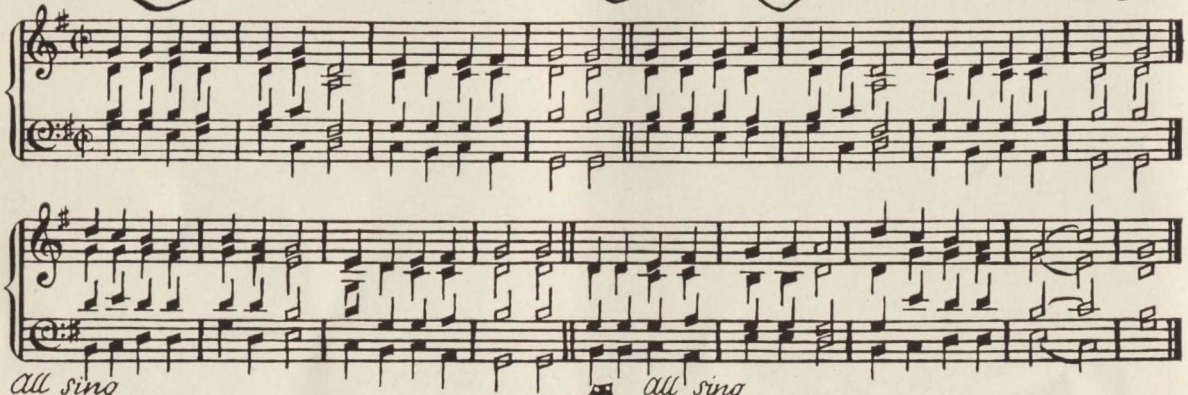
Some months afterwards it was considered desirable that we should have another similar period of combined specialized study and physical training; so another group of people formed itself round Krishnaji, and this time they took up their abode at Bude in Cornwall. The vicarage, a very charming old country house, was the scene of our activities. Once again Mr. G. S. Arundale was the tutor and the head of our household, with his aunt, Miss Francesca Arundale, assisting. Miss Arundale and her mother were among the original band who had the privilege of close association with Madame Blavatsky in the earlier days of modern Theosophical history. Bishop Arundale himself also met our Founder when he was but a little boy of five, and to him Madame Blavatsky once addressed a card in which (using the French form of his name) she called him "Georges Chela"—an accurate prevision on her part, although at the time written seemingly in a light and humorous vein.

Nityananda was not with us during most of this period, though he returned to us towards the end of our stay. The Lady Emily Lutyens, with some of her children, took a house close to us near the sea. Gavern Roberts, the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Percy Roberts, and the brother of Mrs. Tettemer, also paid us a visit of some months' duration. Afterwards he became an officer in the Flying Corps and was killed in action while over the German lines in his plane. Mr. B. Shivarao, who now works so strenuously with Dr. Besant for the political freedom of India, was also our guest for some time.

Our daily routine was simple but efficient; various forms of open air exercise before breakfast, study till lunch time with half an hour's interval in the middle of the morning, and in the afternoon more exercise such as swimming, golf, riding, tennis or rounders. During this time Krishnaji learned to drive a motor-cycle—a $2\frac{3}{4}$ h.p. water-cooled Williamson machine. We learned not only to drive it, but also to make our own repairs, which



Good King Wenceslas



All sing

Good King Wenceslas looked out
On the Feast of Stephen,
When the snow lay round about,
Deep and crisp and even;
Brightly shone the moon that night,
Though the frost was cruel,
When a poor man came in sight,
Gathering winter fuel.

Treble solo

"Hither, page, and stand by me,
If thou knowest it, telling,
Yonder peasant, who is he?
Where and what his dwelling?"

Tenor solo

"Sire, he lives a good league hence,
Underneath the mountain,
Right against the forest fence,
By Saint Agnes' fountain."

Treble solo

"Bring me food and bring me wine,
Bring me pine logs hither;
Thou and I will see him dine,
When we bear them thither."

All sing

Page and monarch forth they went,
Forth they went together,
Through the rude wind's wild lament
And the bitter weather.

Tenor solo

"Sire, the night is darker now,
And the wind blows stronger;
Fails my heart, I know not how,
I can go no longer."

Treble solo

"Mark my footsteps, good my page—!
Tread thou in them boldly;
Thou shalt find the winter's rage
Freeze thy blood less coldly."

All sing

In his master's steps he trod,
Where the snow lay dinted;
Heat was in the very sod
Which the saint had printed.
Therefore, Christian men, be sure,
Wealth or rank possessing,
Ye who now will bless the poor
Shall yourselves find blessing.

Amen

THE PARTS IN THIS CAROL ARE USUALLY WRONGLY DISTRIBUTED. WENCESLAS WAS AT THIS TIME A BOY OF THIRTEEN, AND WOULD THEREFORE SING IN A TREBLE VOICE; WHILE THE SO-CALLED PAGE WAS A GRIZZLED AND HARDY WARRIOR, THE SQUIRE WHO HAD ATTENDED THE YOUNG KING'S FATHER URADISLAS ON THE BATTLEFIELD.

sometimes necessitated the almost complete dismantlement and reassembling of its mechanism. Krishnaji was undoubtedly a first-rate mechanic, and showed an unusual aptitude for work connected with electricity and practical mechanics. Nityananda speedily followed the example of his brother along these lines and became a first-rate driver; little did we imagine then that in doing this he was qualifying himself for the motor-cycle despatch work which he did as a volunteer during the earlier part of the war in France.

