

# The Modern Mystic

## AND MONTHLY SCIENCE REVIEW

Vol. 2 No. 8

SEPTEMBER 1938

2/-

A MONTHLY JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE STUDY OF MYSTICISM AND THE OCCULT SCIENCES

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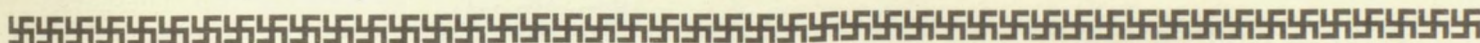
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BOOK REVIEWS. READERS' LETTERS.  
OUR POINT OF VIEW.

# The September Modern Mystic

## Principal Contributors

- *Dr. E. Kolisko*
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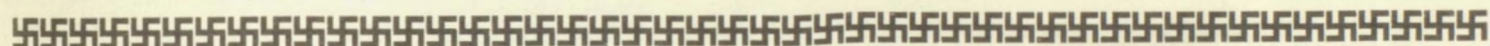
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# Our Point of View

WE HAVE LATELY RECEIVED COPIES of the Indian monthly journal *Triveni*. It calls itself a journal of Indian Renaissance, devoted to Art, Literature, and History: "Triveni seeks to draw together cultured men and women in all lands and establish a fellowship of the spirit."

Sir S. Radhakrishnan and C. Jinarajadasa are among the members of its Advisory Board. The Editor is K. Ramakotiswara Rau. The July number contains some very interesting articles, among them one by Mrs. Marcia Dodwell, of Madras. She writes on *The Task of the English Language*. Mrs. Dodwell has a fine sense of the peculiar character of the English language which is especially that of rhythm. This is not rhythm in the sense of *metre*, which is more native to the German language. She feels that this quality of rhythm is "like the waves of the sea"; and that she "cannot think of a better training for a man who would write or speak English than listening to the sea in all her moods." This sea-rhythm is to be found in all that is best of English prose. I think it is true that this quality gives that imaginative something which makes it possible for English writers and speakers to appeal directly to the human will.

Another element, quite distinct, is the undercurrent coming in from the revival of Celtic literature. Mrs. Dodwell points out

and if this had to continue twenty years, the destruction of culture would be also complete. Interest in all culture and the productive qualities connected with that interest would disappear. A whole generation educated during such a peace era would find itself barren of all progressive ideas, in education, religion, and art. If one were to make today a comparative study of the purposes to which science is applied, one would find that more than 50 per cent. are absorbed in inventions for war or the prevention of war.

• • •

Imagine this carried to extremes—which is not at all improbable. Nobody will be doing anything else but taking part in the assiduous practice of preventive measures. School timetables could be broken up at any moment for a rush to the cellars. Everybody's occupation would become entirely permeated with the disturbances and distractions of this incessant practising of war. Has anyone ever seriously considered how such a state of things (which is really not exaggerated even now) works upon the mind of the people and especially upon the younger generation? There may never be war. And it must be acknowledged that all possible efforts are being made to avoid it. But all the preventions against war create a mental atmosphere which differs very

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## Contributed by Dr. Eugen Kolisko

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that it introduces pure poetry into the larger fundamental rhythms of the English. That this combination shows signs of becoming a world-language she thinks has a value for our present age.

• • •

The confusion in which the world is plunged has become so obvious that there is nobody who could deny it. But one point of view seems to have escaped notice. The level of general culture is sinking. On the continent for instance there are countries where all the cultural workers, teachers, professional classes, university students, etc., are entirely absorbed into public national service. How the education of this generation will be maintained is a problem. But also in other countries the concentration on armaments absorbs first the money that would otherwise be devoted to cultural purposes, and secondly the people who could share in the cultural life.

• • •

If there was a war, especially a modern war, it goes without saying that the whole level of culture would be disastrously lowered. But the paradoxical fact is, that if we achieve peace in all countries through armament—which is the aim of to-day—

little from that of the real thing. Someone might say that these conditions are only to continue for a short time. But there is no reason for believing that this whole situation of armed peace could be changed otherwise—than through a war!

• • •

What is the upshot of all this? Where is all the money and the human efforts coming from? Who is really paying for it all? No other than the *general culture of humanity*. But this is not regarded as of substantial value. It cannot be described in terms either of economics or politics. The simple fact is that the spirit of culture disappears in the preparations and preventions of war, and from every nation.

• • •

One of the most powerful spiritual influences of our time is certainly Walt Disney. He has got hold of a force which is working in the actual spiritual world: the force of *metamorphosis*. Everyone who has ever had a real spiritual experience knows that the main feature of this other world is that everything is in state of change. Even dreams can show the same law. What Walt Disney has introduced into the Cinema should in reality have been introduced into Science. Our present Science is entirely static.

There is no imagination in it. That is why the progress in biology is so ridiculously small in comparison with the progress in mechanics, physics, and so on. This power of change works most strongly of all in the animal kingdom. The key to a real zoology—which our present zoology quite definitely does not possess—is that every animal corresponds to one part of man. For instance a bird develops the nose and upper jaw ; the bull, the lower jaw ; the elephant the upper lip and nose. Every caricaturist knows the secret that the exaggeration of one feature will produce an animal characteristic. Walt Disney has an instinctive knowledge of these facts. Hence the enormous psychological effect of such a creation as Donald Duck. It arouses any amount of laughter. But why?—because people are inwardly aware of the “scientific truth” of such a figure.

If you study the biological development of an animal, the changes and transformations that take place in the formation of its organs, you sometimes find exactly the same forms which Disney uses for his comical effects.

But as our modern scientists have not become aware of the law of metamorphosis, this law has, so to say, revenged itself. It has revealed itself—not to a scientist, but to Walt Disney.

There exists also such a thing as an elementary world—certainly known to all occultists. But people do not like to make serious efforts to become acquainted with it. If they did, they would become clairvoyant. So it happens the other way round, and the elementary world comes to us. And one of the channels for its communication is the peculiar genius of Walt Disney. The climax is Snow-White. It will conquer the world. But why?—People look upon fairy-tales as mere rubbish. But the fairy-tales are actual “pictures” existing in the spiritual world, as real as tables and chairs in this world. Since we will not go to the fairy world, the fairy world forces itself into ours. This marvellous complicated procedure and army of people necessary for producing a Disney film provides the opportunity. It is like an executive organ proceeding from his brain, and through it all the elementary world streams into the Disney films. But it can take no other form than a *materialistic* one. In Snow-White every dwarf is really a physiological process turned into a picture. The animals especially are entirely real. One can feel the greatest scientific interest in watching a Disney film. The *Moth and the Flame*, for instance, introduces the spectator completely into the real movements of organic nature. Of course, if you think it a good thing to take children to Disney films, you are mistaken. They have the effect of entirely destroying natural imagination. Nothing is left for the creative faculty to exercise itself upon. Nervousness is bound to arise ; if not immediately, certainly in the long run.

We are of the opinion that Walt Disney is the instructor of scientists rather than the entertainer of children. What he creates are spiritual realities in a material form. Even if they are distorted, it is none the less a spiritual inspiration. But there is one thing lacking—they are entirely inhuman. The human element is really dissolved by them. And that is why people like them so much : they can cease to be human themselves. They can take an Ego-holiday.

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# Introduction to Alchemy

by Archibald Cockren

## THE SMARAGDINE TABLE OF HERMES TRISMEGISTUS,

*said to be found in the Valley of Ebron, after the Flood.*

1. I speak not fiction, but what is certain and most true.
2. What is below is like that which is above, and what is above is like that which is below for performing the miracle of one thing.
3. And as all things were produced from one by the Mediation of one, so all things are produced from this one thing by adaptation.
4. Its father is the Sun, its mother was the Moon, the wind carried it in its belly, its nurse is the earth.
5. It is the cause of all perfection throughout the whole world.
6. Its power is perfect if it be changed into the earth.
7. Separate the earth from the fire, the subtle from the gross, gently, and with judgment.
8. It ascends from earth to heaven, and descends again to earth, thus you will possess the glory of the whole World and obscurity will fly away.
9. This thing is the fortitude of all fortitude, because it overcomes all subtle things, and penetrates every solid thing.
10. Thus were all things created.
11. Thence proceed wonderful adaptations which are produced in this way.
12. Therefore am I called Hermes Trismegistus, possessing the three parts of the philosophy of the whole World.
13. What I had to say concerning the operation of the Sun is complete.

**A**LCHEMY IS THE PARENT OF MODERN chemistry, but unfortunately the modern chemist has dismissed many of the alchemist's experiments as mere nonsense, since the alchemist, in order to preserve his discoveries from those unfit to receive them, described his art in a language of his own, using a symbolism which is so much jargon to those who have not had some initiation into its interpretation.

Historically, alchemy is as old as history itself. Away back in the very beginnings of time, alchemy as a science was undoubtedly practised. China, India, Persia, Egypt, all had their adepts in the practice of this cult and most of the teachings on the subject have come from Egypt. There is one particularly outstanding writing, known as The Golden Tractate, which is attributed to the great Hermes Trismegistus, as the Greeks called

the great Egyptian Avatar, Thoth. Looking at this history one realises that there must have been a method—a plan, for the sending out at different periods in the history of the world men who have given to the world these secrets in a veiled form. There is no doubt that there was a centre of learning and occult knowledge at the back of the work of these adepts.

The third century A.D. seems to have been a period when alchemy as a science was widely practised. In the fourth century Zosimus the Panopolite wrote an express treatise on "The Divine Art of making Gold and Silver." In the fifth century Morienus the hermit, whose works were translated into Latin as early as 1182, learnt the great art of transmutation at Rome, of Adafa, an Alexandrian and a Christian. After he died, his successors continued the work. Geber (about A.D. 730) devoted his life to the science. His true name was Abou Moussan Djafar—



*Archibald Cockren was qualified at the National Hospital, London, in 1904 for Massage, Electro Therapeutics and Remedial Exercises. In 1906 he was at the Great Northern Hospital in the same capacity. He was a member of the Committee of the original Psycho-Therapeutic Society from 1905 to 1908, and commenced in private practice in Devonshire Street, London, W., in 1908.*

*During the War he was in control of the Manipulative & Electrical Department at the Russian Hospital for British Officers, and also at Millbank Military Hospital and a Prisoners of War Hospital. He served in the British and Australian Armies. He was on the Peace Conference Staff of the Australian Prime Minister in Paris in 1919. Since that date he has been in practice in the West End of London.*

Al Sofi, or The Wise. He was born at Houran in Mesopotamia, and we are indebted to him for the first mention of corrosive sublimate, red oxide of mercury and nitrate of silver. In the tenth century Alfarabi enjoyed the reputation of being the most learned man of his age, and another great alchemist of the same age was Avicenna, whose real name was Ebu Cinna, born at Bokara in A.D. 980.

Alchemy then shifted its centre to Spain, to which country it had been introduced by the Moors. In Europe the most notable names in the practice of the science at this time were Arnaud de Villeneuve, Raymond Lulli and Roger Bacon. In the twelfth century Artepheus wrote "The Art of Prolonging Human Life," and is understood to intimate that he had attained 1,025 years of age. A work on alchemy called "Tesero" was attributed to Alphonso King of Castile, in 1272. William de Loris wrote "Le Roman de Rose" in about 1282, and was assisted by Jean de Meung, who wrote "The Remonstrance of Nature to the Wandering Alchemist" and "The Reply of the Alchemist to Nature." Another famous name was that of Albertus Magnus (1234-1314), the actual designer of Cologne Cathedral.

In the fourteenth century we have the two Isaacs Hollandus, father and son. Two of their principal works were "De Triplici Ordinaris Exiliris et Lapidis Theoria" and "Mineralia Opera Sue de Lapide Philosophico."

In 1357 there is an interesting story of Nicholas Flammel which is well worth repeating. He was a notary by profession, and by chance purchased in that year an old book written in Latin by "Abraham, Patriarch, Jew, Prince, Philosopher, Priest, Levite, Astrologer." It was written with a steel instrument upon the bark of trees and contained  $3 \times 7$  leaves. Each seventh leaf was a picture. The first had a serpent swallowing rods; the second a cross with a serpent crucified; the third represented a desert in which was a fountain, with serpents crawling from side to side. The first page had a picture of Mercury attacked by Saturn; the reverse side represented a flower growing on a mountain top, and around it a number of dragons. The first page of the fifth leaf had a rose tree in full bloom, supported by the trunk of a gigantic oak, at the foot of which was a fountain of milk-white water; the reverse had a royal person superintending the execution of a number of children, whose blood was being collected into a large vessel, two allegorical figures of the sun and moon bathing therein.

The account of Flammel is that until 1382, being then near eighty years of age, he made little progress in his research, but that he then accomplished a projection on mercury and made some excellent silver. He wrote the "Philosophic Summary," three treatises upon Natural Philosophy, and an alchemical allegory entitled "Le Desir Desire." He died in 1415, aged 116 years, having from a poor scrivener enriched himself with great wealth, which he applied to charitable purposes.

The next famous name is that of Basilius Valentinus, born in 1414. Copies of his works are still obtainable in the antique book market, the best known being his "Triumphant Chariot of Antimony," "The Twelve Keys" and "Last Will and Testament." He is supposed to have been canon of a Benedictine monastery near Strasbourg.

Other alchemists of this century were Thomas Norton, who wrote the "Ordinal," and Sir George Ripley, canon of Bridlington Cathedral, of whom it is reported that he provided funds for the Knights of St. John by means of the Philosopher's

Stone, and who dedicated to King Edward IV, in 1477, his "Compound of Alchemy, or The Twelve Gates."

The next eminent name is that of Theophrastus Bombastus Paracelsus de Hohenheim. He seems to have been induced to study alchemy by a perusal of the works of Isaac Hollandus. He was a much travelled man—Egypt, Tartary and Constantinople were amongst the places he visited, and it was in Constantinople that he is reported to have learnt the great secret. His writings indicate an advanced knowledge of the whole science and principles of magnetism. It is quite certain that Paracelsus made an advance on some of the earlier alchemists by simplifying their methods so that the whole process was completed in a shorter time.

The Rosicrucian Order claimed to have held the secrets of alchemy. Their leaders in England were Fludd and Vaughan and in Germany, Maier. In this history one cannot miss "Le Comte de St. Germain," the Supreme Magus of this illustrious Order, who flashes through European history before and after the French Revolution. Manly Hall, in his introduction to The Most Holy Trinosophia of the Comte, translated from the original manuscript in the Bibliothèque de Troyes, quotes a story told by Casanova on a visit to St. Germain:

Casanova writes: "Then he showed me his magistrum, which he called athoeter. It was a white liquid contained in a well stopped phial. He told me that this liquid was the universal spirit of Nature and that if the wax of the stopper was pricked ever so slightly, the whole contents would disappear. I begged him to make the experiment. He thereupon gave me the phial and the pin and I myself pricked the wax, when lo, the phial was empty."

There is evidence that the celebrated Comte possessed the alchemical powder by which it was possible to transmute base metals into gold. He actually performed this feat on at least two occasions, as attested by the writings of contemporaries.

This short history will enable the reader to realise how widespread this science has been throughout the ages. Eminent men of every age and every clime have given their time to unravelling this secret. Would men of learning and understanding have so spent their time if alchemy had been a mere illusion?

Here is a science which deals with first cause, and not as modern chemistry, merely with the effects of the cause. Alchemy has taught that all manifestation proceeds from one thing, and this primordial essence has been called the spirit of mercury. This is not to be confused with that metallic mercury we know to-day, but is something of a much more ethereal nature. From this one essence have all life and all form on this plane proceeded.

Alchemy is both a spiritual and a material science. Firstly, we will attempt to look at the material aspect of alchemy. What is the process that has been followed in the alchemist's research? He has taken metallic and mineral substances and by putting them through certain processes has extracted from these metals and minerals those very substances which have been called mercury, sulphur and salt. By combining these three substances again into one thing he has produced what is called the Philosopher's Stone or the Elixir of Life. We have to realise, however, that the condition arrived at is very different from the metallic substance used in medicine at the present day. In reducing the metals to this first essence, he has eliminated anything of a poisonous nature from them. The crude method of using metals in medicine to-day has led to countless cases of people being poisoned. Although it may have a curative effect on the particular



disease for which it has been administered, the result of taking Mercury is that the patient contracts mercurial poisoning. The alchemist is not nearly so crude in his methods. He takes the metal and in his laboratory eliminates all the poison from the metal, retaining only its curative essence. I would say that in the medicine of metals there lies a system of medicine which stands far above anything which is used at the present time. From each of these metals can be obtained something which takes specific action in certain disorders. Looking around at the present day medical research one finds that the attention has been drawn to the possibility in the use of metals in medicine, but unfortunately not knowing the secret of the alchemist, those medicines are imperfect, and in many cases being not assimilable by the human system, are deleterious. Gold salts are being used for certain troubles, mainly for rheumatoid arthritis and rheumatic complaints, but there have been cases of gold poisoning recorded. Lead is being used in cancer cases, but here again the remedy is sometimes worse than the actual disease, and the patient dies from lead poisoning. Iron has been used for years, but is this crude iron used in medicine really capable of being assimilated and utilised by the cell life of the body? For a metal to be capable of assimilation in the human body the heavy, coarse part of the metal has to be broken up and its essence extracted, the heavy part of the metal rejected, and its essence only used.

To keep secret these processes the alchemist has used symbolic language to describe his experiments; the books on alchemy that one does find are an enigma to both the scientific and the lay reader. One can verify this by reading John Read, Professor of Chemistry, in his *Outline of Alchemy*. The alchemist uses the astrological terms for his metals, i.e. Sun or Sol for gold, Moon for silver, Mercury for quick-silver, Jupiter for tin, Mars for iron, Venus for copper, and Saturn for lead. In speaking of the first essence, the spirit of Mercury, he has used the term "the eagle," and for the philosopher's gold "the lion," and in most of these writings some key has been deliberately omitted to mislead the reader. This symbolic language which he used enabled him to write his secrets in a way intelligible only to the fully instructed.

One question that arises quite naturally to one's mind is "does the science of alchemy belong to a bygone age, or does it contain a science which is useful to the present age and those to come?"

Let us pass to another aspect; Alchemy manifests through every phase of life as man is the Divine alchemist of his body.

Let us for a few moments turn our attention to the digestion of food in the human body. We find that something much more complex takes place in the process of digestion than physiology has so far been able to demonstrate. Man takes his food from the vegetable and the animal kingdoms, but neither of these foods is a perfect one for man until he has transmuted it into a more human form. The process of ingesting food into the human stomach is really a mild form of poisoning, so the human being has to split up that food and bring it together again in a form which the cells of the body are able to take up perfectly. Without this process of transmutation in digestion, man would probably die of poisoning, as he would be unable to utilise the foodstuffs he was taking. There is no physiological explanation which would elucidate the problem, but that it does take place is a fact. Here is a process of transmutation, man takes into his body

a lower form of life and transmutes it into something higher, a process going on all through nature.

Take another function of the human body—breathing. What are we taught about breathing but that its most important function is the taking of oxygen into the lungs to revivify the venous blood which has lost its oxygen and must be replaced before it passes on into the arterial circulation again? That is one function of breath, but another, which physiology has so far not touched, is the breathing in of the natural electricity or prana in the atmosphere which the human body uses as nervous energy. Here again the Divine alchemist is at work. He takes in the air around him and transmutes it into something higher for the work in his own body.

These processes are definitely functions of the unconscious part of the mind, which take place without the conscious knowledge of the ordinary individual, since all the real work of the mind is done in the deeper strata of consciousness. Looking at these functions from an occult standpoint, here in the very midst of a physical world is taking place an act of magic, for occultists have taught that these processes of transmutation in the human body can be assisted by the conscious part of the mind, by concentration and meditation, the bringing into harmony of the conscious mind with the deeper part of the mind which knows and acts.

From these examples we can begin to understand how man is transmuting through himself the lower into the higher, how this is taking place through every phase of consciousness, and how he is transmuting his lower desires into spiritual aspiration. There is no doubt that alchemy was introduced into the world by the initiates for the perfection of mankind and to bring to man the possibility of a body free from disease and age. To make this possible man must be able to perceive that the law works in every phase of consciousness and that this science of alchemy which has been taught through so many generations is part of that one great law. Speaking as a practical alchemist one can begin to see its possibilities. In the laboratory many of these steps of which the alchemist speaks have been attained, likewise the realisation that all their teaching is scientific, practical. "There is in nature a certain pure essence, which being discovered and brought by art to perfection, converts to itself proportionately all imperfect bodies that it touches (from the *Speculum of Arnaud de Villeneuve*), and the truth that all things proceed from one thing by the will of the one Being is demonstrated. Then all metals are transmutable, and as all proceeds from one, so the first matter of all metals and substances is a fixed something altered by the diversities of place, temperature, etc.