The war disturbed our outer peace. How well I remember the peculiar tenseness of the psychic atmosphere in that house at Bude for about two days before war was declared. Perhaps it was because a great decision was being made by the Brotherhood which guides all life on this planet, and because certain of its Members were dwelling in that house—but the atmosphere was as unmistakable as it was unusual. Again we separated and went our several ways, mostly towards some kind of war work, Krishnaji for a time working under the Red Cross Medical Corps in London with Mr. Arundale, who also became an official of some sort in the same organization.

Here it would seem that the childhood of Krishnaji has come to an end —or I should rather say that my very fragmentary sketch of some part of the outer history of his early life comes to an end. When I think of him as I know him to-day, I feel somewhat overwhelmed, and it seems to me that what I have written may be almost a kind of impertinence; but I think that he will understand and will not mind it.

> Ah, blessed Lord ! O High Deliverer !
> Forgive this feeble script, which doth thee wrong,
> Measuring with little wit thy lofty Love.

All that is most real and vital in this childhood cannot be written or even spoken; but these few words may perchance bring some readers nearer to a perception of the beauty and wonder which ever envelop the earthly lives of the Saviour of mankind.

R.B.C.

Good King Wenceslas

By the Editor.

The Duchy of Bohemia in the ninth century was in a transitional condition and there were two strongly marked parties vehemently opposed the one to the other. The chief matter at issue was religious; until quite recently the state had held to some variant of the old Norse religion of Odin, Freya and Thor, and all the dark and gloomy religion of nature and elemental worship into which that ramified in practice. But just before the time of our story there came to the ducal throne of Bohemia one of its most energetic and noble rulers, the good Duke Borivor, who in his youth had travelled to Rome and there embraced Christianity. Naturally he wished to introduce his faith into his Duchy, and he worked most energetically to that end.

He was greatly assisted in this by his wise and capable wife, the Duchess Ludmilla, and a large number of the nobles and the people were converted to Christianity and seconded their ruler's efforts. There was still, however, a great faction among the nobles —an undoubted majority—who clung fiercely to their old religion, and were impatient and scornful of the restrictions which the milder faith of the Christ imposed upon their reckless and selfish lives.

Unfortunately Duke Borivor's only son Uradislas was a weak man, wild and careless-living in his youth. He

was greatly attracted to the rough and boisterous savagery of the pagan party, and was even foolish enough to take for his wife a lady named Drahomira, the daughter of one of the greatest of these heathen nobles. This alliance was made entirely against the wish and advice of his father and mother, and I believe that they thought at first of repudiating the marriage, and making the matter a kind of test question; but in the tense state of feeling this undoubtedly would have meant a sanguinary civil war, and the two parties were far too equally balanced to make that a political possibility. Duke Borivor was exceedingly angry, but his wife eventually persuaded him to receive the Princess Drahomira and to make the best of a bad business. The marriage was nevertheless a great advantage to the pagan party; it increased their influence at court, and much hampered Duke Borivor's efforts to convert the country.

Some years later, Duke Borivor was killed in battle, and the weak Uradislas succeeded him. Drahomira, who was a very clever and scheming person, had her husband much under her influence, and she immediately, though not openly, took the lead of the pagan party, while the Christian Duchess Ludmilla naturally tried to influence her son to carry on the schemes of his father. Thus there arose constant friction and difficulty; and although Uradislas was himself disposed in favour of Christianity, yet the perpetual plotting and scheming of his wife for the ascendency of the pagan nobles caused him a vast amount of trouble, against which his character was too weak to assert itself firmly.

In many of those mediæval states the ruling Duke was little more than *primus inter pares*, and he could assert his nominal power effectively only if he were an able and skilful man. Duke Borivor had those characteristics, but his unfortunate son Uradislas had not; and with Drahomira zealously working to undermine the influence of Christianity, the central power gradually became weakened, and the country became wild and lawless.

Uradislas and Drahomira had two sons, Wenceslas and Boleslas; and when the elder of these was barely twelve years old his father Uradislas died, and Wenceslas succeeded to the dukedom. Of these two children, Wenceslas had always been the favourite of the dowager Duchess Ludmilla, while Boleslas had attached himself more closely to his mother. After the death of Uradislas, a great council of the nobles was called to decide the question of a regency, and naturally the two parties of nobles, who were nearly equal, quarrelled much among themselves at the council, and differed on almost every conceivable point. By right of age and dignity, the Duchess Ludmilla presided at the conference, but Drahomira and her party asserted themselves with all the vigour of which they were capable.

They looked down on and despised those who had taken up what they called the effeminate Christian faith, and stoutly maintained that they and their followers were the only people who could keep Bohemia safe from its enemies. Naturally they were always the warring party, whereas the Christians were always in favour of peace so long as it could be nobly obtained. The pagan party strongly put forward a claim that Boleslas, the second son, should receive the crown, or at any rate be equally associated with his brother. Their idea, or at least their pretext, was that the gentler Wenceslas would prove himself incapable of leading them in war when he grew up. There was much of bitter wrangling and dispute over all this, and it even seemed as though the disagreement might develop into open war, when the boy Wenceslas arose and courteously asked permission from the Duchess Ludmilla to speak to the assembly.

Having received that permission, he stood forth before all those angry

nobles, and calmly announced that he was by succession, by inheritance and by the will of God, Duke of Bohemia, and that he did not intend to lay down that heavy burden which Providence had placed upon him. But he said that considering the condition of affairs, the two parties in the state could not possibly come to an agreement, one being for Christianity, and the other for the older religion, so he was willing to divide the kingdom into two parts, north and south, and while he, remaining at the capital, would rule the northern part (in which as it happened most of the Christian nobles lived), he was willing that the southern part should be governed under him by his brother Boleslas. He further announced that, although he himself held and intended to hold the faith of our fair Father Christ, he would not in any way whatever discriminate against those who followed the heathen line, but that in every way they should be equal under his rule with the others, and should be advanced according to merit and desert, and that no hindrance should be placed in the way of their worship. He said:

"I am the Duke; none of you can question my right and my position. I offer you this as a solution of your difficulties. You can see, from what has already been said here, that there is no alternative to that proposition but a war, an armed division. Now that would mean very much misery for all my beloved people, for there would be thousands killed on both sides whoever won, and Bohemia would be the weaker and the worse."