The spiritual science of alchemy was put forward very ably in mediæval times by Jacob Boehme. Boehme admitted that he had never worked on the actual physical side of alchemy, but his writings were for the object of demonstrating and teaching that man in his inherent essence is a spiritual being, a manifestation of the One life, and as he comes into the knowledge and realisation of this Truth, he transmutes the base metals within himself into the gold of the perfect Spiritual Man and so he returns up the ladder he has descended a self-conscious Divine Being, one with that One Life in all its perfection, Beauty and Harmony.

# The History of the Idea of Reincarnation

II. THE REALITY OF REINCARNATION AND  
KARMA

by Walter Johannes Stein



AS ONE TRACES THE HISTORY of the idea of recurring earth-lives, it is apparent that reincarnation was an actual experience in the Old Orient, that this consciousness was lost, and that Western thinkers have again come to the idea out of the need of their souls.

The modern soul experiences two different conflicts. One consists in this—that the self-conscious ego seeks its place in the world-plan and cannot find it. The other, that, when the self-conscious ego lights upon a single point of the idea, it cannot bring about its connection with the whole or its insertion into the thoughtful issue of the whole of world-history.

Goethe, who, in his *Faust*, presents striving man, allows Faust to speak of both conflicts. The first is expressed in the following words :

Two souls, alas ! are lodged within my breast,  
Which struggle there for undivided reign :  
One to the world, with obstinate desire,  
And closely-cleaving organs, still adheres ;  
Above the mist, the other doth aspire,  
With sacred vehemence, to purer spheres.

The problem is here pictured with which a thinker like Maximilian Drossbach ranks when he endeavours to obtain the harmonising of spirit and nature. He says, while he conjures the Earth-spirit :

I feel it, prayer-compell'd, 'tis thou  
Art hovering near !  
Unveil thyself !  
Ha ! How my heart is riven now !  
Each sense, with eager palpitation,  
Is strained to catch some new sensation !  
I feel my heart surrender'd unto thee !  
Thou must ! Thou must ! Though life should be the fee !

The Earth-Spirit, called up through this exorcism, appears to Faust and speaks thus :

In the currents of life, in action's storm,  
I float and I wave  
With billowy motion !  
Birth and the grave,  
A limitless ocean,  
A constant weaving  
With change still rife,  
A restless heaving,  
A glowing life—  
Thus time's whirring loom unceasing I ply,  
And weave the life-garment of deity.

History is the robe of the godhead. Faust calls up this Spirit, whom he felt so close to him, but when it actually appeared, he could not bear the sight of it. Everyone who desires to approach closer to the reality of recurring earth-lives must

remember that he calls up a spirit, to bear the sight of whom he must first strengthen himself. For the glimpse of that spirit who is ourselves is hard to bear, that spirit, who leads us from earth-life to earth-life so that we may climb out of every imperfection that we have in us, and through each single earth-life finally to reach perfection. Man in his littleness cannot so easily bear the glimpse of the form which shows him that which he must become. Faust experienced this in all its greatness; Lessing experienced it when he wrote the *Education of Man*. In the preceding article we observed in Drossbach and Lessing how the spirit of the investigation of nature and history eternally encounters man. Both thinkers come to the expression of recurring earth-lives through the need of their souls.

How unjust it seems to us, when we are forced to recognise, by observation of the facts of inheritance, that one man must begin his life with rich gifts and another with heavy burdens. The idea of reincarnation can bridge this over. Then the plan of heredity seems to be something which unites itself for a definite purpose along the path to eternity of man's spirit.

How shatteringly the other aspect, that of history, stands before us, when we see culture epochs rise and also fall; when we see whole races vanish. Must we not ask ourselves: "What is the reason for all this, if it bursts like a soap-bubble the moment its time has come?" Or when we regard that which natural history teaches us of distant epochs, in which the planetary system itself hurries to meet its own death by heat. There the change from birth to death seems absolutely senseless. On the other hand, it becomes full of sense if the spirit of man is an eternal one, which has a share in all the cultural epochs, and has sucked something from each of them as a bee sips the honey from flowers which soon will wither away; and when the spirit of man so lives on his eternal journey in ever other and yet other cosmic forms.

So we see that the 18th and 19th centuries searched for the idea of reincarnation out of their own suppositions. We find them also in Goethe, who knew so intimately these two conflicts; that of nature and that of history. For example he wrote to Frau von Stein :

Ah, thou wast in long past times  
My sister or my wife,

that this was not just a poetical expression we can gather from a letter to Wieland, in which he wrote: "I can in no other way explain the significance, the power that this lady has over me, than by the transmigration of souls."

Now we also desire to capture the idea of reincarnation, but it will not be easy. For the soul cannot bear the sight, without more ado, of its own being, which goes through history. Therefore the soul must not say like Faust, while she thinks of her eternal being, of the spirit which gives her eternity :

Thou, restless spirit, thou dost from end to end  
O'ersweep the world; how near I feel to thee !  
Thou'rt like the spirit, thou dost comprehend,  
Not me!

This is the answer which the soul herself gives as she speaks full of fear before the glimpse of her own eternal being: "Oh, of course, there is only one life on earth!" True self-knowledge (and the matter hangs on that if the reality of reincarnation would be grasped) must overcome the boundaries of birth and death.

The eternal part of humanity which goes through recurring earth-lives is not something that is first present after death. It is always there; during earthly life it can be arrived at. But to do this it is necessary to die while living in the body; *living* to step across the border of death. To wrest forth the eternal with consciousness. How the boundaries of the ordinary consciousness can be surmounted must be the next matter for discussion.

If we turn our gaze from the world of the present which surrounds us in the sense-world, and from the present-day world of thought which we are ourselves, then the gates open to us which lead us to the kingdom of Self-knowledge. We find pictures in this kingdom, that is, memories. But as a rule, we only remember fragmentarily. We cannot look over the whole of the memories we have experienced. Moriz Benedikt, the criminal anthropologist, recounts in his autobiography how when he once came near to drowning, he suddenly saw the whole of his memories. That is a typical experience. If the soul really steps past death, then her first experience is the tableau of her own memories. That which comes of its own accord in death, the soul can induce by practice, through her own act of will. But it is no light act; for it means that this standing before the world of one's own memories, through an act of will, is nothing other than looking death full in the face willingly. The soul can only do it if she has strengthened herself. The strength that she needs she gains through exercises which lead to such an experience; for there are exercises which strengthen the inner constancy.

We next discover, if we remember,—for example,—a piece of our lives, that we have an inclination to remember experiences in that sequence in which we lived them. We find it difficult if we attempt to remember them the other way round. We knock against an inner resistance; we touch, to a large extent, gropingly, an inner reality. What we touch there, supersensibly touch—is our own etheric body. We say a sentence: "The father reads the book." Then we reverse it: "Book the reads father the," and at once we experience this inner resistance. If one practises such reversed backward glances next over the day's experiences until evening, and follow that by a glance over several days, then one begins to conquer the resistance which comes to meet one in the inner life. Through this victory something very real appears in our own organism. Through a retrospect stretched over several days we would become aware that this retrospect is not continual; for the clear day-consciousness comes back again to that place where we remember coming to the night time, and is broken by unconscious deep sleep. If we now learn to practise looking at those parts of our consciousness which are dark, then this darkness soon disappears. He, who, during a long time, casts a retrospective view over that which he has dreamed when asleep, will soon find that he begins to discover what he dreamed has more reality than many a waking experience. That is a startling feeling, and if such an exercise goes aright, the soul must thus so strengthen herself, that she learns to clear away everything which she yields up continually through the exercise. The result of such an exercise is that *once* the whole retrospect will be

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achieved, and before it the soul must have the strength now to extinguish again all that which streams into her consciousness from the unconscious depths ; and through this to come to an empty, but awakened, consciousness. This descriptive experience of the retrospect is a supersensible one. One stands, if one has won through to this point, on the threshold of that very step of knowledge, which is called, in the language of the spiritual investigator, the Imaginative. And one stands, if one has learnt to extinguish again the Imaginations to which one has come, at the threshold of the next higher supersensible form of knowledge, the Inspirative.

Supersensible knowledge leads one out of the body, but through it the body becomes directly the object of knowledge. Things bodily, which would otherwise be unknown, come into our consciousness. So man, when he reaches to experiencing free from the body, has clear powers of perception of the fine structure contained within his bone-system. The Skeleton-Man becomes known to him. He is not the symbol of death for nothing. One so experiences the bones, that when one seeks for a word to describe the experience, one would naturally say one felt them as Ashes. Out of these ashes, the being of man, freed from the body, rises like a sun ; one finds it in the speech of the Middle Ages described as the Phoenix, which raises itself out of the ashes anew. Especially clearly is this experience seen where the teeth are set in the mouth. Therefore it was said in old writings that "the dead feel ashes in the mouth." What would one experience if one was conscious of what is thus written ? Death, led by an act of will. But it also teaches us how to gaze deeply into a secret of humanity. One knows after such an experience what memory is. One knows that the memory, which is the torn-away plastic forces of the body, is that which works in a living and upbuilding labour on the bodily organs. One knows therefore that one can only call up odd memories in ordinary consciousness, because one would otherwise withdraw too many of these plastic forces. Now one looks within with a peculiar balance. One discovers that where much organising force works upon the body, very little memory forces are available. We do not remember the first years of childhood, because at that time all our strength, the sum of our formative forces are at work on our physical body. There the formative forces, the animators of our physical organs, the bearer of memory, entirely turns towards the *body*. But at the moment of death the formative forces (the etheric body) leave the physical body, and the physical body decomposes as a corpse. The etheric body is free and before the dead stand the whole of the memories. Death, rightly says Fortlage, is a great awakening. Whosoever in the living body experiences the spiritual world, in which he can tread the way of supersensible knowledge, he learns how to draw out the organising forces from the physical body. How does he do it ? There are exercises through which one can do it. They give one a substitute for the reorganising of the working forces on the body ; for example, they work upon the sleeping man. On the way of supersensible knowledge one goes through something similar to that which everyone goes through when he dies. That is an insight which the philosophers of old always had, and Socrates said on that account that philosophising was incidentally a dying ; why should he fear death, who, all his life, had exerted himself to philosophise ? In other words, to die ? So one can know by an inner schooling what appears at the moment of death, namely, the stepping forth of the etheric body and the gazing on the tableau of the memories. Now comes the

question of what happens to the memories which appear in the consciousness plane of the dead at the end of an earthly life. These memories are forgotten ; that is, the etheric body dissolves after it has lifted itself out of the corpse. As the physical body succumbs to the laws of gravitation, so are the formative forces connected with the whole of the cosmos and after death, the formative forces (etheric body) unite with the cosmos. As then, already in life, out of forgotten images capacities are formed, so also the capacities fashion themselves out of the forgotten memories of one earth-life which a man brings over into the next earth-life, and which unites itself when the Individuality connects itself with the heritage that comes from the father and mother.

It is stated now that capacities are transformed memories. If I learn to write, then the teacher tells me how to hold the pen, how I should do everything in detail. So long as I remember everything that the teacher says, I cannot write ; I can only write when I have forgotten the details and changed them into flesh and blood. The ability rests in the *physical* body, the memories in the locality of the etheric body (formative forces). Capacities arise when that which is stamped into the formative forces-body as memories is forgotten, that is, when it sinks into the physical body. That happens through study during one earth-life, but in a far greater style by the transit from one earth-life into the next. One can understand from this simple explanation, that man in his ordinary consciousness has therefore no memory of his preceding earth-life, because, if he could remember it, he would be born without individual capacities. It is extraordinarily surprising to see how Lessing took into consideration the whole certainty of this fact in his essay. He writes : "Why should I not return as often as I have the ability to absorb new knowledge and new accomplishments ? Do I bring away at one time so much that it is not worth the trouble to come again ? Therefore not ? Or because I forget that I have already been here ? I am lucky that I do forget it. The memory of my past conditions would only allow me to make a misuse of the present one." That is quite exactly and rightly put, in correspondence to the supersensible facts of the case. For capacities of the next life are forgotten metamorphosed memories of the preceding ones.

Here we look fully into the proof of human destiny (karma) as a concrete fact. That which can be found in the formative forces-body (etheric body) in one earth-life, appears in the next in the physical body. We have seen it even in an example, though it is an all-embracing law. In the formative forces-body (etheric body), those soul forces are anchored which are lasting in time ; thus, everything, for example, that has become a habit has a tendency to last. If a man has a special tendency towards lying, so that becomes an attribute which, so long as it lasts, is stamped into the etheric body. By the entrance into the next earth-life this is metamorphosed and it becomes an organ of weakness, a damage to the physical body. One sees that the morals of the one life are the cause of effects which become either sickness or health in the next. There is the harmony between spirit and nature, between the physical and moral. What otherwise seems to be continually apart, the moral and physical, is shown to be connected through reincarnation and karma. But these simply explained precepts are again only a part of a still more embracing one ; for as that which is anchored in the etheric body is metamorphosed in the one earth-life, so it is also comparable to the mutual relation of the formative forces-body (etheric body) and soul forces (astral body). Those things of the

soul which have no permanence, but, instead, only show for a moment, are only of secondary importance. Vacillation is such an attribute. When it has been to the fore in one earth-life, in the next it is turned to lying. The changing of these soul forces through the free activity of man's ego takes place throughout the present earth-life. Every time a person works on himself morally, he changes his physical body from out of his ego. If we survey the whole connection, we see how the free moral acts in the course of the recurring earth-lives work from step to step down into the physical-earthly. By this example (which must, of course, be extensively elaborated) the effects of karma (destiny) are made visible.

Another code of laws which work over from earth-life to earth-life, consists in that the soul takes up in pictures in one life that which she can present intellectually in the next. Such a picture is presented to us, if we remember that scene of which the Bible tells us,—the Adulteress led before Christ. He does not judge her; instead, He writes her sins in the ground. That happens with every sin. The Christ writes them in the earth. If a man commits an act, then this action is so written in the earth that, when he is born again, he feels himself called, by the fact that he treads the earth, to make compensation for the act. As the sense-perceptions are written in the memory, so the acts are written in the earth. The earth is for our deeds what the memory is for our sense-experiences. But the deeds inscribed on the earth which come to meet us as our destiny, only come apparently from outside; for every deed we do not only alters the outside world—the earth—it also changes ourselves. So every action is twice written; once in our ego and a second time in the earth. In that picture which the Bible places before us, the Christ appears as the representative of the ego of Man, Who writes his destiny in the earth, so that man (in the sense of the writer of the Apocalypse) may not forget his "first love" of the earth. Christ joins the karma of man to the karma of the planet. When a man dies, he deserts the earth, leaving his corpse on it to be dissolved and given over to the elements. From the etheric body (formative forces-body) upwards the man is a cosmic being, the cosmos draws him up. And so the spiritual being of man goes through the planetary spheres after death. That is the road which the spirit-being of man treads, and Dante described it. But this going out into the cosmos has its boundaries there where Saturn draws his orbit. The Middle Ages, which had a good knowledge of these things, therefore, drew the archangel of Saturn always with a scythe. He is the Angel of Death. In the writings De Intelligentiis of Trithem von Sponheim, he is also depicted. He calls him Oriphiel. Another Archangel, that of the Moon, Gabriel, is the announcer of birth. The downward climbing spirit of man arrives at last in the moon-spheres; and when it is embodied in the mother-body the rhythms of the moon are still at work. They so work as in all that which is watery, for man before birth is a water being. Thus do birth and death appear in their spiritual aspects. The Oriental idea, with its survey of the time before birth, reflects the descent of the soul from Saturn to the moon. The Western idea, with its survey of the time after death, reflects the ascent of the soul to Saturn, and further on still to the cosmos of the fixed stars. The old Indian consciousness did not want to descend entirely into birth. It did not wish to unite itself with the earth. It had no "first love." Christ had it. For the sake of humanity He stepped down from his cosmic heights into birth. That is the secret of the Baptism by John. Thus Christ

gave to the East what the East could not give to itself; and through death and resurrection in the body He redeemed the Saturn forces in man, the forces of death, which work in the skeleton. For this reason it was said of Christ, there should be no bone of Him broken.

The wonderful deed of the Christ consists in that he overcame birth and death. We, too, must unite ourselves with His impulse to overcome birth and death. We do this through the observation of reincarnation and karma. We have bound the earth to ourselves in this world-period, so also must we take that other step and conquer the Cosmos. There are two ways which lead into the spiritual world, because there are two boundaries for the ordinary consciousness: birth and death. In the Mass one connects one's self with the death and resurrection on Golgotha. In Alchemy the other door opens. Basilus Valentinus says in the practical part of his book on Alchemy where he speaks of the Philosopher's stone: "Thus the whole work is complete in ten minutes through four labours." What is this work? It is the embodying of man in four labours. For man has four bodies: ego, astral-body, etheric body and physical body. The Alchemist speaks of the Philosopher's Vessel and the Philosopher's Fire. These are the life-warmth in which the life-to-be forms itself. In the preface of Basilus Valentinus we read: "The preparation of the Stone, if one knows the time when the conjunctions approach, is only a task for women, and a game for children." Further on he says: "At last take heed and mark, that philosophy has two roads. The Watery road which I myself have used and after that, the dry road." What is the watery road? The way of birth; Moses took it and so wrote Genesis. What is the dry road? The road of death. Lazarus took it, and so wrote the Apocalypse. But all encompassing is the path which unites both roads, which arches over these two pillars of knowledge. That is the road of Anthroposophy. Looking with conscious understanding into recurring earth-lives, it acknowledges that the life after death is identical with the life before birth. The Alchemy of the Father, by which the world arose, and the Mystery of the Son, by which the dying world arose again, is united by Anthroposophy, in that it teaches how to awake in the Spirit; in that it teaches how to tread the road that must be taken by Western culture.

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SPEAKING PERSONALLY (continued from page 333)

own. Those who imagine that before they can enter into the love and freedom of God they must make themselves great by their own efforts suffer from spiritual pride. This is a hard truth for the ambitious to swallow, but Christianity has taught it for two thousand years (rather blindly) and the Chinese knew it even earlier.

In conclusion I must say that this is not intended as a direct "answer" to Mrs. Merry, but an attempt to state my position in such a way that the issue between us (if one really exists) may be clarified. For people cannot discuss things with one another to any purpose until they are quite sure that they understand one another's languages.

# Reflections on our Growing Consciousness of Time

by G. S. Francis

**A**MONG THE MANY CHANGES THAT have taken place in human nature during the life of man on earth, one of the most interesting, it may even be one of the most important to the people of to-day, is that change in consciousness which has enabled us to become aware of time. This extension of consciousness has made it possible for us to form views of the world and of the universe which people of more ancient times would find difficult to understand. In fact the people of Western Europe, with their sense of history and their awareness of time, appear to be unique, an exception to historic precedent, not a rule.

For the races who lived at the dawn of human history time would appear to have had no meaning. They lived in time just as they lived in space, but they were as unconscious of the all-pervading element of time as a fish is unconscious of the watery element in which it lives. Through our physical senses, which developed at a relatively early stage, especially through the sense-perceptions of sight and touch, we naturally and easily become aware of the world of space, but these purely physical channels

are unable to convey to us any awareness or consciousness of the element of time. *Space as extension* is easily perceived by means of our physical senses, but *time as duration* is a discovery that could only be made by thought, hence it is quite natural that the invention and general use of clocks or time measures should arise in this our own age, the era of the development of the conscious intelligence.



G. S. Francis

It was among the peoples of Western Europe that the invention of the mechanical clock—a symbol of the flow of time—first appeared, and the chimes from the countless clock towers and belfries that echo day and night over the towns and villages of Western Europe give a tuneful and distinctive expression of that feeling for the sense of time which is one of the particular characteristics of the peoples of the Western world. In the timeless life of the cities and the countryside of the older and more Eastern world we find nothing of the sort. In Egypt and Babylon water-clocks and sun-dials were known to some extent but were little used, whereas in Greece, right up to the time of Pericles, the time of the day was merely guessed at by observing the length of shadows thrown on the ground. The water-clocks of the Greeks and Romans—earthen vessels pierced with holes for the regular or controlled inlet of water—were not used to measure the day but were more usually employed to set a limit to the length of speeches in the Courts or in the Forum. It was only with Aristotle that the concept of the *hour* arose; prior to his age there existed no exact sub-division of the day.