Finally the nobles agreed to accept his offer, but his mother Drahomira was much dissatisfied; she protested as strongly as she dared and she contrived to introduce some modifications into the agreement, giving her favourite Boleslas more power than had been intended, so that he was almost independent of his brother.

It seems that there was a neighbouring prince, named (I think) Radzowitz, who had some sort of a grievance against Bohemia; and when he heard that Wenceslas had succeeded to the dukedom he spoke very contemptuously about it, and said: "Since they have a ruler who is a child, I shall make war upon them," which he at once proceeded to do. There was great excitement in Bohemia, and all the nobles were much disturbed, for this Radzowitz was a powerful prince. They called together their council of war and gathered together their soldiers, and considered very seriously what they should do, and how they should meet this invasion. They were greatly alarmed, and thought that their chance of victory was poor, now that there was no longer Duke Borivor to lead them. Also Wenceslas' council (who were Christians) were afraid that Drahomira's nobles would not support them in this matter.

However, when the council met, Wenceslas at once took the lead, saying: "I am the commander in war." Fortunately his Prime Minister was a most excellent man, who had served in that capacity under Duke Borivor and Duke Uradislas, and he threw all the weight of his influence on the side of the boy Duke and worked with him most loyally. So when Wenceslas took charge of affairs, they were at least willing to listen respectfully and hear what suggestions he had to make. Wenceslas brought his army together as speedily as possible, but his first actual step was to send an embassy to the invading prince to ask upon what terms the quarrel could be compromised. His counsellors thought that a foolish move, savouring of pusillanimity and likely to demoralize the Bohemian army. However, Wenceslas insisted, and the embassy was duly despatched.

It was, however, too far from the spirit of that martial age to be understood, and Prince Radzowitz sent a contemptuous reply, telling Duke Wenceslas that he should go back to school again, leaving him, Radzowitz,

to manage his kingdom for him; and he further added that he would be glad to pay his school-fees. Wenceslas proceeded to send another embassy, saying this time: "This is a quarrel between you and me; why should thousands of our liege men be killed in the matter? I challenge you to come out and meet me in single combat between the two armies, and upon the result of this the business shall be settled."

Even the Prime Minister doubted the wisdom of this, and the other councillors shrank back in dismay, but their young Duke insisted on carrying out his plan, saying to his council: "I know what I am doing, and if you will agree to what I say, you will see the result." As Prince Radzowitz was a noted man of arms from his youth up, a man in the prime of his strength, while Wenceslas was but a slim stripling, it may be supposed that a considerable amount of faith upon the part of the Ministers was required. But the date was fixed, and in the sight of both armies the two combatants stood forth.

While they were still marching towards one another, Prince Radzowitz was observed to start, to stop suddenly and to gaze on his youthful adversary with horror. A moment later he cast his sword on the ground and turned and rushed in a most undignified manner back to his own army. Wenceslas looked after him with surprise, and seemed undecided what to do; eventually he also turned and called one of his nobles, and sent him over with a flag of truce to find out what was the matter.

The messenger found Radzowitz and his army breaking camp preparatory to returning to their own country, and when at last he was able to get some coherent message from the Prince, it was to the effect: "Your Duke is a magician, and I will have nothing further to do with him in any way whatever. A mighty Angel with a drawn sword stood behind him as I advanced to meet him; I hope I shall never see him again." And so that particular quarrel was settled.

Young Wenceslas proved to be an exceedingly good ruler, for in all things he took the advice of the Prime Minister and of his grandmother, the Duchess Ludmilla; and so it came to pass that the northern part of the country was far better governed, safer and more prosperous than the southern part.

Meantime, the great Emperor Otho had heard of these happenings, and he himself came down to visit Bohemia and to make the acquaintance of his vassal the Duke Wenceslas. He was so impressed by what he saw, and so strongly attracted to the boy Duke, that he conferred upon him the title of King, and in various ways increased his power over Boleslas, whom he sternly censured for the slackness and the incapacity of his government.

It may well have been somewhere at this period that the incident occurred which has been immortalized by ecclesiastical tradition, and cast into the form of a beautiful carol by Dr. John Mason Neale.

The carol tells its own story, but perhaps for perfect comprehension a few words may be added. It seems that on a certain Christmas the young King had ordered that all peasants dwelling on his own vast estate should be provided at Christmas with food and drink of the best, and with fuel for their fires—a most important feature, as the winter in Bohemia is terribly severe. Yet, looking forth from the windows of his castle on the evening of St. Stephen's Day (December 26th), he saw an old man gathering sticks, evidently for a fire. At once he summoned a faithful servitor and demanded how this happened, and why his decree had not been obeyed. The servant was able to identify the old man, and it became obvious that, as he lived in a remote part of the estate, he had been overlooked in the Christmas distribution. At once the young King, feeling it a stain upon his

honour that there should have been this neglect, determined that as a sort of atonement he would supply it in person, and commanded the servant to follow him, so that between them they should bear food and drink and sweet pine-logs, that the old man might have good cheer. The faithful old retainer seems to have ventured upon some remonstrance, but naturally the young King had his way, and it is there that the mediæval tradition goes on to say that the strong man finds his strength failing, and the King bids him follow in his footsteps.

The beautiful life of King Wenceslas, however, was not destined to be a long one. He made determined efforts to come into better and closer relations with his brother Boleslas, and might well have succeeded but for the unrelentless hostility of his mother Drahomira, who never ceased to plot for a reversal of the position of the brothers. Boleslas, at her instigation, invited his brother as King to pay a royal visit to the southern half of his kingdom, alleging that this would do much to increase the loyalty of the heathen part.

Wenceslas gladly accepted, and was very well received, so far as outward appearances went. He was, however, much shocked at the condition of this southern country, and especially at the scarcity and poverty of the Christian Churches there. The agreement, you will remember, had been that in each part of the State the prominent religion should extend perfect tolerance to those of the other faith who dwelt within its boundaries. Wenceslas had always fulfilled this condition most scrupulously, and had sternly repressed any exhibition of ill-feeling towards those of the heathen who lived in the north; but he found that his brother, or rather the evil-minded nobles around him, had been by no means so scrupulous in the south.

The King made it a point personally to visit each Christian Church to which he came in the course of his tour, and it was while worshipping alone in the early morning in one of these neglected Churches that he was assassinated by some of Drahomira's followers. It is not known whether Boleslas was privy to the plot to murder his brother; let us hope not; but I think we may certainly regard St. Wenceslas as a martyr for his faith.

There was of course the greatest indignation and dismay when news of this crime reached the northern part of the kingdom, and the Christian nobles gathered themselves together to avenge the death of their leader. Before their preparations were complete, however, news of this disgraceful murder reached the ears of the Emperor Otho, who promptly assembled his army and marched into Bohemia to avenge his favourite. He appears to have dealt summarily with those who had been concerned in the conspiracy, for he promptly executed Boleslas and Drahomira, and quite a large number of their followers. But the story of our King and Martyr ends here, and for the further fortunes of his country the history of the period must be consulted.

It may be of interest to mention in conclusion that I have had the honour of meeting in this life both King Wenceslas and his Prime Minister. I must not of course give names, but I may say that the former bore himself nobly fighting for the right in the recent Great War, and is so far as I know still working on the physical plane. His Prime Minister in that earlier life, whom I knew much more intimately, was one of the noblest and bravest men I have ever met; he has now passed out of physical life, but is among our ablest and most strenuous astral workers, and has been of the greatest assistance to Lord Roberts in the colossal task entrusted to him of preparing for incarnation in the new sub-race those who in that great conflict laid down their lives in defence of truth and righteousness.

C.W.L.

Mount Solitary

By Paula Hamerster.

A traveller who finds himself in the great island continent of Australia will do well to pay a visit to the Blue Mountains, some seventy miles west of the port of Sydney. It has lately been my fortune to spend some time among them at a small village called Leura, and to become acquainted with the various beautiful sights to be seen there. I was much impressed by one jagged solitary mountain, isolated on every side, standing as it were in a vast basin, encircled by straight majestic walls. Standing at any point on the edge of this basin in the early morning, and preferably in winter, there stretches out before us a scene wondrous and grand, as of heavy seas of rolling mists spreading afar and merging into the clouds in the sky; looking down we may see the mists move slowly up the valleys, climbing higher and still higher into filmy grey-blue veils; then from the centre of this vast dim ocean there stands out Mount Solitary, as it has well been named, though originally it was called Mount Korrowall.

And so on us, a small band of enthusiastic young explorers, Mount Solitary made an impression, and we decided that we should like to climb it. Consequently we made certain enquiries, but the replies were not encouraging. The only definite light thrown on the matter was that it was usually regarded as inaccessible, but that once previously a party of four, who had attempted to climb it, had returned exhausted after eleven at night without having accomplished their purpose.

That news decided us to make the attempt, and we at once began our preparations for the ascent. Mount Solitary is of the nature of a long ridge, and from Leura we look straight at the face of it, but the cliffs are far too precipitous for us to descend here. So our plan was to walk round the rim of the basin until we came opposite to the western end of the ridge, and then to descend into the Jamieson Valley, to climb up and walk along that ridge, then to descend into the valley again at the other end of it, to come out at the other side of the basin to the high ground called the King's Tableland and so to return home. We calculated that the total walk would be about thirty miles, though we realized that it might very well be more than that; for one of the male members of our party had made a partial ascent once before, accompanied by a friend, and he told us that the walk was not so simple as it appeared, as there were many folds of land and little intermediate valleys which were not visible when we looked across from the edge of the basin.

For a week previous to the great attempt we tried various preliminary walks, just to bring our muscles into order, and presently we decided that the time had come when we might risk the expedition; so we left at six o'clock one morning, which as it was midwinter seemed still to be night, since the moon was still visible and the morning star still reigned in the sky.

We walked at a brisk pace and with fresh and eager spirits round the edge of the basin to a high promontory called Narrow Neck, from which we could make our descent. As we reached it the first clear rays of the sun broke forth, brightening the red tips of the gum-trees to a golden hue. The morning sunlight on the hills was beautiful in its delicacy, and it seemed to invigorate us like a bath in a cool spring.

We found a sort of path which wound down the colossal walls which formed that side of the basin; it descended steeply, and we presently

came to steps hewn in the rock which are called The Golden Stairs—perhaps because of the golden hue in which the sun bathes them as he rises. But the stairs were very defective in places, and at one point we had to cross from one precarious foothold to another by walking along three very feeble branches of a tree, with no hand-hold whatever—only a wall of rock, and a drop of twenty to thirty feet below us. We managed it somehow, and then the path led us down into the valley, through semi-tropical scenes mainly of high green ferns ending in a forest of tall silver-barked gum-trees—for there are many varieties of eucalyptus. On our way we came across some remains of a coal-mine, which had evidently been abandoned many years before. About nine o'clock we reached a mass of rocks which is called the Ruined Castle, because it really does look exceedingly like such a ruin, with straight narrow cuts among the rocks like passages.