But the invention of the clock was not an unmixed blessing. To many people to-day it is as much a tyranny as a help. It came at a period when man's outlook was becoming less spiritual and more materialistic, more scientific. A dead mechanical illusion was thrown over an element which in reality is living and vital. The clock, the time-measurer, really destroys the true artistic nature of time. It presents a concept of time marching along in a series of undifferentiated, unaccented moments, whereas if we could perceive time by means of the more spiritual insight of imaginative cognition, we should perceive in it the quality of music. Time would appear more as a melody, its successive notes (moments) having purposeful but changing values and duration, following one another at varying rates of speed—*accelerando*, *rallentando*, etc.—Although the conscious perception of this latter quality of time is for the moment only possessed by the seer and in most of us still awaits development, this conception of time is much more in accord with human experience than the scientific but more mechanical concept suggested by the clock. It is a matter of common experience that moments of time have varying values. Some are light and indifferent; others are heavy with the weight of destiny or become the starting-points of momentous events. Who does not know the feeling that times move at varying rates? At one period successive moments drag themselves slowly along with leaden feet; at another the moments scurry with breathless haste.

The purely scientific view of the world which at present seems to hold nearly the whole field of thought, has been slowly dawning upon the consciousness of the European peoples since about the middle of the fifteenth century. This point of view may be conceived as having its inception in Lord Bacon's "*Novum Organum*," in which he propounded and elaborated the idea that exact knowledge could only be obtained by means of objective

sense-perception. Through our physical senses we can easily perceive the objects and phenomena of the material world in which effects are observed to follow causes which can be perceived in the same region of space and time. In these sequences of cause and effect the searching intellect of scientific investigators proceeds further to discover inherent rules which in their totality are now generally accepted as the laws of nature. Thus the idea that the world—even the entire universe—was the product of material causality eventually became the generally accepted theory, and this idea was later erected into a complete philosophy by Newton.

Now any effective attempt to understand the essential nature of space and time sooner or later involves psychology and it becomes ultimately the function of the metaphysician to try to determine the nature of those realities in the external world which correspond to our mental concepts of space and time.

The first tendency of thought was to treat space and time as having objective existence in the same way as material objects.\* This apparently simple method, however, soon brings us up against real difficulties which may be seen by considering Newton's concept of "absolute time and mathematical time" as something which "in itself and from its own nature flows equally and with no liability to change." If Newton meant to assert that time is a flowing stream no less real than the Thames, his assertion is open to serious objections. All real streams have a definite beginning and ending—but where is the source of time and where its finish? Every real stream flows between banks or boundaries, but where are the boundaries of time? Every real stream has definite qualities. Water is heavy and translucent and produces observable effect upon bodies plunged into it.—What are the specific qualities of time? How are things affected by immersion in time so as to be different from things that are not in time? If it be asserted that time has such specific qualities, by what sense do we perceive them?

We may justly assume that none of these questions which are raised by the Newtonian philosophy can be answered intelligibly out of a knowledge confined to facts which can be observed by the physical senses. Thinkers of the past have seen these difficulties without solving them, while there was always a tendency in Greek thought to treat time as if it were in some sense unreal. Time was felt to be intimately connected with change and it was just this liability to change that made material things unreal when contrasted with the unchanging steadfastness of the Platonic Ideas. Without delving into the mathematical obscurities of Einstein, we may reasonably assume that the idea or concept of time that is generally held to-day is based on our experience of change, combined with memory and anticipation. These experiences we feel directly in our personal consciousness, and consciousness is not spatial; and because our personal experience seems to imply that change is an objective reality, we tend to invest time with some of the attributes of objective reality as well.

But while the foregoing is the commonly accepted point of view in the Western world to-day, it is not the only way in which the phenomena of life and the world can be regarded. In contradistinction to the material or scientific view of the world as a mechanism of dead matter controlled by fixed, unchanging laws and existing in space, we can learn to look upon the world as an *organism living in time*. Indeed this was how Goethe saw the world. †Goethe was interested in the phenomena of living nature, in the

process of life, growth and development, always the thing becoming, never the thing become. The Newtonian view of the *world as a mechanism* stands opposed to the Goethean conception of the *world as an organism*, dead matter against living nature; rigid law as against mobile and growing form. To the more spiritual vision of Goethe, the life-process presented itself as continued metamorphosis; he was conscious of the *destiny* in nature—not its causality. Goethe used a deep but scarcely appreciated method in exploring his living nature, namely the method of *living into* the object as opposed to dissecting it—a method involving sympathetic understanding rather than analytical reasoning. So, when following out the metamorphosis of the plant from the leaf, the idea of continuous becoming is presented as the prime phenomena of living nature. To the spiritual eye of Goethe the concept of the primordial plant—the *Urpflanze*—was clearly visible behind the form of every individual plant that happened to come up or that could possibly come up. In his investigations into the basic phenomena of the vertebrates and of geological strata, as well as his percept of the leaf as the prime form of all plant organisms, metamorphosis is disclosed as the prime form of all organic becoming, the basic method by means of which life manifests itself in time. From a consideration of the Goethean point of view we are led to perceive that besides the necessity of cause and effect—the logic of space—there is another organic necessity of life, namely that of *destiny—the logic of time*. This fact is sensed by religious and artistic thought and constitutes the essence of all real history, but neither the fact of destiny (or purpose), nor its connections, can be grasped by sense-perception and it is in consequence ignored by the materialistic point of view which remains wedded to the principle of causality.

The term "habit" is used of a plant to signify the special way—the way peculiar to itself—in which it manifests, the character, course and duration of its life-history. By its "habit" each kind is distinguished from all plants belonging to other species. In this sense we can also speak of the "habit" of the various time-periods in human history, or, if the word is preferred, the "style." The habit or style of a time-period expresses itself in characteristic ways, in the choice of particular forms of art, for instance, the choice of sculpture and the fresco by the Greeks, of orchestral music and perspective oil-painting by Western Europe, or, in methods of communication, the preference for oratory in Greece and Rome, the preference for writing in China and Western Europe. The habit or style of the cities of the separate culture-epochs or time-periods also differ radically. The cities of the Græco-Roman age differed markedly in lay-out and street planning, in the nature of the public and private architecture, in their colour, noises, street life and night life, from the cities of the earlier civilisations of the East or from the later civilisations of the West. Contrast the tendency in the Western world to straight-lined perspectives in the lay-out of such cities as London, Paris and Berlin with the almost deliberate complexity of the classic cities whose parts are arranged without any thought to vista or perspective, or the even more labyrinthine forms of the older cities of the East. To the "habit" of these time-groups belong also their own *tempo* of development. The rhythm of the classic or middle period differed from that of the earlier Eastern periods or the later Western ones that followed, and judging by ordinary standards of comparison, we can speak

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\* Cp. article on Space and Time in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

† Cp. Introduction *Decline of the West*. Oswald Spengler.

# Speaking Personally

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A THEME, IN RESPONSE TO MRS. ELEANOR C. MERRY'S ARTICLE "THE THRESHOLD OF A NEW AGE."

by Alan W. Watts

I AM VERY GLAD THAT MRS. MERRY, in her article "The Threshold of a New Age" (*Modern Mystic*, July), has given me the opportunity to clarify some of the points raised in my own article "Is Religion Necessary?" For I had expressed a point of view which may easily be misunderstood if the terms and phrases employed are insufficiently defined. However, allowing for this, and having read both my own article and Mrs. Merry's again several times, I am still not quite sure what the difference of opinion is about. There is so much in her article with which I find myself in perfect agreement, that I can only assume that one of two things has happened: either that she has assumed my ideas to belong to a specifically oriental background, or else that I have not made myself sufficiently clear.

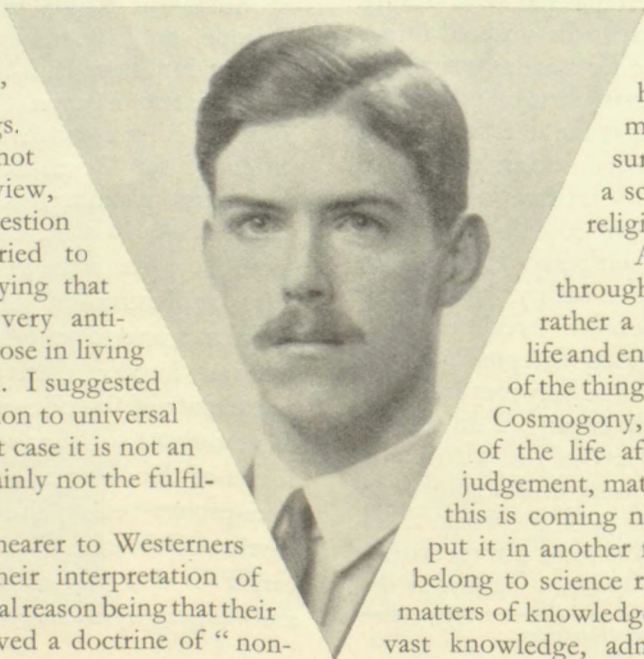
Both of these eventualities require some personal explanation and I ask readers to bear with me if I make something rather like a confession of faith. The words I used which appear to have been the chief cause of the difficulty were these: "It is not a question of what *you* do, but of what God does, and you cannot save yourself by any means, either by doing or not doing. God is always saving you, but this is not easy to understand." Here, as Mrs. Merry points out, we have the elusive Eastern doctrine of non-action (a better term is "non-assertion,") but it is not, as her subsequent remarks seem to imply, a doctrine of utter renunciation and denial of the world. That is to say, not as I understand it. My interpretation of this doctrine is derived from Chinese sources, and unfortunately these are less well-known in the West than the Indian. The Indian approach to religion is, generally speaking, world-denying; Indian Buddhism is an outstanding example of this tendency, and is avowedly no more than a means of escaping from the world as we know it to a state where all diversity is merged into an infinite one-ness, sometimes called No-thing-ness because it is a "something" in which there are no separate things. Being a confirmed Westerner, I cannot find sympathy with this point of view, simply because the ideal state in question seems abysmally uninteresting. I tried to make this very plain in my article, saying that this state of uniformity seemed the very antithesis of life, and that there was no purpose in living if this denial of life was to be the end. I suggested that this state might bear the same relation to universal life as death to individual life, but in that case it is not an ideal state but a passing stage, and certainly not the fulfilment of the divine purpose.

The Chinese, however, are much nearer to Westerners in mentality than the Indians, and their interpretation of Buddhism is utterly different, the principal reason being that their native mysticism is Taoism which evolved a doctrine of "non-

action" (*wu-wei*) wholly its own. Taoism is based on the concept of the Tao, which means something like the Way or Meaning of life as it is—a term which should be held synonymous with God in the sense I wished it to have in the above quotation from my article. Life expresses itself in a multitude of pairs of opposites, I and thou living and dying, pleasure and pain, man and woman, day and night. None of these things can exist without its opposite; man is meaningless without woman, but in man *and* woman there is meaning, and this meaning is Tao whose symbol is the child. But Tao is not some abstract, formless essence which can be conceived as existing apart from these pairs of opposites; it is less an entity than a condition, the condition of relationship between opposites. In fact it IS the opposites considered together; take them apart, and Tao vanishes, but this taking apart is something which we can only suggest for the sake of argument; in fact it cannot happen. But people do try to make it happen. They desire pleasure without pain, life without death and so on, and this desire is life-denying because, if it were attainable, the world would vanish into nothingness.

Therefore when I asked "Is Religion Necessary?" I was referring to those forms of religion whose logical conclusion is the dissolution of the world. Certain Indian religions state in plain terms that that is indeed their aim. But there are others which unintentionally work towards that goal, though they would be the last to admit it. These are the religions which strive for earthly perfection, and by earthly I do not mean only material. In this sense the phrase "earthly perfection" should be understood as the final, eternal and total achievement of a state which is in fact one of a pair of opposites. Immortality is an example. Life as a whole is immortal, but the forms of life are not. A person is a form of life, and thus personal immortality is to my mind not only unattainable but undesirable. It may be, however, that in each of us there is a more-than-personal consciousness which survives bodily death, but I feel that this is a scientific and metaphysical question, not a religious one.

Admittedly I have got myself into trouble through using the term "true religion" in rather a limited sense. For I feel that spiritual life and endeavour is not concerned at all with many of the things which figure so prominently in religion. Cosmogony, morality, theology, eschatology (the study of the life after death) and metaphysics are, in my judgement, material rather than spiritual questions. And this is coming near to the crux of the whole matter. To put it in another form, I believe that occultism and ethics belong to science rather than religion, for they are primarily matters of knowledge, behaviour and faculty. You may have vast knowledge, admirable behaviour towards your fellow





men, and the capacity to attain states of consciousness and perception unknown to ordinary men. But these things are only tools, and man has to learn the lesson that they are not necessarily the keys to happiness. Yes, happiness is the word. Do not confuse it with pleasure. Call it rather the love of life in all its aspects; call it spiritual freedom. No one can deny, however, that it is the thing which all men desire. The word has certain unfortunate associations, but so long as the quest for happiness is not identified with so-called hedonism, we must admit that all human striving and all religion arises from the desire to be happy. In other words, man wants to be so adapted to life, to pleasure and to pain, that he can say, "I love it."

Knowledge as such does not necessarily bring happiness, and by knowledge we must understand not only book-knowledge but also first-hand experience. You may have an occult experience which proves to you beyond all doubt that you will live for ever, but if you do not love life as pleasure and as pain, you will be thoroughly depressed by this knowledge. The reason that knowledge does not necessarily bring happiness is that happiness depends not on what you know or do, but on what you desire. It is a question of motive. It is a truism that if you search for happiness you never find it. Less of a truism, but also true, is the fact that if you search for happiness by a studied not-searching for it, you still fail, because the latter is only an indirect form of the former, its first cousin once removed. Then how are we to find it? That is the problem, for we have to get it neither by looking for it nor by not looking for it. We cannot get it by doing something about it, nor by not doing, because both methods arise from the same desire—which is to *do* something about it by direct or indirect means. But the Chinese sages teach a way of not-doing which is above and beyond these pairs of opposites, but which yet exists in them! Before we consider this, however, let me return once more to Mrs. Merry's article.

The attainment of happiness is not in any way analogous to walking from Bloomsbury to Westminster. I do not think Mrs. Merry was implying that Westminster is a nicer place than Bloomsbury, but this is what she unintentionally suggests, the point being that if one is not happy in Bloomsbury, one will certainly not be happy in Westminster. For happiness belongs to the man who walks; not to the places to which he goes. Her actual intention was to point out that the two places are some distance apart and that you do not make the whole journey by taking the first step. Quite so; this applies to science, occultism and all other means of increasing one's knowledge and developing one's faculties, in fact to all things about which one must *DO* something if one is to make progress. But happiness is not like that, for there is nothing one can *do* about it in the same sense. And yet it is the thing we want most of all.

None of this must be taken to imply that science and occultism are a waste of time. They are perfectly legitimate activities so long as it is recognised (and this is most important) that *they are not the means by which happiness is found but the field wherein it is found*. And this may be said of anything else, such as bootmaking, painting, housekeeping, farming or going for a walk. Then what are the means? The answer is that the means are the same as those one would adopt in turning round to look at one's own eyes. For let us examine more closely what is meant by happiness. It is, I believe, love of life in all its aspects arising from a sense of spiritual freedom. For in this sense love and freedom are one because real freedom is not what the world supposes it to be. It is

not just fooling about as you like without any regard to the rules of life and without any hindrance. The difference is this: that the false concept of freedom is freedom to do as one likes. True freedom is freedom to do as one likes and also as one doesn't like. In fact it consists in doing absolutely anything, whether you like it or not, the point being that if your freedom excludes certain actions or circumstances which you don't like, it is no longer free. It is limited by your own whims. Yet it is not really limited; it is only limited to your knowledge. In truth you cannot limit this freedom, for it belongs to the universe which includes all things pleasant and painful, great and small. If anything is excluded the freedom is not genuine, for God excludes no creature however sinful or humble from His love and grace. Therefore spiritual freedom in this sense cannot be had by going anywhere particular or by doing anything particular, for this implies that the person who goes or does is under the impression that he has not got that freedom already. But the stupendous truth is that he has, and what is more that, however much he may deceive himself to the contrary, he cannot get away from it. By no possible means can you limit or deprive yourself of your spiritual freedom, for all that you think or do and all that comes to you from outside yourself is the free activity of the universe which excludes nothing. And when you realize that by no possible action, by no desperate crime, by no folly, by no calamity, can you exclude yourself from that freedom, then you will realize the meaning of love. You say this is a dangerous doctrine?—that whatever you do and whatever is done to you partakes of God and His omnipotent freedom? Yes, and no. For once realized it has a strange effect on one's mind. The knowledge that one has this freedom is a responsibility, but having it one does not desire to abuse it. For vicious actions are all mistaken attempts to achieve happiness, which this realization has given in such abundance that one need ask for no more. Furthermore, it releases a mighty energy in the depths of the soul so that one almost "walks on air" as the saying goes. For you feel the power of the universe at work in all that you do, and without any effort, for you know that nothing you can do can cut off that power. And with such force in one's hands one learns the meaning of responsibility as never before!

This, to my mind, is the main business of religion, for, as I pointed out in my previous article, it is a matter of "becoming what you are." And so far from implying any denial of the world of opposites, of the ego and of the transient forms of life, it is a tremendous affirmation of them; all things, however they behave, are the Tao and cannot be anything else, and by this they are redeemed in spite of themselves. But although this redemption, this spiritual freedom, is something quite independent of morality it is not an escape from the moral law. There is still a price to be paid for folly. But in this sense immorality is not a spiritual sin—it is a material, mental, emotional or psychic error which produces its results in accordance with the laws of those planes of existence. If a sage carelessly drops a match on a pile of gunpowder he cannot escape being blown up; the explosion, however, does not limit or invalidate his spiritual attainment. In just the same way, a moral error will have its painful consequences, but it cannot detract from one's spiritual stature. For the highest in spiritual attainment are those who realize that in this realm there is no such thing as attainment, that spiritually we are redeemed as we are in spite of ourselves, through no virtue of our

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# Poe

## II

**I**T HAS BEEN OBSERVED WITH MUCH interest that Poe had a peculiar fondness for the assertion of Bacon that "There is no exquisite beauty without some strangeness in the proportion," and often quoted it in his works. "Take away," he writes in one place, "this element of strangeness, of unexpectedness, of novelty, of originality, call it what we will, and all that is *ethereal* in loveliness is lost at once." Poe himself was of a classical beauty of countenance, but there was a strangeness in it; his wife was very beautiful, but there was a strange ethereality in her beauty, difficult to fathom; his works are classically beautiful in form and description, but their strangeness passes understanding. There was a strangeness, unexpectedness, novelty and originality in and through his whole work, and an ethereal loveliness in some of it so ruthless and pathetic that it can move the sensitive reader to tears. But only such a reader, because he alone feels that he is sensing with the artist something of another, an ideal world, something so remote and deeply absorbing, so far away and contrasted with the formal life of the crude objective world, and it is good to be transported there for a moment, in spite of its strangeness.

We have read much of the wonders that are disclosed to those of higher dimensional vision, things wondrously strange, beautiful and almost unbelievable; but we have no ground for affirming they do not exist simply because we may not be able to travel in that enchanted realm. Many do travel there in our day; perhaps far fewer did in the days of Poe. Perhaps he was one of a mere handful of pioneers who did so a hundred years ago. And if there is any point in discussing so far off an event, its value may lie in this: the realm to which Poe was a constant visitant is opening up its wonder, strangeness and ethereality with startling rapidity today, and another Poe may rise at any moment among us to weave the mysteries of that realm into creations of entrancing beauty to awaken the unheeding masses to attentive consideration of it. If so, he must not be mocked, rejected and starved, and left in the gutter to die. He must be cherished and loved and encouraged to speak the last word of his vision.

I propose to note briefly from Krutch, one of Poe's biographers, some opinions and judgments on the artist and his creations. He says: "That world of physical nature which forms the background of his stories is either one cut off completely from the rest of the world or one in which all law is suspended." "Poe was a poet, but a poet so unusual that not even nature had for him any charm unless it had some aspect of nightmare strangeness." "His stories are too full of life and in detail too richly varied to be mechanical copies of one another, but they are in essence too similar not to be expressions of a mastering interest. Dreamlike in their power to make fantastic unrealities seem real, they are dreams in essence, experiences, that is to say, which satisfy in some way the desires of the dreamer. That these desires were abnormal and that they were ones not likely to be wholly realised in waking life, both the character of the dreams and the character of the dreamer would of themselves suggest;

by *Raymund Andrea*

and to consider a little more closely certain aspects of the stories is to connect them even more intimately with the character of their creator." . . . "It is, moreover, worth observing that in the majority of cases the emotions and actions of the characters are apparently unmotivated. They fear they know not what, and they are oppressed with a sense of guilt which is either frankly baseless or the result of some deed which the author, unable to imagine, tells us is too terrible to be mentioned." . . . "When it is remembered also that the characters in his stories and poems are frequently suffering from disorders of the mind of exactly the sort which might give rise to fancies such as those amidst which they are represented, that Poe's works are replete with various obiter dicta upon the subject of obsessions, perversions, and manias which he could have learned of only from himself, and that he gave in the mysterious wreck of his own life proof of the intimate relationship to the characters which he created, it is impossible not to see that instead of being deliberately invented his stories and poems invented themselves." . . . And finally: "Poe invented the detective story in order that he might not go mad."