On the top of these rocks we built a fire, hoping that the friends whom we had left in Leura would see it, and thus realize that we had come safely so far. After steadily plodding across the rest of the width of the valley we came to the foot of the real mountain. Before this we had been walking up a fairly steep hill, but now we had to scramble over gigantic boulders and both arms and legs came in useful. As is usual among mountains, each time we surmounted a rise we thought we had come to the top, but each time we were disappointed by finding still another summit in front of us; but we extracted some sort of consolation from the many beautiful spring flowers and the bushes covered with blossom.

As I said before, the mountain is a long ridge, not very wide but consisting of three flattish humps. The first of these humps was the furthest point reached by our masculine member and his friend some years before; but this time we did not pause there, but followed along the ridge until we reached the middle and highest point of our mountain a little before noon.

(Partly after we reached home that night, and partly on the following morning, we drew up a kind of joint account of our expedition, beginning from this central point; so from now on I shall quote from that, though occasionally adding to it observations of my own.)

At that central point we lit another fire facing Leura across the Jamieson Valley; and by throwing on damp leaves we made quite a tremendous column of smoke, which was duly seen by our friends. Here we recited a certain ancient Ritual; and it has never seemed more impressive than then, when we were far away from all other human beings, deep in the heart of Nature. After that we ate our lunch, which had the advantage not only of strengthening us but also of relieving us of various packages. No doubt we still carried the contents with us, but they were more evenly distributed.

Before we left that central point we formed ourselves into a circle round the fire and all joined in an Invocation to the great Angel who reigns upon that Mountain. We said something like this:

> O Holy Deva of this mountain, we salute you with reverent and loving greeting, and we bring to you the blessing of our Masters of Wisdom and Compassion. We also bring the blessing of the Great White Brotherhood which exists from eternity unto eternity. May the peace and the benediction of our Lord and our Lady be with you and upon all your work on this mountain and its surrounding valleys.

(Three of our party were members of that Great Brotherhood, so that they could give what the rest of us cannot give yet.) We all felt a great and gracious response, which reinvigorated us for the next stage of our journey.

We had long left behind us anything resembling a path, and it was often very difficult to make our way through the thick scrub. Still we eventually reached the eastern end of the ridge and commenced the descent. As

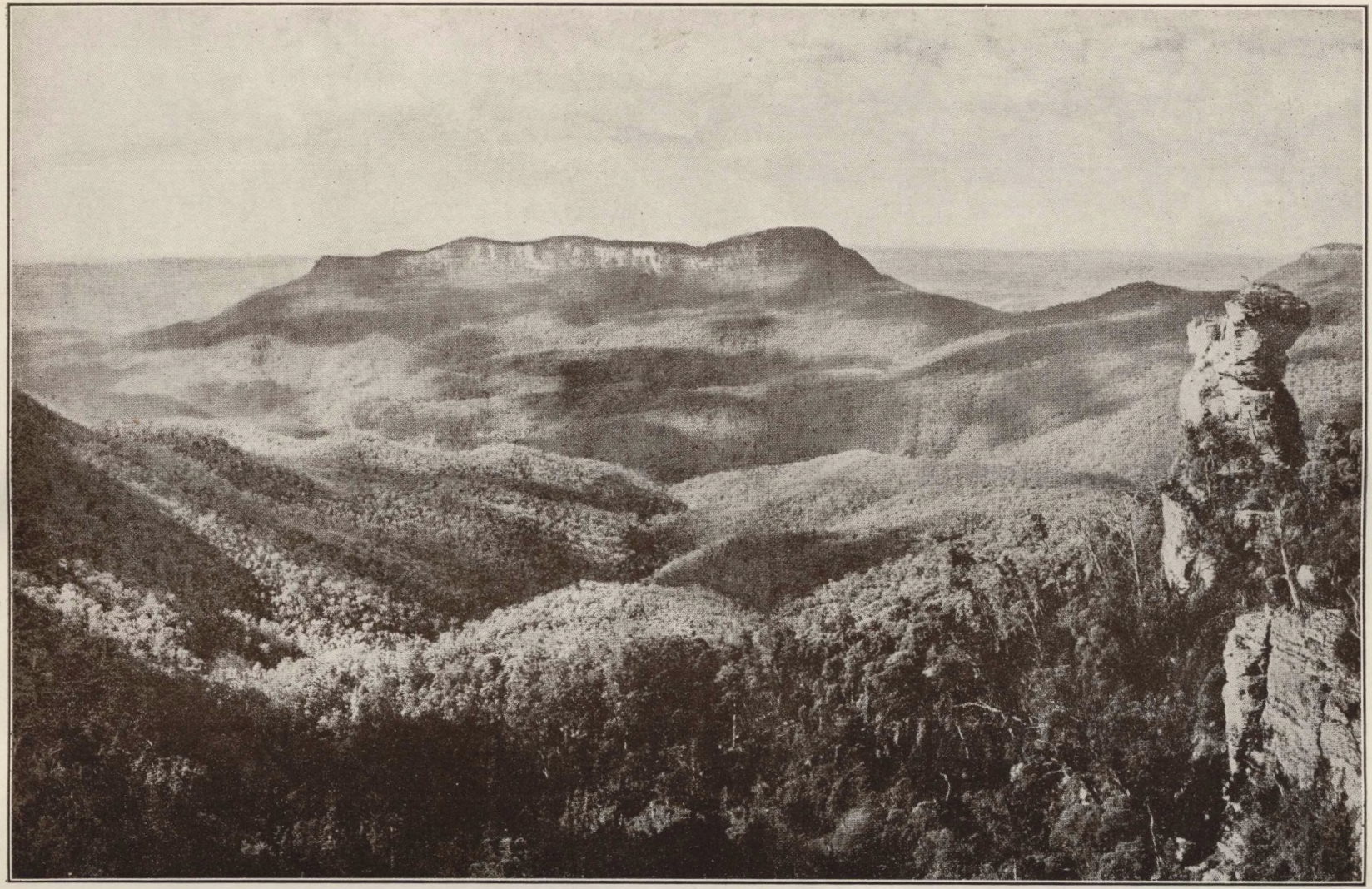
one looks at that end of the mountain from across the valley it appears to be a fairly easy descent in a simple continuous curve, but on the spot we found it to be very different. The hill-side seemed to be almost covered with prickly bushes, and in some places we had to slide down steep slopes, to leap over fallen trees and to cling to others which were still upright. Indeed two of the party had a hair-breadth escape, sliding down an almost sheer slab of rock for a distance of about fifty feet, and checking themselves only just on the edge of a precipice. We found that we had to cross a series of deep and steep-sided ravines which had been quite invisible from the other side of the valley.