In contrast with this hotchpotch of superficial comment, it will be of interest to quote views of some eminent thinkers who really understood genius and art. And first, from Turck, in his lecture on "Artistic enjoyment and productivity." "It is utterly ridiculous and inadmissible," he says: "to demand that an artist should keep exactly to his model and do nothing more than counterfeit nature, that he should not, for the life of him, idealise and compose, but only reproduce some fragment or other of existing nature, and this without adding to or taking from it anything whatever. That would be not art, but a childish pastime, for it would entirely miss its aim, seeing that a mere, dead, spiritless imitation cannot approach the original in its effect. The man who loves, however, sees the object already idealised and perfected. Again and again he becomes engrossed in the contemplation of the beauty of each separate part, until the whole melts together into a single harmony; it becomes a unity, a complete whole—a finished poem, a musical composition, or a picture." . . . And, "The artist of genius idealises the object he reproduces, but does he thereby become untrue and unnatural? Is he not rather then just to the thing when, in pursuing the intentions of nature, he perfects, completes, idealises it, renders it more beautiful or characteristic than it appears in fact to the prosaic eye?"

Coleridge, in a lecture on Shakespeare, writes: "For art cannot exist without, or apart from, nature; and what has man of his own to give to his fellowman, but his own thoughts and feelings, and his observations so far as they are modified by his own thoughts and feelings?" . . . "No work of true genius dares want its appropriate form, neither indeed is there any danger of this. As it must not, so genius cannot, be lawless: for it is even this that constitutes it genius—the power of acting creatively under laws of its own origination." And, "Nature, the prime genial artist, inexhaustible in diverse powers, is equally

inexhaustible in forms;—each exterior is the physiognomy of the being within—its true image reflected and thrown out from the concave mirror.”

Finally, Hugo, in his “Promontorium Somnii”: “What pedants style caprice, the imbecile unreason, the ignorant hallucination, what formerly was called sacred madness, what today, accordingly as it is one or the other aspect of the dream, is called melancholy or fantasy, that singular state of soul which, persisting in all the poets, has maintained as realities, abstractions, symbols, the lyre, the muse, the tripod, invoked or evoked unceasingly—those strange overtures to unknown inspiration are essential to the profound life of art. Art voluntarily respire the irrespirable. To suppress that is to prevent communication with the infinite. The poet’s thought ought to be on a level with extra-human horizons.”

Now, the further we leave behind Krutch, the biographer, in the above quotations of writers on genius and its power of creation, the nearer we approach to an understanding of Poe. Viewing Poe through Krutch alone we do not know where the artist stands, or whether he stands at all, that is, the average reader would not know. Anyone with an esoteric training in mysticism and having a psychological knowledge of genius would not be long in deciding where Poe stood, or where his superficial biographer sat. It was beyond Krutch’s comprehension that nature functions in other realms than that of trees, mountains, and walking men and women; that this objective existence is but the mundane level of a vast universe of phenomena. Poe’s realm of nature was not “completely cut off from the rest of the world,” but one step beyond and invisible to it; nor was it one in which “all law is suspended,” but having laws of its own which were madness to Krutch. And when a biographer tells us that the works of a genius, acknowledged the world over and the despair of thousands of would-be imitators, some of them of considerable name, were deliberately written in order to prevent madness, that is biography at its worst. It is plain impertinence.

It is time for Poe himself to give us a glimpse of the particular kind of madness that afflicted him. “All that I have here expressed was actually present to me. Remember the mental condition which gave rise to ‘Ligeia.’ I regard these visions with an awe which in some measures moderates or tranquillizes the ecstasy: this ecstasy in itself is supernal to human nature—is a glimpse of the spirit’s outer world.” This was a pencilled note on the manuscript of one of his poems. It is Poe’s revelation of the secret of the major portion of his work. And if he had not given it to us, we should have little difficulty in supplying it ourselves. The creations of genius never lie: the soul of the creator is always visible in his work, if we have the eyes to see it. It has been said that Poe was a “victim of hyperaesthesia.” But that by no means accounts for his genius. This condition is one of exalted or morbidly increased sensibility. I suppose there are hundreds of students of the mystic life who are such victims. Indeed, to a great extent it is a necessity for the objective they have in view. With a normal degree of sensitiveness they would never reach that objective, which is the contacting and sensing of higher dimensional rates of vibration and a projection of consciousness into and a registration of phenomena of the world whence Poe drew his inspiration. And even among those who are most successful in this kind of contact through mystical translation of consciousness, how few have the ability to bring back any coherent and co-ordinated communications of that hidden domain of

nature, or give them an uncommon and curious expression. How few, with all their study of it, are able to adjust their mental mechanism to the functioning of the laws of that domain and record anything beyond fugitive impressions of light and colour and detached fragments of the phantasmagoria which nature paints to the vision just beyond the confines of the world of sense. It evokes a smile to read of the “morbid imagination that mastered Poe.” It was his vision that mastered him; and the possession of the faculties of creative imagination and mental analysis in a superlative degree enabled him to translate that vision into unique specimens of literary art which have driven his critics mad in an attempted interpretation of them.

(continued in next page)

## We Are Here... Why?



IS THERE a mother who has never gazed down on the innocent babe nestled in her arms and wondered — what does the morrow hold for him? Was there ever a man who has not asked himself, “Is this my destiny”? Who has not had, at some time, the lurking fear that he has chosen the wrong career? Must chance decree your fate? Is it not time that humanity ceased plunging into darkness, into the unknown of life, hoping to seize the skirts of passing opportunity? There is no man more confident of what the years will bring him—no woman more happy—than the one who has found Self, who knows his purpose in life and how it can be attained. You can have no greater joy than doing the things you are best suited for.

Success comes only to those who find play in their labor. There is no question more intimate, or problem more vital to your welfare, than why you are here, and how you can make the best of it.

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The Rosicrucians

ROSICRUCIAN PARK  
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

Let us hear what Poe has to say to the critics in defence of his "Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque." "The epithets 'Grotesque' and 'Arabesque' will be found to indicate with sufficient precision the prevalent tenor of the tales here published. But from the fact that, during a period of some two or three years, I have written five-and-twenty short stories whose general character may be so briefly defined, it cannot be fairly inferred—at all events it is not truly inferred—that I have, for this species of writing, any inordinate, or indeed any particular taste or prepossession. I may have written with an eye to republication in volume form, and may, therefore, have desired to preserve, as far as a certain point, a certain unity of design. That is, indeed, the fact; and it may even happen that in this manner, I shall never compose anything again. I speak of these things here, because I am led to think that it is this prevalence of the 'Arabesque' in my serious tales, which has induced one or two critics to tax me, in all friendliness, with what they have pleased to term 'Germanism' and gloom. The charge is in bad taste, and the grounds of it have not been sufficiently considered. Let us admit for the moment, that the 'phantasy-pieces' now given *are* Germanic, or what not. Then Germanism is 'in the vein' for the time being. Tomorrow I may be anything but German, as yesterday I was everything else. These many pieces are yet one book. My friends would be quite as wise in taxing an astronomer with too much astronomy, or an ethical writer with treating too largely of morals. But the truth is that, with a single exception, there is no one of these stories in which the scholar would recognize the distinctive features of that species of pseudo-horror which we are taught to call Germanic, for no better reason than that some of the secondary names of German literature have become identified with its folly. If in many of my productions terror has been the thesis, I maintain that terror is not of Germany, but of the soul—that I have deduced this terror only from its legitimate sources and urged it only to its legitimate results."

I shall never forget the impressions those writings made upon me when I first read them some twenty-four years ago, in the month of November. I particularly mention the time of year, as it was a propitious season for an introduction to the work of Poe, when the sun was low and all nature wrapped in the mystery of silence and haunting shadow. Reading today, after a long interval, "The fall of the house of Usher," the style and atmosphere are as much a mystery as on the first perusal. The conception is striking and exceptional. In form and word technique it is perfect. The evolution of the idea of intellectual power and concealed tragedy, combined with mental and physical suffering, rises in a crescendo of dramatic appeal to mind and heart, compelling the reader to participate as a present witness in every detail of the sombre recital as it moves slowly and unfalteringly to its close. The conclusion is no less remarkable than the opening, as it fades away like a succession of dissonant chords of music into the silence. That indeed is what it is; a piece of unearthly music portraying the affliction of a distraught mortal, gathering momentum in its progress of disturbing elements until the climax is reached and the dread secret disclosed, and ending in a juxtaposition of opposing harmonies of despair and ruin.

A point of singular interest in this early piece is a recital of certain books of rare quality which Poe weaves into it. It has a moving glamour of its own. He writes: "Our books—the books which, for years, had formed no small portion of the mental existence of the invalid—were, as might be supposed, in strict

keeping with this character of phantasm. We pored together over such works as the *Ververt et Chartreuse* of Gresset; the *Belphegor* of Machiavelli; the *Heaven and Hell* of Swedenborg; the *Subterranean Voyage* of Nicholas Klimm by Holberg; the *Chiro-mancy* of Robert Flud, of Jean D'Indagine, and of *De la Chambre*; the *Journey into the Blue Distance* of Tieck; and the *City of the Sun* of Campanella. One favourite volume was a small octavo edition of the *Directorium Inquisitorium*, by the Dominican Eyméric de Gironne; and there were passages in Pomponius Mela, about the old African Satyrs and Oegipans, over which Usher would sit dreaming for hours. His chief delight, however, was found in the perusal of an exceedingly rare and curious book in quarto Gothic—the manual of a forgotten church—the *Vigiliae Mortuorum secundum Chorum Ecclesiae Maguntinae*." There is a good deal of truth in the statement that Poe's work is largely autobiographical.

So with many of these "Tales," as he called them, these transcripts of vision seen in the astral light and penned with a reality, breadth and power unequalled by any other writer. They contain the same strange music, pathos and gripping sense of mystery and haunting ubiquitousness of the hidden side of nature, so startling and grotesque sometimes, it may be, as to repel by reason of their unusualness. But they leave an unforgettable and unanalysable impression upon the reader of a lonely seer, with mind often trembling on the balance at what he sees, peering beyond the curtain that hides a forbidden world from ordinary mortals, and drawing forth at will for his own magic pen an ideal beauty, strange and ethereal, of landscape, forms and architecture, and of beings of superhuman, and some of subhuman quality, that cast a new light upon the unknown and perplexed psychologies of human life around us.

It is a fact worthy of note, and which enhances Poe's reputation as a seer, that many of the researches of psychology, psychiatry and neurology today, with their fearless probings into the mysteries of human personality, reveal and methodically classify some of the most salient features, peculiarities and eccentricities portrayed so vividly by the artist in his visionary characters. The unreal and bizarre in some of his most serious work, which afforded a target of abuse for his asinine critics, has become a subject of clinical enquiry of mental scientists and alienists and shown to be intrinsic ingredients of certain psychologies.

Poe was a most versatile writer. A cursory glance through the ten volumes of his works will reveal the extent of his learning, multifarious reading and mastery in recondite departments of knowledge. He was probably the greatest master of the short story of the type described that ever lived. His reviews of writers and poets won him the title of "almost the only fearless American critic." He was a caustic critic who threw out the most unexpected and extraordinary opinions just when the literary world of America most needed them. It was noted how individualistic and detached was Pascal in his scientific opinions and affirmations. He had not one ounce of respect for the accepted canons of orthodoxy. Exactly the same was Poe in the world of literature. It is said that he made "no bid for an inclusion in the kindly circle composed of such men as Longfellow and Lowell, who constituted the literary world of America." Why should he kneel to minor potentates? It is a mistake that groups and coteries have always made, and make today: they expect an original and individualistic thinker to curtail his pace and fall into step, move to the rules of polite mediocrity, and trim his ideas to the size of those who

have not half his vision. But genius never has done this, and never will; and Poe was no exception to the rule. That he is referred to as a critic as much as a poet and fiction writer, is sufficient testimony to the value of his work in that sphere. That some of his criticisms of writers and books cut deeply, it must be admitted; but he had an eye that glanced to the pith of his subject, and having no patience with shoddy or pedantic workmanship, he stripped the veneer off men and the tinsel off their books.

The writer Lowell had some handsome things to say of Poe, but he denies that the latter had any sympathy with mysticism, apparently because he had an extremely analytical mind and his work the formality of mathematical design. In confirmation of this opinion he points to characteristic tendencies to be met with in the mystic. "The mystic dwells *in* the mystery, is enveloped with it; it colours all his thoughts; it affects his optical nerve especially, and the commonest things get a rainbow edging from it." As a matter of fact, this is true of Poe to the letter. No man more fully dwelt in the mystery of what he wrote, or had his thoughts more coloured with it, as his "Tales" amply witness.

It is only too true that Poe fell upon evil times. No one understood him. He not only fell among thieves; he fell among men, admirers and detractors alike, who read and judged him objectively and superficially. They had not a spark of vision of the true background of his life and work, or of the secret of his inspiration. He was a misdated man. He belongs to the twentieth century.

In that remarkable series of writings called the "Marginalia," he reproduced a wealth of comment which he had pencilled from time to time in the margins of his books. Krutch, knowing his man so well, is pleased to say that Poe's "formal education was early broken up, he had little time for extensive reading, and there is no evidence whatever that his familiarity with general literature was great." Yet Krutch had read the "Marginalia"; but this, he avers, Poe "published in the form of a scholar's notebook jottings, giving it as his own." In a word, Poe pilfered these comments on his own books from other writers! Well, here are two comments from the "Marginalia"; one, on the biographer of genius, and the other on plagiarism. First: "I have sometimes amused myself by endeavouring to fancy what would be the fate of an individual gifted, or rather accursed with an intellect *very* far superior to that of his race. Of course, he would be conscious of his superiority; nor could he (if otherwise constituted as man is) help manifesting his consciousness. Thus he would make himself enemies at all points. And since his opinions and speculations would differ widely from those of all mankind—that he would be considered a madman, is evident. How horribly painful such a condition! Hell could invent no greater torture than that of being charged with abnormal weakness on account of being abnormally strong.

"In like manner, nothing can be clearer than that a *very* generous spirit—*truly* feeling what all merely profess—must inevitably find itself misconceived in every direction—its motives misinterpreted. Just as extremeness of intelligence would be thought fatuity, so excess of chivalry could not fail of being looked upon as meanness in its last degree:—and so on with other virtues. This subject is a painful one indeed. That individuals *have* so soared above the plane of their race, is scarcely to be questioned; but, in looking back through history for traces of their existence, we should pass over all biographies of 'the good and the great,' while we search carefully the slight

records of wretches who died in prison, in Bedlam, or upon the gallows."

And secondly: "The ordinary pickpocket filches a purse, and the matter is at an end. He neither takes honor to himself, openly, on the score of the purloined purse, nor does he subject the individual robbed to the charge of pickpocketism in his own person; by so much the less odious is he, then, than the filcher of literary property. It is impossible, we should think, to imagine a more sickening spectacle than that of the plagiarist, who walks among mankind with an erecter step, and who feels his heart beat with a prouder impulse, on account of plaudits which he is conscious are the due of another. It is the purity, the nobility, the ethereality of just fame—it is the contrast between this ethereality and the grossness of the crime of theft, which places the sin of plagiarism in so detestable a light. We are horror-stricken to find existing in the same bosom the soul-uplifting thirst for fame, and the debasing propensity to pilfer. It is the anomaly, the discord, which so grossly offends." . . .

It really looks as if Poe, in one of his prophetic visions, saw one of his biographers in the distance, and left a few words in the "Marginalia" for him.

Just as Poe stands in solitary and elevated isolation in his prose writings, so in his verse, though small in bulk, few have excelled his fine craftsmanship. "With me," he wrote, "poetry has been not a purpose, but a passion; and the passions should be held in reverence; they must not—they cannot at will be excited with an eye to the paltry compensations, or the more paltry commendations, of mankind." He had little more than paltry compensations for his poetry, but he had handsome commendations during his life. Since his death it has won universal admiration. Everyone knows "The Raven." It was published in 1845, and his recognition as a poet of genius dates from its appearance. In England it received immediate recognition; and Elizabeth Barrett, the poetess, wrote him: "Your 'Raven' has produced a sensation, a 'fit of horror,' here in England. Some of my friends are taken by the fear of it and some by the music. I hear of persons haunted by the 'Nevermore,' and one acquaintance of mine who has the misfortune of possessing a 'bust of Pallas' can never bear to look at it in the twilight." And J. A. T. Lloyd quotes Professor Woodberry as writing: "No brief poem ever established itself so immediately . . . and so imperishably in men's minds. The 'Raven' became, in some sort, a national bird, and the author the most notorious American of the hour," and tells us that the manuscript of this poem, for which Poe received a remuneration of ten dollars, has been recently purchased for twenty thousand pounds.

Almost as much quoted is "The Bells." It is one of Poe's best known sound pictures. In it he rings the changes of the music of the bells in their swiftly moving alternations of joyousness and solemnity, and describes the mystic message of their varying tones with wonderful force of imagination and power of invention.

Many a self-revealing and sombre note is touched in Poe's verse. The secret of the mystery of his life is told simply and truly in his "Alone."

"From childhood's hour I have not been  
As others were; I have not seen  
As others saw; I could not bring  
My passions from a common spring,  
From the same source I have not taken

My sorrow ; I could not awaken  
 My heart to joy at the same tone ;  
 And all I loved, I loved alone.  
 Then—in my childhood, in the dawn  
 Of a most stormy life—was drawn  
 From every depth of good and ill  
 The mystery which binds me still :  
 From the torrent, or the fountain,  
 From the red cliff of the mountain,  
 From the sun that round me rolled  
 In its autumn tint of gold,  
 From the lightning in the sky  
 As it passed me flying by,  
 From the thunder and the storm,  
 And the cloud that took the form  
 (When the rest of Heaven was blue)  
 Of a demon in my view."

And finally, in his essay on "The poetic principle," it will be of value to read Poe's conception of the true poet's aim and inspiration. "An immortal instinct, deep within the spirit of man, is thus, plainly, a sense of the Beautiful. This it is which administers to his delight in the manifold forms, and sounds, and odours, and sentiments amid which he exists. And just as the lily is repeated in the lake, or the eyes of Amaryllis in the mirror, so is the mere oral or written repetition of these forms, and sounds, and odours, and sentiments, a duplicate source of delight, But this mere repetition is not poetry. He who shall simply sing, with however glowing enthusiasm, or with however vivid a truth of description, of the sights, and sounds, and odours, and colours, and sentiments, which greet *him* in common with all mankind—he, I say, has yet failed to prove his divine title. There is still a something in the distance which he has been unable to attain. We have still a thirst unquenchable, to allay which he has not shown us the crystal springs. This thirst belongs to the immortality of Man. It is at once a consequence and an indication of his perennial existence. It is the desire of the moth for the star. It is no mere appreciation of the Beauty before us—but a wild effort to reach the Beauty above. Inspired by an ecstatic pre-sence of the glories beyond the grave, we struggle, by multi-form combinations among the things and thoughts of Time, to attain a portion of that Loveliness whose very elements, perhaps, appertain to eternity alone. And thus when by Poetry—or when by Music, the most entrancing of the Poetic moods—we find ourselves melted into tears—not as the Abbate Gravia supposes—through excess of pleasure, but through a certain, petulant, impatient sorrow at our inability to grasp *now*, wholly, here on earth, at once and forever, those divine and rapturous joys, of which *through* the poem, or *through* the music, we attain to but brief and indeterminate glimpses."

On rising from a review of Poe's life and work there is a thought which somehow compensates for the legitimate resentment we may feel at the treatment he received at the hands of his contemporaries. It is this : the act of creation of such ideal forms of beauty as he has left us, must have given him a rare delight, beyond anything that environment could have given. No matter what the circumstances in which genius creates, and sordid enough they often are, there is a self-sufficing joy in artistic creation which only genius knows. In Poe's life and writings there is abundant testimony to the fact that he lived as much, if not more, in a visionary world as in this one. No man "imagina-

tion-mastered," no rules of art, no beauty of woman, no sex or sexlessness, could have created those masterpieces of prose and verse which have long been acknowledged world classics. It would not be easy to name any other literary genius of such quality about which such drivel has been written as that to explain Poe's creative ability. One reason for this is, that his was a quality unusual in literature ; another is, that those who wrote the drivel judged his work according to ordinary canons of criticism simply because they had none other to judge it by.