In about the middle of that valley we knew that there was a pig-farm (though its proprietors call it a cattle-ranch) because we could see from Sublime Point, near Leura, the clearing in which it was situated. We did not reach that farm until four o'clock in the afternoon, and we were not very favourably impressed by it when we did reach it. The only building which we could find was a little corrugated-iron hovel, inhabited by an old man and woman of somewhat rough aspect, who did not seem particularly friendly, and certainly made no offer of hospitality of any kind—though such an offer is universally made in lonely places in this country. However, they directed our party how to find the beginning of the bridle-path by which they themselves convey their goods on pack-horses up to the road on the King's Tableland. On our way we came across a small stream, and though the water was of rather doubtful cleanliness we were very glad to see it, for we had not encountered any since we left home in the early morning.

By the time that we reached the beginning of the bridle-path it was already growing dark, and we knew that the moon would not rise until eleven o'clock; also, we girls were thoroughly tired, and hardly able to put one foot before the other. Still as we naturally had no rugs with us, and were in no way prepared to pass the night in the open at such a low temperature, we decided that we must somehow manage to push on. Fortunately the planet Venus happened to be in quadrature, and therefore just at its brightest, so that it even cast a shadow, which it does only very rarely and only under the most favourable conditions. So we actually climbed that rugged bridle-path by its light, though we found it so steep and so rough that one of the party remarked that the pack-horses which are supposed to use it must really be pack-monkeys !

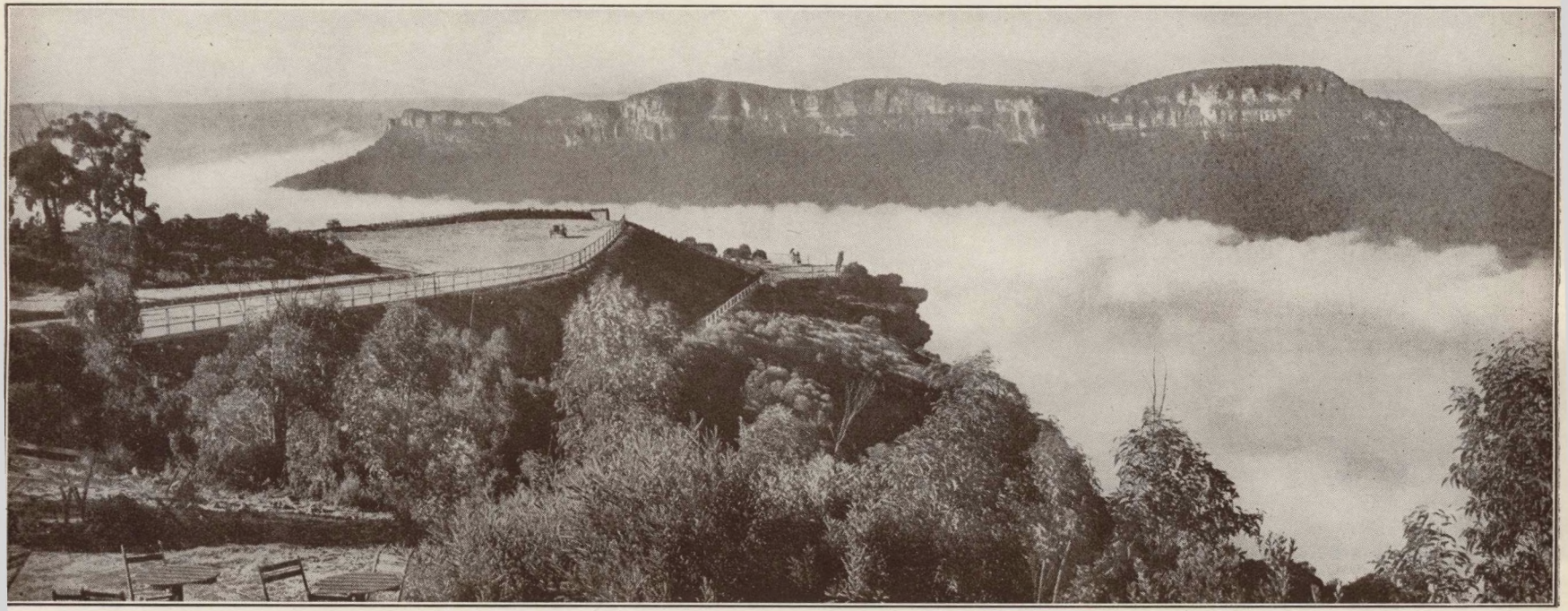
After three miles of this steep, winding and very narrow path, negotiated thus by starlight, we came to the beginning of a slightly wider track, which climbed up for three-and-a-half miles more before it arrived at the level of the Tableland. We were all so tired that we were walking in a kind of daze; a senior member of our party, by way of encouragement, quoted the President's remark: "There is no obstacle which the God within you cannot overcome." But one of our girls replied: "The God within us is all right, but our legs won't work any more !"

When we arrived at that slightly wider track one of our male companions ran on ahead, so as to reach the top a little in advance of the rest, with some idea of trying to find a house or a conveyance. By great good fortune he discovered that the Queen Victoria Home for Consumptives was within a quarter of a mile of the head of the path; so he called there and asked to see the Matron or Mother Superior, and told her the story of the party's adventures, asking that they might be allowed to rest awhile. The Matron rose nobly to the occasion and at once ordered her nurses to light a great fire in the nurses' sitting room and to prepare hot tea and cakes for eight, while our *avant-courier* was telephoning to Leura to tell our anxious friends where we were. So when we exhausted girls at last crawled on to the Tableland, we received an unexpectedly



MOUNT SOLITARY

AS SEEN FROM ACROSS THE VALLEY, NOT FAR FROM OUR STARTING-POINT. THE HIGH LAND ON THE EXTREME RIGHT IS THE TIP OF THE PROMONTORY CALLED NARROW NECK; THE SMALL HUMP BETWEEN THAT AND MOUNT SOLITARY IS THE SITE OF "THE RUINED CASTLE."



MOUNT SOLITARY

AS SEEN FROM THE NEAREST POINT ON THE SOUTHERN RIM OF THE BASIN, WHEN THE JAMIESON VALLEY IS FILLED WITH CLOUD.

hearty welcome, which was a delightful surprise for us, for it had been just about as much as we could do to struggle up to that Hospital; and we were immensely relieved to find that there was no need for us to walk any further, as we could hire a motor-car to carry us that last nine miles.

During the latter part of the climb we had rather a curious experience, for I think that our extreme fatgue, coupled with the gloom of the night, must have made us more sensitive than usual and a little more clairvoyant. We certainly had the sense of the presence of many people all around us, and we were conscious of non-human beings abiding in the trees and of crowds of entities hovering behind the bushes; also we saw faint glimmering lights. When our car came we were soon whirled away home, where we arrived weary but triumphant; we had hot soup and hot baths and speedily subsided into bed, and breakfast was not *very* early the next morning ! Of course we were very stiff the next day, but no permanent harm resulted.

A very interesting feature was that during the night we all went over again astrally and interviewed the Angel of the Mountain. He had been greatly surprised and much pleased at our greeting, and he wanted to know a great deal more about us. His whole attitude was unexpected, and revealed a condition of affairs of which we had previously had no idea. It seems that he has been in charge of that mountain, and has acted as Overlord to a great stretch of surrounding country, for more than a hundred years; but during all that time he has known practically nothing of the human race, as the only members of it who ever came within his purview in the earlier days were aborigines who engaged in obscene and disgusting tribal rites.

All these Arupadevas have a glorious life of their own on the higher mental plane, just as egos have, and the work which they have to do on the physical plane is a very small and insignificant part of their existence; and this particular gentleman had apparently confined his activities on this level to receiving reports from his subordinates, and exercising a somewhat perfunctory supervision over them.

Those understrappers had been doing their best for the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms, but they saw very little of the human, and considered it hopeless to try to do anything with it. They seem to have regarded those aborigines much as we look upon snakes or scorpions—as unpleasant creatures which are no doubt all right among themselves as a separate evolution, but to the rest of the world are nothing but a dangerous nuisance. When later on, they encountered a very few white men—probably those who worked in that deserted coal-mine—they saw little to induce them to change their opinion, for these people destroyed the trees and animals which the devas were appointed to guard and to help, and also radiated from themselves the most loathsome emanations of tobacco, alcohol and lust. Not flattering to our race, but you can see why they thought so.

The Great Angel said quite frankly that he had never known before that there were human beings such as we, sufficiently intelligent to understand him or sufficiently interested to invoke him. He remembered the visit of two of our members to the fringe of his mountain some years before, but they were so very different from any human beings that he had ever seen that he supposed them to be some foreign kind of Deva, taking on the appearance of humanity for some purpose of their own, as nature-spirits so often do. He knew in a general way that the Seventh Ray was now dominating the earth, and that instructions had been received from on high that the Deva evolution was to co-operate with humanity where possible; but he had not hitherto seen any way in which he could apply those instructions. We have introduced him to the great Angel who presides over

our life at *The Manor* and to the Deva in charge of National Park, and have really opened up to him a new line of thought and a new section of the world, in which he is immensely interested.

Now this expedition happened only a few days before the Festival of the Assumption of the World-Mother, and as she is especially the Queen of Angels we thought it might interest this Angel to see a Church Service in her honour. So our senior member invited him to come down to the city and watch it, and to bring with him some subordinates whom we knew—the Angels of Mount Hay and Mount King George, and also the deva of the valley which runs down from our back-garden.