Poe was a most extraordinary man. He was a born psychic, a man obsessed with vision. Where other men have to resort to all kinds of methods and disciplines, good and bad, to catch a worth while idea with which to bless themselves, this seer had but to *look* and there unrolled before his eyes the wonderful panorama of the cosmic picture gallery. His labour was to fashion what he saw into superb literary art forms that would satisfy the exceptional critical standard he set for himself. Those forms were perfect in construction and beauty, unique and revolutionary ; and it was the unique and revolutionary in Poe and his work that angered and baffled his contemporaries and many of his biographers. The former recognised his superiority and hated him for it : the latter, while recognising it, were at a loss to touch the secret of it ; and having no hint of the supernatural in themselves, judged him after the canons of their own standard of correctness and taste, and clothed their patent ignorance with the opprobrium of aberration and madness.

That is why it is good to forget what has been written of Poe and read what he wrote.



#### REFLECTIONS ON OUR GROWING CONSCIOUSNESS OF TIME (continued from page 331)

of the *largo* of the East, the *andante* of Greece and Rome, and the *allegro con brio* of the West.

This progressive quickening of the tempo of existence, this perceptible acceleration of time is not merely to be felt over lengthy historic periods ; it is an experience that is becoming increasingly frequent among the people of to-day with regard to contemporary life. What this phenomenon may mean in the future evolution of humanity is a subject that lies outside the scope of this article, but this increasing awareness of consciousness of time and time-phenomena is of great assistance to those who desire to comprehend the connections of the vast time-sequences disclosed to us by Rudolf Steiner in his book, *An Outline of Occult Science*, and in many of his lecture-courses.

In conclusion we may say that in the perceptions of our physical senses we become conscious of and participate in the events and phenomena of the world of space, but in our thinking we become linked with the *time* process. In our thinking we become beings of time, for by thought we already link the past to the present and it only needs an extension of this faculty to enable us to project our consciousness into the future. As physical beings we live and move in the world of space, becoming conscious of its *causality* ; as thinking, spiritual beings we can become aware of our *destiny* and with this event we consciously enter the realm of time.

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## MODERN MYSTIC

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# The Mysticism of Ferruccio Busoni

By Bernard Bromage, M.A.

**I**N OUR PRESENT VERY IMPERFECT STATE of knowledge and culture there is no subject more universally misunderstood than the place of the mystic consciousness in the evolution of a human civilisation. One of the chief obstacles in the way of any approach to an understanding of the greatest of all the faculties lies in the fact that very few persons, even the most cultivated, have the mental grasp to see that all experience is, in the last resort, one and indivisible.

In particular, this lack of comprehension has rebounded very gravely on certain creative artists of undoubted versatility and breadth of vision, who have excelled equally in two or more branches of achievement.

Pre-eminent among these is to be reckoned the late and eternally lamented Ferruccio Busoni, who, like Liszt before him, committed the unforgivable crime of doing two things equally well. Both as composer and virtuoso Busoni will live in the memory of *colori che sanno* as a supreme example of the artist as thinker and architect, infinitely curious about all manifestations of philosophy and activity, impatient of any unnecessary constraint on the interpretative reason. The whole secret of this strange and ever-fascinating personality was that it held in its core the soul of a great mystic.

This was very largely seen in the man's enormous sense of dedication. Even more ardently than in the case of Milton there burned in his breast from the beginning the conviction that life and genius had been given him with the object of dedicating it to some great goal. What this goal was became fully apparent only at the end of his life when the gigantic structure of his opera "Faust" bore full witness to the implications of his studies and achievements in magical lore.

To attend a piano recital by Busoni was to realise at once that one was in the presence of a being of more than usual distinction. That eminent composer and critic, Mr. Kaikhosru Sorabji,\* one of his most fervent admirers, has well expressed the impression created by one of these events. "In his playing that immense lofty aloofness, that curious sense of existence in some superhuman Deva-chan world (to borrow an idea from Brahmanic thought), that extraordinary cold white fire of intellectualised and sublimated emotion, emotion so great, so intense, and at once so intellectualised and sublimated as to transcend and wholly obliterate the commonplace physical and nervous sensations that are dignified by the name, that almost terrifying personal and mental power all made together of Busoni, compared with other pianists, what one feels a great Brahman Rishi would be, alone in his Himalayan hermitage, compared with the peripatetic yogis, fakirs and jugglers, who will perform their tricks, mystifying and marvellous enough for what they are, where and whenever there is prospect of reward."†

This is extremely well said, and bears full witness to the

\* One of the very greatest musical scholars and critics of modern times.—ED.

† *Around Music*, p. 21.

extraordinary spell which Busoni cast on anyone who was privileged to know him. He radiated a serenity of a quite peculiar nature, bearing no resemblance to any of the well-known categories of fascination. He seemed to say to listeners and hearers that it was possible to so cultivate the mind and will that the essences both of this world, and the others, could be caught on the wing and enjoyed for what they are worth. But there was always visible and felt the divine dissatisfaction of the maker who was never content with any ordinary goal,—the exiled seer, eager for home.

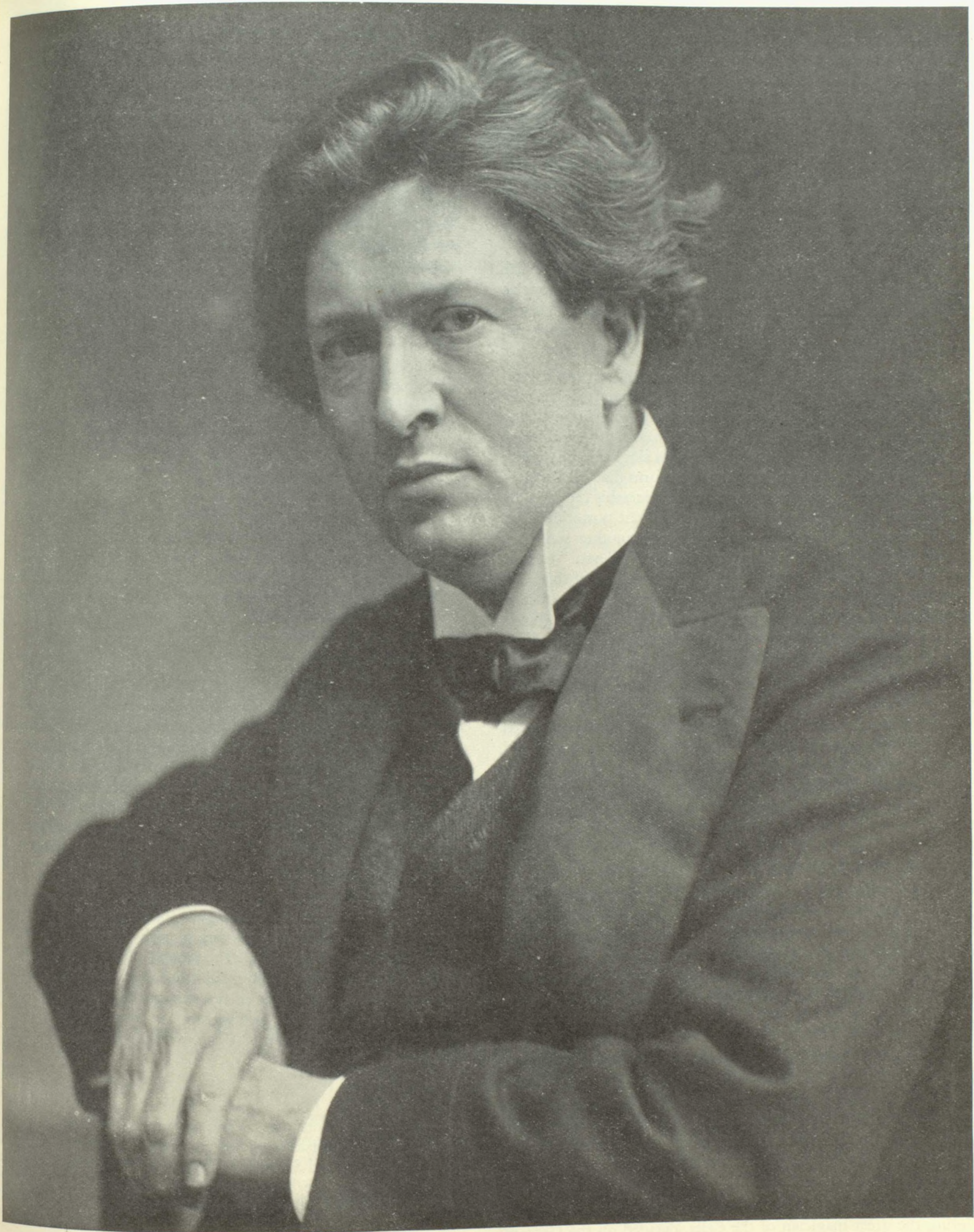
Since Goethe there has probably been no more worthy example of the mystic life at its highest and best than the career of Busoni. It is true that he was hardly ever cloistered and hid from the ordinary gaze. His path lay in much more important channels.

He seems to have been born with that natural precocity which Mr. Shaw tells us in his "Back to Methuselah" will be the sign-manual of the more developed humanity of the future. He never had a childhood in any ordinary sense; for his parents, the one an Austrian Jewess, the other a poorly-paid Italian clarinetist in a Turin orchestra, realising the profitable side of his extraordinary talent for the piano, sent him on European tours at an age when most children are still in the nursery. According to Mr. Edward Dent, his learned and authoritative biographer, it was in these years that he developed a taste for research into the deepest philosophy, including Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Hume, which was the seed-ground of his later mystical development.

For, like all the kings of the human race he did not disdain to regard all the possibilities inherent in the actual before floating his barque on the seas of the possible. He was a very keen student of human character, and possessed a natural wit and power of repartee which were the terror of fools who sought to take any unfair advantage of his immense kindness and sympathy for the deserving. On one occasion he let himself go, in a manner as scaring as it was critical, at the expense of those academic hodmen who judge the value of music by its antiquity. "Is it possible," he asked, "that any adult person can be so stupid as to estimate the value of a composition by the fact that it belongs to one century rather than another?" To him, as to all true mystics, any great work of art existed in a realm of its own, divorced from the puny limits of time and space.

It is impossible to understand the mysticism of Busoni without taking into account the fact that he was a most extraordinary blend of two strong racial influences—the glowing emotion of the Italian and the philosophic seriousness of the German. Needless to say he was disdainful of any of the more narrow forms of nationalism (actually he was one of the most convinced and consistent of pacifists and lived in Zurich during the whole of the Great War because his sense of ultimate decency was profoundly shocked by the carnage and waste involved in hostilities); but to the end of his days he can be said to have





*Ferruccio Busoni*

been as much a great Italian patriot as was d'Annunzio. His soul could not live without the inspiration of Italian dynamism, colour, and sound. Like Stendhal, the greatest of all French realistic novelists, he insisted that his epitaph should commemorate the debt he owed to Italian soil.

The constant fight in his nature between the Latin and Teutonic strains acted as the forcing-house of his mysticism—that strenuous and indefatigable desire for a synthesis of all the arts, much more potent and realistic than that of Wagner: that noble attempt to pass the frontiers of normal activity into a world in which hope and consummation would be one.

So he set out on his philosophic pilgrim's progress, which was also to be his life as a creative musician. For it was above all things characteristic of Busoni never to write a bar which was not suffused with an attempt at an interpretation of life's deepest problems and experiences.

His first opera "Die Brautwahl" was composed on a typically German subject, taken from E. T. A. Hoffmann; but wholly Busoni's is the idea of the vision scene in which the young painter who is the hero of the piece is seen at work on a fresco in an Italian church while a mystic chorus sings an epilogue in Latin. Here is fully discernible in mature form that quite individual grasp of the 'macabre' which was ineluctably Busoni. By this expression is meant, not by any means a mere power to shock and astonish, but the rare capacity to live in another and more intense dimension, which is nevertheless no Shelleyan "escapologist's" world but a highly dynamized extension of this. All Busoni's music has in fact the same quality which the attentive reader can find in the stories of Ambrose Bierce and M. R. James—a species of mystical feeling in which the lurid, the sardonic and the terrifying becomes merged in the conventions of a realm 'Jenseits Böse und Gute' and very far removed indeed from this comparatively petty field of our sorrow.

Quite early in life Busoni, like Goethe before him, yearned to express his philosophy of life in a major work which should embody in a single canon all his experience, his thoughts, convictions and hopes. For a long time he was undecided as to which star to hitch his waggon. His knowledge of the world's literature was always great; but many themes were to interest him before he made his final choice. What figure in human history offered most in the way of intensity of thought and feeling?

Once in London he was struck by the poster of a film on Dante's "Inferno," and at once began to sketch out the plan of an opera on a Dantesque subject. Later the idea of taking Leonardo da Vinci as his principal character attracted him; he saw Leonardo as the ideal artist, ever pointing to new and marvellous discoveries, and always obstructed by the narrow minds of those whom he was so ready to benefit. Leonardo, he said, was the Italian Faust.

He went to Paris to talk over the subject with d'Annunzio. The idea of an 'Italian Faust' pleased the poet, who however, felt Leonardo's life to be too devoid of feminine interest. Nothing came of it; d'Annunzio knew too little of Busoni's compositions, and was not much inclined to risk spending time and trouble over a work which might fail to be a practical success.

So this scheme was dropped, and Busoni, after a short period of fascination in the company of literature concerning Merlin, the great magician of the Celts, decided on the German

Faust as his 'hero'. Actually, he had been brooding consciously and subconsciously on the theme since (at least) 1910. In the October of this year occurs the first mention of Faust as the possible subject for an opera. It is clear, moreover, that he had been absorbed, not in the more popular version of the theme, but in the *Puppenspielen* which had been the first vehicle of the story in the Middle Ages.

The importance of this choice cannot be over-estimated. In the idea of the marionette Busoni saw much that appealed to his sense of the determinism inherent in all human life—the solitary pilgrimage of the 'Unknown to the Unknown': the illimitable inferences which could be drawn anent the conditioning of mankind towards a diviner future. Certainly Busoni was no mere medievalist. He cleaved to no orthodox Western religious belief, and the range of his mind was, in the high and best sense 'modern'. He went back to the Middle Ages because he found there what he wanted—a sense of man's nothingness in face of his own potentially marvellous future. What that great Tantrist scholar Sir George Woodroffe wrote about the civilization of India is very applicable to Busoni's attitude: "We steep ourselves in tradition not merely to reproduce it automatically, but to make ourselves worthy of our forebears, capable of being as vitally creative as they were."\*

On December 21st, 1914, after a concert, Busoni looked in a drawer for his draft on the Leonardo subject; by accident, he found his notes for 'Faust', and then, as he writes, "suddenly everything came together like a vision". The whole libretto was written within a few days; the music was spread over the remaining years of Busoni's life and the opera was left unfinished at his death in July, 1924. Faust's final monologue was composed from Busoni's sketches by his Spanish pupil, Philip Jarnach, and the opera was first brought out at Dresden on May 21, 1925.

In the main the story follows the puppet-play, but various important ideas are Busoni's own creation. The prelude begins with a suggestion of bells ringing, and a chorus is heard repeating the word 'Pax' (this was composed at Zurich during the European War). At this point an actor appears representing the poet, who speaks a long introduction in verse telling how Busoni discarded Merlin and Don Juan for Faust and setting forth Busoni's life-long theory that opera ought always to deal with the magical the mystical and the necromantic elements in life.

Now begins the first Prologue. Faust receives the Three Students from Cracow, who bring him a book of Magic, as in the puppet-play. In the Second Prologue, he sets to work to conjure, summoning six spirits, of which the last is Mephistopheles, with whom he makes the famous compact. Then, at this worthy's instigation, he attacks and kills the brother of Gretchen, the maiden whom he has fascinated and seduced.

Now we are transported to Parma, where the Duke is about to be married with great pomp and splendour. Faust appears as a herald and entertains the bridal pair with exhibitions of magic, causing to appear visions of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, John the Baptist and Salome, and Samson and Delilah. In each of these visions the female partner resembles the Duchess. Overcome by his spells, the lady follows Faust. But it is note-

\* *Bharata Shakti*, by Sir John Woodroffe [Madras: 1921] (p. 128).

worthy that the stage-directions point out that she does not *meet with Faust!*

The next scene, laid in a tavern at Wittenberg, shows us a rowdy meeting of University students, ready to indulge in any debate which may be forthcoming. Faust enters and takes the side of Luther against the traditionalists. Suddenly, news is brought by Mephistopheles that the Duchess is dead. A bundle is cast at his feet: it is a bundle of straw, all that remains of his child. The students slink out amid sulphurous smoke, leaving Faust alone with visions of Helen of Troy whose shape he tries to grasp, in vain. To add to his other woes, at this moment the sinister students of Prague reappear and demand the Magic Book. Faust says that he has lost it, and he knows that his end is near.

The opera ends in the streets of Wittenberg. Wagner has been elected Rector of the University in succession to Faust. The students sing him a serenade, which is interrupted by the entrance of the Night-Watchman, the Hanswurst of the puppet-play. Faust staggers in, desiring only repentance; but prayer is denied him. In his agony he totters towards the steps of the church. On the steps a beggar-woman is sitting. It is the Duchess: she holds out the dead child to him. When he seeks to enter the Church the ghost of the dead soldier bars the way. He falls down before the Crucifix outside; but it changes into a vision of Helen of Troy.

At last he lays the dead child on the ground, and by a tremendous effort of the psychic will (Itchha Yoga), he transfers his own life to it. As he dies, the child rises in the form of a youth, and strides away into the town. The Night Watchman enters and holds his lamp over the face of Faust. "Sollte dieser Mann verunglückt sein" (This man must have been very unlucky!) The opera is over.

Here, as Dryden would have said, is 'God's plenty.' Or, as some may prefer to put it, the very odour of Hell. Certainly, the atmosphere will not be for all tastes. It is far too suffused with the daring occult speculation of Busoni's very complex and very uncompromising temperament; far too much Henry James's "real right thing" to please those persons whose idea of mysticism is limited to the effusions of Michael Fairless and those rather withered little Flowers of St. Francis.

But it would be idle to deny that the work is one of the greatest examples in the world's art of the art which transcends art and becomes spatial and temporal creation. In other words, by some uncanny spiritual mastery, Busoni leads us to the frightened conclusion that our puny ephemeral thoughts and sensations are as nought compared with the larger world which exists within our own extended consciousness.

It remains to compute what Busoni has added to the already recognised mystical approach to the problems of human life.

In the first place, he has refused and rejected nothing. Before embarking on his pilgrim's progress in art, he had assimilated, with a grand philosophical impartiality, the various modes and manifestations of the world. Secondly, he refreshed and rejuvenated the usual attitudes of prayer and reverence before the mysteries life offers to the enquiring soul, with a vitality and intensity of temperament which recall an age before the coming of industrialism and the mass-production article. Finally, he

combined the mystic's gift with an optimism which it is not always associated. "Never look back" he used to tell his pupils at Weimar, where, like Liszt and Goethe before him, he gave of his best gratis to any he thought worthy of that favour, "Each day starts a new course: the great sin is to eat the heart Coraggio!"

He realised much more deeply than most creative artists that the written bar or word is only a more or less vague approximation to what the artist, in the sincerity and the solitude of his heart wishes to say. In a pamphlet on *Aesthetics* published in Berlin in 1922, he categorically states that it is useless to seek to apperceive the nature of a man's 'message' by any mere study of his works. Unless one has the ability and the humility to enter into the various mansions of the spirit, irrespective of prejudice and prepossession, one will never get beyond the words, the bars or the canvas to the inner heart which partakes of the Heart of the World.

In this advocacy of the most valuable of all spiritual exercises Busoni joins hands with the most distinguished of contemporary critics of art, Croce in Italy and Professor Richards at Cambridge. Like them he was convinced that appreciation of art demands not only learning and respect, but also what a mystic would call 'supstitution'—the capacity to follow, as it were, the blood and the nerve-stream of the person or the work with which it is sought to make oneself in 'rapport'.

In an age which has forgotten the function of the high priest the life of Ferruccio Busoni will serve as a recall to a more sober and dignified mode of consciousness. His standards were almost preternaturally high; but they are a useful antidote to the mock-culture of our day. As Bernard van Dieren has put it, in that most masterly book of Essays "Down Among the Dead Men": "He equally feared and loathed the familiarity of the slick professional and the ignorance of the amateur who would thoughtlessly challenge the mystery. . . The popularity of music—what today with such excruciating aptness we call 'having music on tap'—was a thing he foresaw long ago with a prescience born of his dread of the appalling vulgarization of holy things which is perpetrated in the name of 'appreciation'."