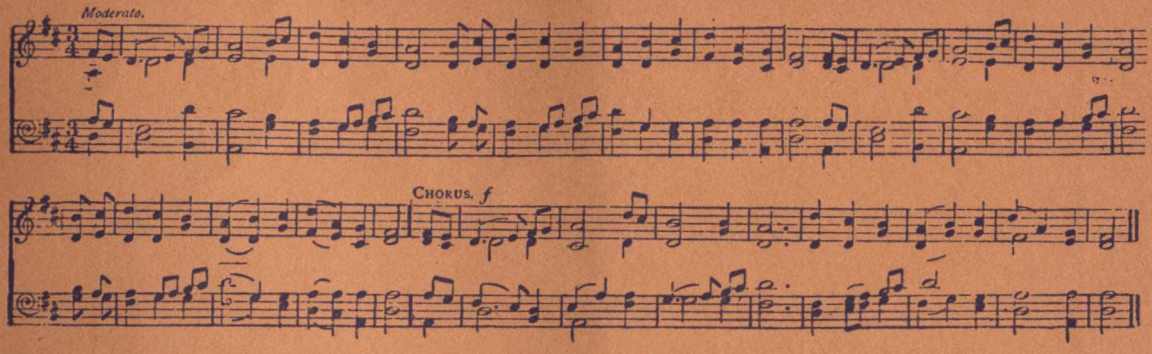
We had thought that just those would come; we had not realized that they are in the habit of moving about with a very large escort of attendants. In this case they not only brought what might be thought of as their ordinary court, but practically the whole army of their subordinates—all of them, I mean, which can be taken away from their ordinary location. Naturally the vast hosts of tree-spirits and rock-spirits cannot be drawn more than a very short distance from their physical bodies; but all the Devas in charge of a wood, a hillside or some special department of the work in a given tract of country can of course leave their place of work whenever permitted or desired to do so. The Mount Solitary Angel appears to be a great and powerful magnate, and he seems to have issued instructions to all the movable Devas under his control, with the result that vast hosts descended upon us and the air was thick with these creatures for a mile around and more. In whatever direction one looked, one saw serried hosts, a vast army containing all kinds of different Devas.

We especially noticed an enormous number of those lovely creatures who look like exceptionally beautiful children of about seven to ten years of age; it would appear that they principally inhabit very lonely places where human beings hardly ever go. It was really one of the most wonderful sights that we have seen, and reminded us of the hymn which speaks of the ransomed saints: "Ten thousand times ten thousand in sparkling raiment bright." And then when Our Lady herself appeared it was again a most marvellous thing to see all those countless thousands prostrating themselves before her and to see the tremendous glow of love and delight which they poured out at her feet and the smile which she gave them in reply. It was distinctly a strenuous effort under all these conditions to keep in the physical body and attend to the mechanism of the Service. The great Angels were immensely impressed. The Lord of Mount Solitary came after the Service was over and thanked us for having introduced him to a new world of thought and of work, and, as during the Service Vespers at *The Manor* in the evening had been announced, he expressed his intention of coming down to see that, which he duly did. We have thus opened up a new and valuable connection, and we cannot yet tell how far it will extend. The great Angel intends to spread the news among his peers, so it is quite possible that at least all over this continent of Australia the Angels of the vast desolate tracts in the centre may make it their business to get into touch with the various Churches on the outskirts of their domain, and that *may* mean a very great impetus to Church influence and Church work of all kinds if only the people are prepared to respond, even if unconsciously. There must be some among all the Priests and the Church people who would see and feel the Angelic influence; and even the others (the great majority, I am afraid, would not be directly conscious of it) would nevertheless be helped, strengthened and uplifted. We may have set in motion something larger than we yet know; and it is obviously all part of the *rapprochement* between the Angel and the human kingdoms.—P.H.



BISHOP AND MRS. TETTEMER

The First Nowell



1

The first Nowell the Angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel!

2

They looked up and saw a Star,
Shining in the East, beyond them far,
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night.
Nowell, etc.

3

And by the light of that same Star,
Three Wisemen came from country far,
To seek for a King was their intent,
And to follow the Star wherever it went.
Nowell, etc.

4

This Star drew nigh to the north-west,
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay,
Right over the place where Jesus lay.
Nowell, etc.

5

Then entered in those Wisemen three,
Full reverently upon their knee,
And offered there, in His Presence,
Their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.
Nowell, etc.

6

Then let us all with one accord,
Sing praises to our Heavenly Lord,
That hath made Heaven and earth of nought.
And with His Blood mankind hath bought.
Nowell, etc.

Bishop and Mrs. Tettemer

Our Theosophical members in Sydney join in giving the heartiest of welcomes to the Rt. Rev. John Moyniham Tettemer and his wife who have come to help us in our work. They are both of them old friends, well known and well beloved in our city in past years, and we all hope that their stay among us will be long and fruitful. Bishop Tettemer comes to us from California, where he has been acting as Coadjutor to the Regionary Bishop of the Liberal Catholic Church in the United States of America, while Mrs. Tettemer since she left us eighteen months ago has been rendering efficient assistance to her Mother, Mrs. Roberts, in the work of the Star and the World-Mother in London. We count ourselves fortunate, indeed, to receive such an accession of strength to this southern centre of Theosophy, and I am sure that we shall all do our best by our warm appreciation and affection to show ourselves worthy of the great stimulus and benediction of their presence.

A WEDDING

The wedding of two of our younger workers, Mr. Walter Hassall and Miss Daisy Heyting, will be celebrated at 10.30 a.m. on Christmas Eve, December 24th, at the Church of St. Alban, Regent Street, Sydney. All friends of the happy pair are cordially invited to be present.

The Theosophical Society

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General Secretary: The Rev. Harold Morton.

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Marrickville Lodge, Despointe Street, Marrickville.
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Townsville Lodge, over Rees & Tice, Ltd., Sturt Street, Townsville

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