In years to come, when some future Spengler or Buckle scans with perceptive eye the course of our epoch, certain names will stand out pre-eminent as the guardians and prophets of civilisation. Foremost among these will be that of Busoni. At the moment he is out of favour in Germany, which in the days of the Weimar Constitution, honoured him with a Directorship and, at the last, with a public funeral, worthy of any monarch.

The reason will return. No narrow prejudice of race will ever be able finally to suppress the benison of genius. In a letter to his wife dated April 6, 1922, from Trieste, he writes: "Last night I had the following dream. I saw a new species. . . ." Whether this improvement or new departure of humanity is towards the stars or a plunge into the depths will depend very largely on the extent to which the example of Busoni is followed, implicitly or explicitly by those who would seek to educate the mass of men towards a more spacious reconsideration of their lot.

# The British Association

by the Editor

**T**HE 1938 MEETING OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION is being held in Cambridge. Every year the papers read at the annual meeting receive excellent publicity at the hands of the National Press, and in such a well-meaning and uncritical way as to deceive the layman into the belief that the august pronouncements of our scientists represent the last word of human thinkers on their straight-line path of progress from savagery to "Truth." To prevent any possible misunderstanding we should point out that the British Association is a useful and excellent one. The fact that it is, rightly, accepted as an "institution" should be warning enough that its activities of necessity must represent in some way the tendencies of the age. Its proceedings, like those of parliament, or the equally vague fashions in art, are a barometer by which we may know the current scale of values. An examination of that scale will tell us far more about true progress than all the scientist's independent descriptions of new inventions and new theories put together.

Once again, Mr. H. G. Wells has been holding forth. Last year he had something to say about education which must have caused the layman more sadness than gladness. In the first place, what has the British Association to do with Education? Education is not a science, it is an art, and until the day comes when there is no discrepancy between Science and Art, the British Association ought to leave the question severely alone. Mr. Wells has enjoyed an enormous popularity as a writer, especially in the early years of this century, but there is no evidence to show that he ought to be taken seriously as an educationist. We think it not an unfair judgment to say that he is a journalist who, because of rare imaginative gifts (which in his later books is no longer manifest) found favour with a large section of the public which reads not-too-heavy novels. His early books on socialism are already forgotten; they had no literary content. His more recent *Outline of History* adds nothing whatever to our understanding of history; it is merely a rehash of accepted historical data; some of it true.

Following Mr. Wells' speech of 1937, a questionnaire was addressed to twenty-six elementary schools and twenty-one secondary schools. Only eighteen of the former and nine of the latter undertook to reply at all. The general impression gained was one of hostility. One correspondent\* able to penetrate to the vacuum concealed in long words wrote: "Some of the phrases are rather staggering for a school curriculum, but they probably mean less than they appear to mean." Fundamentally, Mr. Wells has nothing new to say either in criticism or reconstruction of our miserable educational system. And until our professional educationists realise that it is mere folly to try and impose an adult and quite erroneous world conception on children, most of whom are living much nearer to the truth, nearly all modern so-called education is faulty. Readers who may be interested in educational methods are referred to certain issues of the *Modern Mystic* contained in our first volume.

\* See *Times* report (p. 7), August 19th, 1938.

Dr. W. Brown, on "Problems of the Mature Personality," is worth quoting:†

Dr. Brown defined the age of maturity as beginning when the individual was satisfactorily and happily married. Marriage, he said, "involved some deep psychological problems beginning with the necessity for the individual to shoulder his responsibilities for another as well as himself. The development of this 'binocular' view of life, both masculine and feminine, might give rise to disturbances affecting outlook if not also conduct. The great danger at every stage of mature life was regression, a retreat to a previously occupied position. New problems of adaptation occurred when children came, and the parents then had to learn to live for their children in an objective, not in a narcissistic way, as though the children were their personal possessions.

It was in the late forties and early fifties that the greatest ethical demands were, as a rule, made on the individual. He then must consent finally to the surrender of some personal ambitions for himself, abandon the last vestiges of narcissism, and find a philosophy to meet advancing years."

Dr. Brown has overlooked those people, men and women who, after only one or many attempts at marital happiness and who in all other respects appear to be perfectly normal have died without finding it. If we pay any attention to Dr. Brown, we shall have to conclude that none of them was mature. An obvious absurdity. There cannot be any evidence at all for the assertion that the greatest ethical demands are made during the late forties and early fifties. An intelligent reading of the biographies of eminent people would show at once that ethical demands are insistent throughout a whole life-time, and that if they are more so at one time than at another it is during the early years of the career. That "new problems of adaptation occur when children come" is one of those obvious remarks which since the beginning of the human race have been muttered by every prospective mother-in-law into the ears of those "about to be married." We regret being unable to record Dr. Brown's speech as a contribution to science.

A significant thing is the use by many lecturers in all branches of science of the terminology of psycho-analysis, employed in every case when science has no real explanation of phenomena, the alleged explanation being mere verbiage devoid of meaning and often of sense. Mr. R. Knight, of the Department of Psychology of Aberdeen University, said that "Children left to themselves no more became civilised adults than fields left to themselves became gardens." A most unfortunate simile. First, there is no evidence to support the view that children left to themselves would become uncivilised. The garden is of course merely a projection of the gardener's mind; the product of our educational establishments is too often merely the projection of the teacher's mind. We have no right to assume that all teachers are necessarily themselves civilised; we should have to make enquiries into their tastes and behaviour. A knowledge of mathematics, for instance,

† *Ibid.*

is at once negated by a fondness for jazz music. The true spirit of mathematics is alien and spiritually antagonistic to the technical construction of jazz. A teacher who professes both tastes is either ignorantly unaware of the correspondence between the two, and therefore unqualified as a teacher of mathematics, or is merely hypocritical. The degenerate priest is merely a human being with a head crammed with theology, but spiritually incapable of applying it to his own life. He is considered a hypocrite. Actually, all kinds of hypocrisy denote an inability to transfer thought or knowledge into action. All hypocrisy is unconscious; there is in the mind of the person concerned no clear relationship between the soul and its external activities as manifested through the physical body. There is, strictly speaking, no such thing as conscious hypocrisy; conscious hypocrisy is plain, unvarnished deceit. The title of Mr. Knight's paper was "The Background of the Problem Child." All children are "problems"; Mr. Knight really meant, we assume, the child who is ill. In any event, science has no knowledge of any kind regarding the "background" of a given child save the family doctor's statement on the health and antecedents of the parents, knowledge which, without other kinds of data and a highly developed flair for observation is not only useless, but even dangerous.

\* \* \*

Mr. J. G. W. Davies, vocational adviser of the National Institute of Industrial Psychology, discussed the "Place of Interests in vocational adjustment." Such a title is immediately suspect. We are far from wishing to see a general use of American "snappiness" but surely, "Are You Fed Up With Your Job?" would have been more apposite, for the long-winded and foolish title adopted means just that and not a single thing more. The only answer forthcoming was the one we always anticipate from the psycho-analysts. Dear reader, when you feel fed-up with your job, remember that you are merely "projecting on to your work some of your own emotional problems." Rot. We make no apology for our constant jibes at the psycho-analysts. Theirs is the craziest theory that ever fuddled our already benumbed consciousness. There are many students of occultism who feel that perhaps the psychologists will succeed in elucidating the mystery of "mind." It is a vain hope and a dangerous one. It is founded in falsity and pursued for profit. Its practitioners batten on the mental and physical ills consequent upon the unemployment, unrest and anxiety whose roots lie in economics. It is not a science. It is completely pseudo in the worst sense. The only consolation about it is that it is a scientific fashion. All scientific fashions in course of time, usually a very short time, are superseded.

\* \* \*

In the course of his Presidential address in the Section of Mathematical and Physical Sciences, Dr. Darwin referred to the work of the late Lord Rutherford. "I remember," he said, "the occasion of a Sunday evening supper, when he told us all about it, and I remember being astonished at the use he could make of the vague recollections of what he had learnt at school about the hyperbola. Rutherford had an intuition that kept him right—a process that has been described by saying that if he went into a chemical laboratory for a reagent he would somehow always go to the right bottle even if there were no labels."

Is it not curious to have such scientific assent to the fact of intuition? For of course, the scientist is not supposed to believe in it. It is quite certain that no one will comment on this. Thus does science, by subtle degrees impinge upon and appropriate occult knowledge, until at last it becomes an article of faith.

Since the days of Newton there has been a sort of international rivalry in scientific achievement. It is an excellent sign that this year's Association meeting is being attended by a number of American scientists. We look forward to the day when the Association will be truly international, when the scientists will draw a firm line between what is science proper and what is merely devilish and perverted ingenuity; when within locked rooms they will decide to destroy inventions for destruction, and realise that what is black must always cast a shadow over what is white. Such a vision is not unduly optimistic, for the American scientists, Drs. F. R. and H. G. Moulton and Dr. G. D. Birkhoff have already formulated a plan for a "Scientific League of Nations" with Great Britain and America as the nucleus. So that we have in science a number of people who believe, with many students of occultism, that the world's future is closely bound up with the immediate destinies of Great Britain and America. A realisation by the two great democracies of their common task, and a mutual determination to grasp the opportunity which now confronts them to assume the responsibility for a world reorientation of worn-out ideas of economy, currency, agriculture, distribution, and other major problems, would be the first step towards a wide spiritual culture which would remain proof against all subversive activities.

\* \* \*

The first two days of the Association's meetings brought nothing worth mentioning in genuine scientific achievement. The third day was spent in running around in a quite wonderful new motor-car which, according to the description given by Professor Lea, is a genuine advance in engineering. The scientific comments proved conclusively that far more interest was shown in the product than in the idea which conceived it—the besetting sin of the age. Marconi's original idea was to save life at sea; it has been transformed into a source of amusement for triflers in the arts, people who in a well-governed community would not be considered eligible for admission to a symphony concert. Incidentally, quite a number of them would be scientists and scholars of real or imagined importance. The present form of the motor vehicle demands a certain amount of responsibility and efficiency on the part of the driver. The new car, because of a lack of gear-control, makes the probable life of the pedestrian of even shorter duration.

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#### BOOK REVIEW (continued from page 358)

If we wish to prevent the stones being thrown back at us we can do so by putting the whole Earth between them and us; in short, by insistence on a completely new and international system of economics. For economics, not irreligion, is the cause of all our ills.

It is just probable that if our civilisation is to be saved from complete destruction, some statesman with courage will gather behind him the world's remaining democracies whose loyalty will be founded in faith and not in fear. Were he to succeed in imposing a new and satisfactory world-economy, free from the puerilities of politicians and the fanaticism of financiers, the whole world would breathe again.

# Reincarnation

No. VI. ANOTHER HISTORICAL EXAMPLE

BEETHOVEN

**W**HAT ARE THE MOST STRIKING features of Beethoven's biography?—There are two—One, that he was one of the greatest of all composers, but deaf. And the other is the discrepancy between the sublimity of his musical creation and the wretchedness of his personal life.

His temperament was, as everyone knows, choleric. And he was one of the most revolutionary spirits that ever existed. He could not play the part of sycophant to the princes who patronised him. Once when Prince Lichnowsky had invited a French General and other French officers to a musical party, one of the officers asked Beethoven if he "also understood the violin." Beethoven did not even deign to answer. And when the prince presently invited him to play, there was a terrible scene. Beethoven immediately left the house on foot, in spite of the heavy rain, and wrote the following letter to Lichnowsky :

"Prince! What you are, you are through accident and birth. What I am, I am through my own efforts. There are Princes, and there will be thousands of princes more; but there is only one Beethoven."

Or again, when Napoleon had won the battle of Jena in 1806, Beethoven said: "It is a great pity that I do not understand the art of war as well as I do the art of music—I would conquer him."

Another incident of greatest significance is his meeting the members of the Imperial family when he is out walking with Goethe. In a letter to Bettina von Arnim Beethoven describes the incident: "When two such as I and Goethe meet together, these grand gentlemen are forced to note what greatness, in such as we are, means. Yesterday, on the way home, we met the whole Imperial family. We saw them from afar approaching, and Goethe slipped away from me and stood on one side. Say what I would, I could not induce him to advance another step, so I pushed my hat on my head, buttoned up my overcoat, and went, arms folded, into the thickest of the crowd—Princes and sycophants drew up in a line. Duke Rudolf took off my hat after the Empress had first greeted me. . . ."

Beethoven was surely a great individualist. And he has also individualised music. Compare Bach, Haydn, or Mozart with Beethoven, and you will feel as though all their music had, through Beethoven, become a real possession of the human soul—Beethoven's music is addressed directly to the element of individualised Will.

His family brought him nothing but misfortune. His biographers agree that his father Johann was a "dissolute, handsome, good-for-nothing man," who only kept his position as court-musician to the Elector of Cologne through *his* father's influence. This grandfather of Beethoven was also a court-musician—"short, muscular, with extremely animated eyes." His wife was, it is said, addicted to drink; and at the death of her son, Johann, Beethoven's father, the Elector himself wrote in a letter to his Court Marshal: "The revenues from the liquor

by Eugen Kolisko, M.D. (Vienna)

excise have suffered a loss in the deaths of Beethoven and Eichoff."

Also other members of the family had this tendency. And where his nephews and brothers were concerned, Beethoven had nothing but misfortune. They embittered the whole of his life in Vienna.

So he inherited little else but burdens. Beethoven died of an illness of the liver, from which he had suffered a great deal the whole of his life, although he was not at all a drinker himself. The *post-mortem* examination showed cirrhosis of the liver and consequent dropsy. This is really the illness which results from drunkenness.

His own mother, who was gentle and refined, was greatly beloved by him; but she died when he was seventeen. From his father's side he inherited the physical qualities; from his mother he inherited the gentle nature which, so contradictingly, lived side by side in him with the stubborn energy of the others.

His genius cannot be traced from his family—but only the miserable contradictions in his physical nature.

His father tried to make him into an "infant prodigy"—and in fact he was from his earliest childhood a pianist. His destiny brought him in contact with Mozart, just before the close of the latter's life. "Keep your eyes on him," wrote Mozart, "some day he will make the world talk about him." Quite soon afterwards, Mozart died; and when Beethoven, at 21, went permanently to Vienna, his friend Count Waldstein wrote him the famous letter, which seems like a revelation of the spiritual continuity of modern musical genius:

"Dear Beethoven. You are going to Vienna to fulfil your long frustrated wishes. The genius of Mozart is mourning and weeping over the death of her pupil. She found a refuge, but no occupation, with the inexhaustible Haydn! Through him she wishes to form a union with another. With the help of diligent labour you will receive Mozart's spirit from Haydn's hands."

His destiny carries him directly to the place of his great achievements exactly at the right time—at the moment when his own individuality shows itself; as is always the case when the age of 21 is reached. It is a remarkable "constellation": Beethoven, whose task is to individualise music, meets, when his own ego is born, with the *manes* of Mozart. And this all takes place at the time of the French Revolution which one may consider as the crisis of individualism.

The fact of Beethoven's deafness is a most extraordinary phenomenon. The first signs of it appeared when he was thirty years old, and gradually increased. Already in 1801, a letter shows how desperately he feels about this. . . . "Heaven knows what will become of me! I have often cursed my existence. Plutarch taught me resignation."

The deafness, at first intermittent, could not be cured, although he consulted innumerable doctors. Beethoven himself, in 1815, gave to an English friend, Charles Neate, an account of how he first noticed it. He was once disturbed at work when

writing an opera ("not Fidelio," he said,) "by a tenor; and jumping up in a rage I threw myself on the floor as actors do . . . and when I arose I found myself deaf and have been so ever since."

Although this may not be the immediate cause, it is extremely interesting to see the connection of his choleric temperament with his deafness. It is a physiological fact that a person in a violent rage *is* deaf—he can "hear" nothing.

On the other hand the *liver* has to do also with the production of gall, and in a choleric temperament the liver is continually affected. A spiritual physiology of man is aware of the fact that the *individual* forces of the human ego work through the whole organism. In the liver, sugar is stored; and then set free to flow into the muscles where it is the source of muscular action. Now it is most striking that Beethoven, who shows such strong individual energy in his music, was phenomenally *undecided*—even in the smallest matters—in his ordinary life. His biographer, W. I. Turner, from whose standard work *Beethoven* most of the quotations in this article are taken, says:

"Scarcely was he in possession of one lodging than something displeased him, and he made himself foot-sore in search of another. It often happened that he had taken several lodgings at the same time; and he was a second Hercules of indecision. He could never succeed in deciding to which he should give the preference."

In a letter of one of his friends, we find:

"Beethoven had always been considered among artists as the supreme example of force of character and heroic will, but there is abundance of evidence that in practical affairs and in every-day conduct, he was almost a martyr to indecision."

But the decision that was lacking in his ordinary life was transposed into his music. The fact that he was so undecided in all ordinary affairs, shows that the stream of force which should lead to decisive action which really starts from the liver, and conducts energy into the limbs, was hampered in its action. Ear, liver, and limbs co-operate together; they form one organic system, through which the human will expresses itself.

This also explains the profound connection that exists between music and will.

Beethoven had to struggle against an absolute deficiency in this whole complex. His choleric temperament made it even more difficult. Let us try to make this clearer.

When you move your muscles they vibrate; a doctor, listening to the contraction of a muscle with his stethoscope, can hear the sound. We ourselves do not *hear* it; but it is with this energy of "sound" that we move the muscle. That is our *will*. On the other hand, in the ear it is the opposite. Sound becomes perceptible to our inner appreciation. The ear stops the movement, or the vibrations, of the air, and sound is born.

Our will is deeply affected by music, which we hear. But how does a man appear when he is listening?—He remains motionless. And all the movements which he *could* bring into his limbs, he directs into his ear. Even the mouth—which is held closed by contraction of the muscles—falls open. In listening, the stream of movement is turned *inwards*. The liver is the mediator in this polarity. In a musical and choleric person all this works with redoubled strength.

Now the remarkable thing is that all the *real* "Beethoven" music only begins at the moment when his deafness begins. The year 1800 is the threshold both for the new music and the deafness.

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It was Beethoven's 30th year. The musical faculties are by no means something unconnected with the body. Rather, they *build up* the body, as has just been indicated. What is a normal process in the ordinary person, was a terrific battle in Beethoven's organism. He could never have created such music if he had been healthy. He conquered the illness by transforming the direction of its forces. He lifted them up to the heroic. But his body had to be forsaken. His physical ears were stunned, and his liver contracted.

Yes—illness in a genius is something quite different from illness in ordinary mortals. It is well enough known that "pearls are a disease." Beethoven's music is altogether inseparable from his deafness.

But here we enter into the sphere of destiny. If one really receives a deep impression from all this, one feels as though nothing quite like it is to be found in the ordinary world of history—it is somehow mythological. The Greek myths seem to offer us similar pictures. A Titanic force seems to be at work.

In Greek mythology there is one figure especially in the story of the great struggles of the Titans against the Gods, which a study of Beethoven conjures before our mind's eye; and this is Prometheus.

Prometheus was one of the Titans. The myth tells how he helped Zeus to conquer Cronos and the other Giants. But he was the friend of man. He brought to humanity all the arts and sciences. He stole from Zeus the heavenly Fire, and gave it to mankind. Thus he is the inaugurator of all individualised human culture. But Zeus in his anger, desiring to punish him, chained him to a rock on Mount Caucasus; and sent an eagle to devour his liver, which grew again every night. He had to suffer for thirty years, until Heracles delivered him. Zeus, the omnipotent ruler of cosmic wisdom, is in opposition to the rebellious champion of mortal knowledge, and of human independence. But he who draws down the heavenly force becomes more bound to his earthly existence—he is "chained to the rock." But cosmic wisdom cannot bring about human freedom; this can only arise on the earth itself. Æschylus in his trilogy *Prometheus the Firebearer*, *Prometheus Bound*, and *Prometheus Released*, introduced this myth, which formed a part of the teaching of the Mysteries, into the art of the drama.

Every mythology has three sides to it—one that is mythological or religious, one that is historical, and one that is *physiological*. What has been mentioned so far is the mythological or philosophical-religious aspect, and this is quite universally acknowledged. The historical seems still doubtful. A hundred years ago, the heroes of the Trojan war were in no sense regarded as historical figures. But Schliemann's excavations have proved that these heroes once really lived. And this I believe to be the case with all mythological heroes—especially the Greek ones. On the other hand, if by any chance we had lost all the historical data about Alexander the Great, and had nothing but the medieval, the oriental and the occidental sagas about him, we should certainly believe that Alexander had been only a mytho-

logical hero. And if I may be permitted to say so, the same might even apply to Napoleon!—Even the once mysterious Menes, or Gilgamesh, are now recognised as historical personages. I am convinced that the whole world of the Greek Gods is so "human" because they do not only represent divine powers, but are also reminiscences of real heroes, leaders and kings of very ancient times—I mean even of the time of Atlantis.

I only mention this in order to emphasise my conviction that *Prometheus was also a living human being*. There are always certain moments when that which was *to begin with* a divine gift to men becomes something humanly acquired by all. But there are *mediators* who stand between these two worlds—that is, who obtain the divine gifts *first*, and in their own person alone.

Edouard Schuré in his book *The Great Initiates* has visualised this twofold aspect—the divine and the human—in the ancient myths, very clearly.

And now what of the physiological aspect? The entire Greek Theogony is at the same time capable of interpretation as a picture of the physical evolution of man. This is certainly applicable to the book of Genesis, as well as to the Greek or Egyptian mythology.

What is here described as the Prometheus epic, happens every day in the human body.

What is "Zeus"? It is the plastic force which builds up the human figure, especially the *head*, and the face, and all the plastic anatomy of the body. One only has to look at the great sculptured figure of the Zeus of Olympia by Phidias to realise that it represents the archetype of the white (or Caucasian) race. From out of his head *Athene* is born. That means the whole plastic mastery of the organism transforms itself into the capacity of *Thought*. But these thoughts are *perceiving* all the "cosmic order" of the body which has been created by Zeus.

What is the polar *antithesis* of Zeus? It is the force of the individualised human Will! This has its expression in movement. Movement is carried out by the limbs, but the force of movement originates in the liver. Food, which we take from the Earth, is transformed in the liver, and the energy from it is distributed in the muscles. This "fire" is always struggling against the formative or plastic power which originates in the head and which also creates cosmic thoughts. So the Zeus-force and the Prometheus-force are in constant conflict in our organism.

It would be a tremendous help for modern physiology and medicine if it could be realised that there is more science about man to be found in mythology than in many orthodox text-books.

If we now look again at Beethoven, what strikes us is his Promethean capacity for suffering. His ears had become sclerotised—hardened. His liver had become shrunken. But the power of his music had become exalted to the highest state of perfection.

The inner ear happens to be embedded in one of the very hardest bones of the body, which, in German, is even called the "rock-bone." There would be no resonance in the ear if this were not the case.

Now if we take the whole question quite seriously, could we





not say in very truth that in his 30th year Beethoven became "chained to the rock"? And his liver? Was it not "devoured by an eagle" sent by Zeus? Yes—and what had he done with the Fire? He had stolen it as *music* from the heavens! By Beethoven, music that in Mozart and in Bach was still native to the Olympic world, had been carried down to the Earth, and became more connected with human emotion and passion—not uncontrolled—but controlled and plastically organised.

In Beethoven, we have the story of Prometheus over again. And his suffering, too. *Music* is the gift he brought, but now in a more human form. All people recognised this "incarnation" of music, when they listened to Beethoven's compositions.

The most profoundly moving document of Beethoven's suffering is the so-called "Heiligenstadt Testament" (1802), written in his 32nd year, to his brothers. . . . "How humiliating was it, when someone, standing close to me heard a distant flute, and I heard *nothing*, or a *shepherd singing*, and again I heard nothing. Such incidents almost drove me to despair; at times I was on the point of putting an end to my life—*art* alone restrained my hand. . . . *Patience*, I am told, I must choose as my guide. I have done so; lasting, I hope, will be my resolution to bear up until it pleases the inexorable Parca to break the thread. . . . O Divine Being, Thou who lookest down into my inmost soul, Thou understandest; Thou knowest that love for mankind and the desire to do good dwell therein. Oh, my fellow-men, when one day you read this, remember that you were unjust to me, and let the unfortunate one console himself if he can find one like himself, who in spite of all obstacles which Nature has thrown in his way, has still done everything in his power to be received into the ranks of worthy artists and men."

And then comes a really remarkable sentence: "You, my brothers Carl and —, as soon as I am dead, beg Professor Schmidt, if he be still living, to describe my malady; and annex this written account to that of my illness, so that at least the world, as far as is possible, may become reconciled to me after my death."

I said, in one of my previous articles, that we should take biographies *seriously*.

Beethoven is Prometheus. Let us only follow his own advice, and lay the account of his illness side by side with his last testamentary words. And then we shall be placing the suffering of Prometheus next to the words which the modern Prometheus of Music has written.

Many music-lovers will know that Beethoven's first overture—which was the model for all the others—was "*The Creatures of Prometheus*." This belonged to a great work, the *Prometheus Ballet*, op. 43. At this time (about 1800) Vigano, the famous ballet-master, had introduced a new kind of art, which he called "serious ballet." This was not to be in the old Italian convention, but should be more like a dramatic representation, interspersed with expressive dancing. This man wrote a libretto, *Prometheus*, and asked Beethoven to compose the music. This music, which, with the exception of the overture, is not very well known, contains the most significant themes of many of Beethoven's later works; for instance, the theme of the *finale* of the *Eroica* symphony, and the peasant theme from the *Pastoral* symphony, that comes after the thunderstorm.

One can see that it marks a turning point in Beethoven's music, and that it contains so to say all the "seeds" of his later

(continued in page 357)

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# Prometheus Unbound

by Eleanor C. Merry

[Note.—This article is intended to be complementary to that by Dr. E. Kolisko on *Beethoven*, and deals with the more mythological and mystical aspect of the Promethean legend.]

“Grant me one only evening star—  
The Iron Age’s Avatar!”—A.E.

WE MUST ADMIT THAT WHATEVER the mistakes, the perversions, the catastrophes, the dreams, that rise and fall with every sunset and sunrise, there is something underlying the great human drama, which in this twentieth century is beginning to penetrate the depths of the *Will* with a new quality of the spirit.

Where material things are concerned we may say of Man, in the words spoken by the Earth in Shelley’s *Prometheus Unbound*:

“The lightning is his slave; heaven’s utmost deep  
Gives up her stars, and like a flock of sheep  
They pass before his eyes, are numbered, and roll on!  
The tempest is his steed, he rides the air;  
And the abyss shouts from her depth laid bare,  
Heaven, hast thou secrets? Man unveils me; I have none.”

We all know that it has not always been thus—but the contrary. Long ago it was the earthly secrets that were hidden, and the heavenly ones that were known. It needs, however, a deeper insight and a nobler belief in human destiny than most of us possess to-day, to recognise that the Prometheus legend presents a picture of the centre upon which the whole Earth-drama turns its circle from light to dark, and must turn from dark to light again.

The story of Prometheus is familiar to everybody as the story of the Titan who, rebelling against the fettering rule of the Jovian Hierarchy and moved by the pre-vision which saw the need for human freedom and self-consciousness through the coming ages, steals the heavenly Fire and brings it down to men. Brought to Earth, it becomes, in a sense, man’s master; for none can escape from the obligations it imposes, until, in the fullness of time, its true use is learned through pain and suffering.

Shelley did not altogether follow closely the ancient form of the myth. Speaking broadly, he saw that the world could be redeemed from evil by the will of man; that man could *become* so perfect as to be able to expel evil from his own nature and from the greater part of the creation. “The image of One warring with the Evil Principle—One who was oppressed, not only by it, but also by *all*, even by the good who were deluded into considering evil a necessary portion of humanity”—that was an image that Shelley loved.\* His Prometheus is a being who “sins” with the *forethought born out of Love*, and who is sustained in the sacrifice it entails by the mightiest will; a will which (personified at last in the original story by an external being—

\* Note on *Prometheus Unbound*, by Mrs. Shelley.

Heracles)—is nevertheless a quality also inherent within him, which becoming regenerated and purified, ultimately releases him, and with him, the whole of humanity.

But the event which made this release possible, brought about the dethroning of the old divine order in which man was involved to the detriment of his independence, and the establishing of a new divine order in which he was free to develop his own human mission on the Earth.

In the poem, Prometheus, at the crisis of his spiritual awakening, reads the secret of his task recorded in the imperishable memory of the Earth itself, from whose depths rise up the phantoms of all accomplished deeds and spoken words. As we should say to-day—his Self and its Karma becomes known to him; or rather, it is revealed in that part of him which is mortal and of the Earth; for in converse with the Earth-Mother, his *immortal* nature, not yet freed from the old order of divine dependence, has no knowledge of “that tongue which is known only to those who die.” And what is really the first stage of his awakening to a human self-consciousness is revealed in his amazed words, when the phantasmal record of his cursing of Jupiter rises out of the Earth-depths, and he asks incredulously:—

“Were these my words, O Parent?”

And the Earth replies:

‘They were thine. . . .’

And Prometheus:

‘It doth repent me: words are quick and vain;  
Grief for awhile is blind, and so was mine.  
*I wish no living thing to suffer pain.’*”

And following this recognition of the inevitable steps of his catharsis, a flood of still greater pain and torture falls upon him. . . . And so the drama goes on. The great struggle of the human spirit is pictured complete in every aspect. And how does it end? After the fullness of self-knowledge is attained there is the re-union of the spirit of Man with the spirit of Nature,† and the appearance of the Young Spirit of the Earth, the “Christ”; the redemption too, of the dead elements of the Moon, the dead elements of the Past, through the triumph of Love; and with it, the redemption of the Earth itself through the triumph of Love and Will together. So that the regenerated Earth exclaims in ecstasy over her children:

“Man—oh, not men! a chain of linkèd thought  
Of love and might to be divided not! . . .”

Prometheus, chained to his rock, is as old as the solid earth, born out of the War in Heaven—that War, described in so many thousands of ways in many ages and climes—where the Spirits of Wisdom and the Spirits of Motion‡ strove, and still strive,

† “Asia,” in Shelley’s poem.

‡ In Christian Esotericism called the “Dominions” and “Principalities.”

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for the mastery; and which we feel in its continuance through the ages, as the opposition of Consciousness and Matter.

But has the opposition remained at the same stage throughout the millennia? Have not, as so wonderfully described in the poem, the Spirits of the Hours brought their whisperings and proclamations of change and destiny?—

Prometheus,\* brooding and suffering in calm and tremendous patience, represents three things in Man. Three things that pass through those changing arcs in Time that are foreseen and understood by Demogorgon, the Spirit of Eternity, alone. In their earliest state they are: the fore-knowledge and desire for Freedom of the spirit to work out its own destiny in full consciousness—the Fire that must be brought to Earth in Incarnation, and which is the mystery of *Thought*. Secondly, the fore-knowledge of and desire for the draught of oblivion of the Divine, so that the descent into Matter may bring death, and through death, redemption and resurrection; which is the mystery of *Love*. And thirdly, the foreknowledge of and the desire for the Deliverer, who is to be known as the purified and aspiring *Will*; the Will that first tempted him, and which became purged to holiness.

Here then is the legendary, the mystical, picture of a state and a process which at the present epoch of human evolution points to events of the deepest and most overwhelming significance. And if we listen, we shall hear, echoing in the hearts of all nations of the Earth, the question that was asked by Nature of Eternity:

“ . . . Prometheus shall arise  
Henceforth the sun of this rejoicing world:  
When shall the destined hour arrive? ”

And Eternity's cryptic answer:

“ *Behold!* ”

The story of Prometheus is above all the story of the Iron Age, the Deliverer wherefrom has so long been looked for, and whose expected presence is at once so palpable and so unrealised!

So beside the picture of Prometheus we will place another:

Looking back into the civilisations of a remote past, long before the accredited date of the Promethean myth, there can be found, in innumerable traditions, a certain Spiritual Imagination. † The form in which this Imagination still survives in the West, is that of the Archangel Michael slaying the Dragon. He slays it with a sword, and tramples it under His feet. Sometimes He rides a white horse, the symbol of Intelligence. His countenance shines as the Sun. His gleaming sword reflects the light, as Power reflects omnipotent Will. The Dragon emits a suffocating sulphurous breath. Its breath can annihilate the world. What potency lies in the sword—in the Power—which can change the killing breath into a healing force?

If Prometheus presents the picture of the evolution of “civilisation”—the power of Will directed to the Earth in patience, in pain, in the dim consciousness of a high destiny—then we may say that Michael presents the picture of that particular force in Man's diviner nature, that descends, at a certain point of time,

\* In the legend, a vulture, sent by Jupiter, feeds on the liver of Prometheus by day, and it is healed by night; an instance of the profound wisdom in which all myths are framed. For, as Occult Science teaches, it is especially through the liver that Man is most deeply driven into the illusory nature of Matter; but counter-acting forces are present in him also which prevent his ultimate annihilation therein.

† “Imagination” is not used here in the sense of “Fancy,” but in the sense of a correct and exact reflection of a Spiritual Reality.

into his Will from above;—that brings into his dull god-forgotten intelligence a flash from the all-knowing Cosmic Intelligence, which knows the reason of Reason, and can become his spiritual Guide to Truth. But the fact that this entails the death of what the lower nature of man has incorporated into his works, *brings Fear*. The breath of the Dragon seeks to stupefy and enchain him.

The period, from the Greek civilisation to the present day, is marked on the one hand by that great exhortation—which was in those days the *only* entrance to a knowledge of the world—“*Man, know thyself.*” This indicated that all the secrets of the Universe could be revealed in the successive stages of *self-knowledge*. This led to the realisation of the imminent, though not yet fully apparent, change from the dependence upon ancient “revelation” to a dependence, in freedom, upon the self-conscious human will. And on the other hand, the close of the period is marked, in the last third of the nineteenth century, by that outlook which reached its greatest climax in the confession: *Ignorabimus*, of Du Bois-Raymond. Man might *do* all, but could *know* nothing.

Midway between these two extremes, there lies that period known as the Dark Ages—the Mediæval Age. An age that, though “dark” for the modern historian, was nevertheless filled with an intense spiritual activity. For the realisation of Self-dependence instead of God-dependence, *was then receiving its direction for the future*, through Scholasticism, theological Dogma, and later, to the “miraculous” tyranny of Natural Science.

From the fifteenth century to the present day, the world has been ruled with the iron rule of unilluminated Fact, Weight, Number, and Measure! Even Religion has come under its sway. The “calculable” dominates the whole of human knowledge. The Heavens are measured, but their light is not found. The Earth is weighed, but its Spirit is weightless. Man has created, in the mechanisation of industry, a monster that battens itself upon him. Prometheus, lying chained upon his rock, saw in prophetic vision the holocaust of the Earth—the sin, the poverty, the degradation, the blindness . . . and its *possibilities!* . . . How can it be redeemed since it was love and desire for the Earth that brought it about? And there rings out his anguished cry: “I wish no living thing to suffer pain!” Was there ever such a paradox! Was there ever so sombre a tragedy!

There is always, however, a breaking point to every tension. Hence the tumultuous conditions of the twentieth century. Who does not know that unexplained rebellion of the temper when suspense seems near its lifting—whether it be to disclose either Terror or Hope? We have come to that *impasse* which suggests that by his achievements alone Man might destroy himself altogether. He cannot go back. To believe that he *must not* go forward would be to deny the law of progress.

“If the machine,” says Gareth Garrett in *Ouroboros*, ‡ “with which Man has believed himself to be storming a childish wish, ever brought him to a state of effortless ease on earth, that would be his last. It may be a power he is yet morally unprepared to exercise. How strange at least that with an incentive so trivial and naive in itself he should have been able to perform an absolute feat of creation! The machine was not. He reached his mind into emptiness and seized it. Even yet he cannot realise what he has done. Out of the free elemental stuff of the universe, visible and invisible—such as lightning—he has invented a class of

‡ *Ouroboros, the mechanical extension of Mankind.* (Kegan Paul, pub.)

typhonic mindless organisms exempt from the will of nature. . . . The machine is the externalised image of Man's thoughts. It is, furthermore, an extension of his life, for we perceive as an economic fact that human existence in its present phase, in its present scale, could not continue in its absence. . . . Man's task . . . is to learn how best to live with these powerful creatures of his mind, how to give their fecundity a law and their functions a rhythm, how not to employ them in error against himself—since he cannot live without them."

Man feels—as the breaking point draws near—that in his conquest of the Iron of the Earth, *he stands in danger of a loss of his own Will.*

But since the commencement of the last third of the nineteenth century, quite sub-consciously, there is already stirring a new longing for liberation from this Promethean *karma*. Michael appears on the horizon of man's spiritual consciousness! His raiment is of Sungold. His sword is not forged of earthly, but of heavenly iron—the iron of courage. It is in the domain of the mechanisation of human life, in those realms we call "Industry" and "Science," that this spiritualising element must, above all, enter. It depends first of all upon a realisation of the emptiness of all those catch-words of modern life that still mask the old out-lived conditions; it depends on a new self-knowledge, fitted to the stature of modern man; it depends upon his willingness to admit that not only can there be new phases of the knowledge of Matter, but *new phases of the knowledge of the Spirit*. When he admits that, he will find the material for its practical application already at hand. . . . "Then healing will come to thee out of thy works."

Like Heracles of old, this Figure presents once again to the Promethean Will, the quality of Strength. It is this other mythological picture, that of Michael and the Dragon, which is the messenger for our present age, and tells of the fulfilment of the spiritual regeneration, through *active* courage, of the human Will, which was given its freedom and self-consciousness in the "Fire stolen from Olympus."

Shelley completed his *Prometheus Unbound* at first without the final Act, which was added many months later. He believed "that man could be so perfectionised as to be able to expel evil from his own nature, and from the greater part of the creation." So Mrs. Shelley tells us in her Notes. And that "mankind had only to will that there should be no evil, and there would be none." This was the central point of his philosophy of life. His Prometheus could not hope to restore man's original innocence to him, but could lead him, as Shelley says, to that state in which he "becomes virtuous through wisdom." And this is the will to suffer.

I think no two people could be imagined representing a greater contrast to one another than Shelley and Beethoven—Dr. Kolisko's article on whom—also in connection with Prometheus—is printed in this number. Yet both were connected, but in quite opposite ways, with the profound mystery of the human Will. In Shelley the "passion" of suffering found no rock-like foundation as in Beethoven, but it soared to heaven in his poetry. In Shelley, the Will was an ideal fulfilment of the human spirit. In Beethoven, it was a storm beating upon the rock, and creating music.

Physically too, they were the antithesis of one another—Shelley was "tall and slight, and if not of exact formal beauty of face, had a countenance full of spiritual beauty, radiant with its luminous blue eyes. His poetry is inspired by an ardent passion for truth, an ardent love of humanity; it expresses desires and regrets with a peculiar intensity, but also sets forth a *somewhat stoical ideal of self-possession*" (my italics) "as if to balance the excessive sensitiveness of its author." . . . "Shelley's creed . . . rested in his mature years on a spiritual conception of the universe." (From an article by Professor Dowden.)

He did not die in illness, but was drowned—at the age of 30.

That there is a spiritual link between Beethoven and Shelley one cannot doubt.

In the last Act of *Prometheus Unbound*, the old Hours of suffering have fled

"To the dark, to the past, to the dead,"

and the new Hours cry:

"We have heard the lute of Hope in sleep;  
We have known the voice of Love in dreams;  
We have felt the wand of Power." . . .

And finally, Demogorgon, the Spirit of Eternity, announces the redemption of Prometheus:

"This is the day, which down the void abysm,  
At the Earth-born's spell, yawns for Heaven's despotism.  
And Conquest is dragged captive through the deep:  
Love, from its awful throne of patient power  
In the wise heart, from the last giddy hour  
Of dread endurance, from the slippery, steep,  
And narrow verge of craglike agony, springs  
And folds over the world its healing wings.

Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and Endurance,  
These are the seals of that most firm assurance  
Which bars the pit over Destruction's strength;  
And if with infirm hand, Eternity,  
Mother of many acts and hours, should free  
The serpent that would clasp her with its length,  
These are the spells by which to reassume  
An empire o'er the disentangled doom.

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;  
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;  
To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;  
To love and bear; to hope till Hope creates  
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;  
Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;  
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be  
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;  
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory."

# The Woman Clothed with the Sun

by E. W. Marshall Harvey

**A**MONG THE MANY IMAGES PRESENTED to us in the Book of Revelation not the least perplexing and yet mysteriously beautiful is that of The Woman Clothed with the Sun. She appears in striking contrast to that other Woman upon whose forehead is the name written "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of the Harlots and of the Abomination of the Earth." Needless to say, a great diversity of opinion among theologians and others has existed throughout the centuries as to the verities or principles which these two images are intended to symbolise, and we need not wonder that without some understanding of the Mystery Teachings little can be gathered as to what is intended to be conveyed.

It is not difficult for us to reconstruct in our imagination the symbol first mentioned and which in Chapter XII is described as the appearance of a great wonder, or sign in heaven—"a woman arrayed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." We are told further "she was with child: and she crieth out, travailing in birth, and in pain to be delivered." Let us, however, pause a moment, and with the symbol clear in our minds trace back so far as we are able from the realm of causes, and let us begin with the Sun.

It must be surprising when we stop to give the matter thought, how much regarding the sun, judged according merely to our sensory perceptions, is actually incorrect and is merely illusory. Thus, to judge by appearances the sun rotates around the earth. It would seem to be hotter to us in this our Northern hemisphere in Summer than in Winter. It would appear to be of a golden or a red colour, and it would seem to have no effect upon us during the depth of night. All of these things we know, however, to be incorrect. No human eye has seen the sun except through a thick veil which hides its real nature and permits us instead to glimpse but a symbol itself. Through the careful observation and reasoning of astronomers and scientists much,

however, has been gathered as to its true nature, though these deductions lead us only from mystery on to still greater mystery, as is ever the case when man sets out to uncover the mighty secrets of Creation. *Man studying the physical sun without taking cognisance of the Spiritual sun behind it is playing at the old game of trying to understand effects whilst ignoring causes.*

There is, however, an important lesson to be learnt from this very fact that so many primary observations of the sun if followed unthinkingly would lead us to incorrect deductions, for the further we progress in our esoteric study of this and other great symbols, the more we must be on our guard against jumping to the conclusion that what at first sight is apparent is actuality, for the reflections of Reality coming downwards into physical manifestation undergo many changes. We all remember the story of the rustic looking at the image of the moon in a pool and thinking it was a cheese lying in the water. Explain to the rustic the story that what he sees in the pool at night is but the

reflection of the rays of the sun that shines by day and will he believe? Probably he will adhere to his belief in the cheese.

One of the great unsolved mysteries of the sun to men of science is the source from which it draws its supply of light and energy, for if the sun were drawing solely upon itself it would have consumed its substance long æons of time ago. The concept which the mystic holds of the sun is that of a focal point through which spiritual radiations stream into physical manifestation. As these forms make their impact upon what we will term the material plane and radiate outwards in the form of a globe we get that blaze of light which appears to us as a physical object, this being our sun through which light, heat, energy and life are poured outwards throughout the solar system. We do not see the Light which thus illumines and animates the sun, we only see its modified effect, which to the true Light is darkness.

This, of course, is one of the well-known paradoxes of occultism.

The Moon again gives us but the reflected light of the



E. W. Marshall Harvey

Sun; furthermore it gives us reflected radiations of life and energy. These lunar radiations are of a debased character as compared with the glorious solar radiations, and it is material to notice that the early Israelites were in reality worshippers of this lower or reflected glory through their race god, Jehovah. There is much significance therefore in the description of the Woman clothed with the sun *having the Moon at her feet*, for in this symbol the pure Sun Mysteries are indicated, the Moon Mysteries having been transcended.

Let us now think back to that Primal Light which illuminates our sun. We must think of It as being a radiation from the Causeless Cause, or in other words a veritable emanation of that Being no finite mind can in anywise comprehend and Whom we designate by the word "God."

Notice particularly that the symbol is of a Woman. The Woman thus stands for the Great Mother, in whom the germs of all living things are carried, and from whence in due season they come into physical manifestation.

Certain words in the Stanzas of Dzyan help us to a comprehension of this Mystery.

"Light drops one solitary Ray into the Waters, into the Mother-Deep. The Ray shoots through the Virgin Egg, the Ray causes the Eternal Egg to thrill, and drop the non-eternal"—or mortal and perishable—"Germ, which condenses into the World-Egg."

The Mother is the great preserver, not the creator of Life, which proceeds from the Father. Indeed, as it stated elsewhere in the Stanza—

"Life precedes Form, and Life survives the last atom. Through the countless Rays the Life-Ray, the One, like a Thread through many Beads."

Thus it will be seen that The Woman Clothed with the Sun is a symbol of the great cosmic forces of Creation and in studying these laws man obeys the ancient command to know Himself, for by studying the laws which govern the creation of a Universe man studies the laws of his own creation and being. Well is it if he will remember that from Nature, often designated by Occultists as "Mare," the Sea, not only he, but every sentient thing preceded and proceeds. Well too is it if he will remember also that the Great Father (Light) drops that one solitary Ray which is Life into the Waters of the Mother Deep, and that this Life is as a thread passing through many beads; and finally that as this Life which is of God, the First Cause, precedes form, so it is indestructible and survives Form. In the perishable then will the man who truly seeks to unfold find the imperishable—in the mortal, the immortal.

Pursuing our reflections upon Creation we must give a moment's consideration to the threefold process always entailed. Stated in the simplest terms we would observe first Activity, or the outbreathing of the Life-Stream; secondly the action of this outbreathing upon Substance and finally the outcome of activity operating upon substance which gives Form. This, of course, expressed differently gives us the Divine Triad—Father, Mother, Son. It will occasion us no surprise then to find in considering further the vision described in the Apocalypse to read of the Woman that "she was with child and crieth out, travailing in birth, and in pain to be delivered." Expressly we are told that the man child of which she was delivered was the Christ. And it is only by the Christ principle within himself that man can unlock

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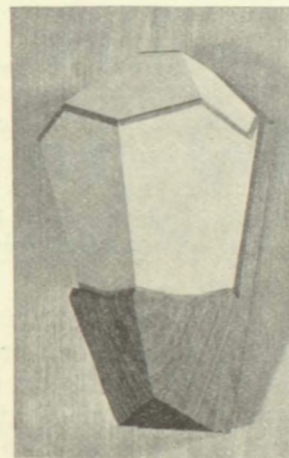
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the seals which, as we have previously in these Articles seen, hold him in bondage in the world of matter.

It is above all important that we here emphasise the essential difference between the Lunar and the Solar Mysteries. The lunar mysteries have always stood for negative development along the way of passive clairvoyance and mediumship. They belong to the Night. Along this pathway moreover the way of initiation was closed to all who did not by birth qualify for the right thereto. The Solar pathway is open to all and is the way of positive development through service to humanity, through renunciation of the lower self, through the conquest of the animal passions (symbolically portrayed as the Red Dragon) and by Knowledge.

The desire of all genuine students of Occultism is to find in these studies that which is helpful to them in regard to their own unfoldment, and it is always to be remembered that where we find given to us symbols descriptive of the incarnation of Christ in a physical body we may, if we are able, read through those symbols the manner whereby the Christ may be born in us. Thus, we must visualise the Christ force as Light which also is Life implanted within us and to bring that Light into physical manifestation we must ever strive. Before the birth from out of the Womb of the Great Mother the vehicle must be prepared for, otherwise, as we are told there stands before the woman the great red dragon that when she is delivered he may devour her child, just as did Pharaoh destroy the men children in Egypt and Herod later slew the infant male children in Bethlehem. This connection is made strikingly plain in Ezekiel Chap. XXIX wherein the prophet is enjoined to set his face against Pharaoh King of Egypt, who is spoken of as the great dragon, and the desolation of Egypt and giving of it over for spoil to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon is foretold.

As Egypt signifies the place of sensual passions and desires and red is the blood which flows through our veins so must the blood be purified and the Initiate (Israel) must come out of Egypt (the place where the Dragon rules) as also did Elijah flee into the wilderness from the face of Ahab. All this again finds correspondence in the Book of Revelation for we read of the Woman that she fled into the Wilderness where she had a place prepared of God.

Again it is noteworthy that when we consider the symbol of the great Mother forces perverted and debased as represented by the Scarlet Woman, Babylon, the Mother of the Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth, John to witness this vision, is carried away in the Spirit *into a wilderness*, but in this case it is not to a place prepared of God (Chap. 17 verse 3).

Limited as ordinary man is, and conscious of little except what affects him through the avenue of his five senses, he has small appreciation of the dangers that beset the path of the aspirant. He knows well the dangers, perils and afflictions of everyday life, the perils of war, disease and accident. The occultist knows that these things, their sphere of influence being restricted in the main to the physical body, constitute the lesser things to be feared. He knows that as there are entities higher in the scale than man, there are elementals and discarnate entities not only of the human life wave but indeed of a sub-mundane life wave. They are the denizens of the pit.

As man develops spiritually these dangers must be faced and transcended, for the way to mastery entails this. It is ever open to him as he advances to yield to the lure of evil, forsaking

his high mission. Worse for him a thousand times is it should he succumb than that he should fall victim to any of the physical dangers that beset the way of earthly life.

Singularly enough, the word Babylon which is the name of The Scarlet Woman and of the City of Evil and voluptuous desires is derived from the words "Bab-ilu" which means "Gateway to God." This gateway exists in the Mind, and the man who would pass through consciously to the state of At-One-Ment must divest himself of every clogging influence. He is counselled "to render to her even as she rendered, and double unto her the double according to her works and in the cup which she mingled, mingle unto her double."

For ordinary men and women what then is the lesson? In all truth it is that many people living lives of sacrifice and service—the common run of people who fight to hold in check the adverse influences and passions that beset them, the humble Mothers who offer themselves up in perpetual sacrifice for the sake of their children, the men who renounce the way of dishonour and apparent plenty and ease for the sake of ideals—these and thousands of others like them are all preparing and progressing. Spiritual unfoldment is not a matter of devotion to cults and "isms," indeed the only measure of progress in a given earth life is the added power built into the soul through conquest, and if the truth must be told, many who give no thought to occultism or spiritual development are in fact progressing along the great Path with greater certainty and speed than those whom we may term "dabblers." Still more so are they than those who are profaners of the great Mystery Sciences, who in fact are retrogressing.

In the blood are contained all the records, all experiences, all passions, all desires. Ever, from incarnation to incarnation and from age to age the ceaseless work of purifying the blood goes on until at last it shines resplendent with the Christ Light. This is the "Mystery of the Blood of the Lamb" through which all victory is won.

Nothing is ever lost.

## The Hills

By Hesper le Gallienne

A white road winding to the sky,  
Through fields of green and russet brown,  
Leads me away from the grim scars  
That meet the eye within the town.

Leads me to where the winds of God  
Wash free the soul of all its ills,  
To where great strength comes surging down  
From out the everlasting hills.

"Lift up thine eyes," the Psalmist sang  
So many centuries gone by.  
To reach the hills each one must take  
A white road winding to the sky.



## New Ways of Thinking about Social Problems

At a time when negative principles and repressive policy dominate the world, an opportunity to develop world social principles and constructive policy may be welcomed.

"New ways of Thinking about Social Problems" is the title of a pamphlet recently published by the Threefold Commonwealth Research Group, in which an attempt is made by the author, Miss Gladys Mayer, to trace the connection between the sociological ideas of Goethe, Professor Sir Patrick Geddes and Rudolf Steiner.

Arising out of this has come the offer from the heirs of Sir Patrick Geddes of the Scots' College of Social Science, which Professor Geddes founded at Montpellier, South France, if it can be developed for constructive social purpose on these lines.

A Conference and Sociological Symposium, which everyone interested is invited to attend, is being arranged at the College from September 9th to 19th by Miss Mayer and others interested in the idea, to decide whether it is possible to make this an opportunity for bringing together constructive thinkers without political or national bias to create a world college of Social Science.

Anyone interested is invited to apply for particulars without delay to G. Mayer, Rudolf Steiner House, 35 Park Road, N.W.1.

How literally this is true, I could only perceive when I studied the whole material and history available.

## An Appeal

Three little boys, children of good family, aged 7, 5½ and 4½, are fatherless. There is hardly any money. Their mother is too delicate to work for them. There are no prospects for the future at all.

Can any readers of THE MODERN MYSTIC contribute £10 a year or more towards the cost of the education, at reduced fees, of the two youngest at a *Rudolf Steiner School*?

Owing to their unhappy circumstances, and to the fact that neither of the children is very robust, they are sorely in need of just that kind of upbringing which the Steiner educational method alone can supply. Altogether £150 is needed—that is £75 for each child per year.

Do please give an order to your banker to send sixteen shillings and eightpence each month (£10 per annum) or £1 13s. 4d. each month (£20 per annum) to THE MODERN MYSTIC, for Mrs. E. C. Merry's *Poor Children's Educational Fund*. The sum of £20 is urgently needed at once to open the fund.

There are, actually, many children being taken at Rudolf Steiner Schools in this country at greatly reduced fees. If this fund could grow it would be of enormous help to this wonderful pioneer educational movement which had its origin in the famous Waldorf School at Stuttgart.

### REINCARNATION (continued from page 349)

works. The content of the ballet has for its main feature that the two "creatures" created by Prometheus as man and wife are first lifeless images, which then slowly come to animation. This is expressed through the music and the dances.

How interesting it is that Beethoven's music really begins out of this Dionysian element—from below—bringing the modelled forms into movement; and all this connected into the name "Prometheus"!

But indeed, if one studies the whole of Beethoven's time, one often wonders whether all the great figures who were his contemporaries—Goethe, Schiller, Hölderlin, Bettina von Arnim, Shelley, Byron, and innumerable others—were not in reality the actors in a re-born Grecian myth. They not only speak much of Greek history and culture, but they *are like* Greek or Roman gods. Take only Goethe! He has dealt with Prometheus in his fragment of that name and in his *Pandora*. . . . He was even called "the Olympian" by his friends. . . .

I think that much of the great enigma of Beethoven's titanic personality becomes fully illumined if we look at him as a re-incarnation of the *historical* individuality, Prometheus. He is, in any case, the inaugurator of modern music. The deed of Prometheus, once accomplished in the Greek world of spatial form, had to be repeated in the world of music. The "Eroica" had to be *lived* before it could be written.

I was deeply impressed when, some time ago, I heard from a very well-known musician, that, in a personal conversation that he had with Rudolf Steiner, the latter said: "*Beethoven is Prometheus.*"

## Alan W. Watts's Legacy of Asia and Western Man

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## Book Review

ARM THE APOSTLES. By Rom Landau. (Nicholson & Watson Ltd.) 3s. 6d.

### Reviewed by the Editor

Mr. Landau's latest book, an excellent 3s. 6d. worth, is in a somewhat different vein from his former works. He is here concerned with war and the rumours of war. Is there a way of avoiding the catastrophe which every one fears is imminent? If so, does it lie along the path of spirit, or must armaments be faced by more and still more armaments? Whether or not we agree with Mr. Landau's conclusions, two sterling qualities lie transparent in his pages. A genuine love of England, and an appreciation of some of the more worthy of our national characteristics. There are too many *étrangers*, eager enough to accept the hospitality of these shores and to enjoy a measure of freedom unobtainable in their native countries, who have no good word to say in return. Mr. Landau is not one of them.

The author is (in common with every one else) all out for total disarmament. He believes that did Britain take the initiative, the rest of the world would follow suit. English pacifists use identically the same argument. It may be true enough that Britain is virtually the world's leader and that its mission is a spiritual one. It may be true, as Mr. Landau argues, that Britain is the most civilised country in Europe and should therefore take the lead. We are far from being militarists, but we would rather subscribe to those leaders, such as they are, who insist on speedy re-armament.

Why? Simply because Mr. Landau makes the mistake of imagining that certain European countries are susceptible to example. He overlooks the inference that to be so presupposes a spiritual development of some kind,—a quality which he has already assured us is non-existent in the very nations who are likely to disturb the peace. We are told that no Power would attack a completely disarmed nation; here, the wish is father to the thought. Mr. Landau has quickly forgotten Abyssinia, and besides, who does he imagine would tell the common people of the attacking nations that their "enemies" are unarmed. Certainly not their leaders. Press censorships are not imposed for nothing. Their existence is all the proof we need that their mission is to distort the truth. The theme of the book is that applied Christianity and all that it implies in Brotherhood and so on, can bring about the necessary changes of heart and mind so urgently required to establish a real peace. True; but in Christendom where are the Christians? The fact is that any real peace plan must be based not upon religion, but upon some denominator common to all concerned. The Dictators are not concerned with religion. They are completely incompetent (despite the excellent things they have done and which have merely enhanced their prestige at home) for none of them has uttered one single word to infer a knowledge of the underlying causes of their own very real problems. They appear to be obsessed with the insane word "nationalism," a word which ceased to have any meaning on November 11th, 1918.

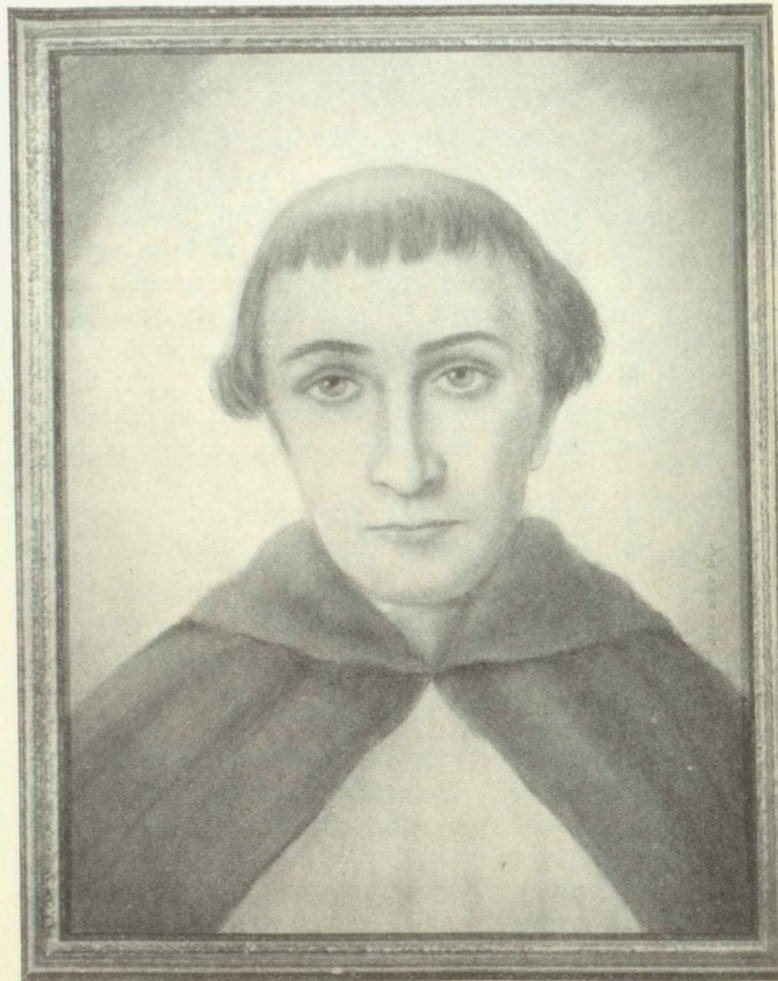
Britain's mission is clear enough. Arm to the very teeth, not to steal trade, not to injure any nation, not for self-aggrandisement, but to impose by force of arms if necessary on the blind who cannot or won't see the cause of world distress and its equally obvious solution, and on those humbugging little merchants who know it all well enough but, so long as they can add an ill-gotten penny to a wretched bank-balance are quite willing that you and me should fight to secure it for them. And they don't all live in Germany, or in Italy, or in Russia, or in Japan.

Mr. Landau's book is excellent journalism. It comes at a time when we talk a little longer than we did a year or two ago when war is mentioned. It is the best piece of pacifist propaganda of its kind published since the war scare began. It is a good Christian's testament of faith. But let us keep both our feet firmly on the ground. It is true that to fight is unchristian; but there is also something in the Bible about a man who asked for bread and was offered a stone. One half of the world has been offering stones to the other half for twenty years.

(continued in page 345)

## Rahere

The picture of Rahere, reproduced below, is the work of Mrs. E. V. Walker, whose "inspirational" pictures have attracted considerable attention over a number of years. The original of this picture now hangs in the Lady Chapel at Bart's. It is a pastel and very beautifully executed. A unique feature of all of Mrs. Walker's work is the eyes, and the present picture is no exception. Mrs. Walker is not a trained artist; she received only one or two elementary lessons when quite young. Judged by any standard, her pictures are fine examples and leave no doubt whatever of innate artistic ability. The following version of the foundation of St. Bartholomew's hospital is taken from the original chronicle\*:



"Rahere, a courtier though a cleric, decreed himself to go to Rome to do the worthy fruits of penance and, our Lord God directing his pace, came whole and sound whither he purposed, where at the martyrdoms of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, he, weeping his deeds and calling to mind the escapades of his youth and ignorance, prayed to our Lord for the remission of them, promising further more none like to do, but this utterly to forsake, promising ever devoutly to obey His will. And when he would perfect his way that he had begun he saw a vision full of dread and sweetness. It seemed to him that he was borne up on high of a certain beast which set him in an high place and, when he from so great a height would inflect and bow down his eyes, he beheld an horrible pit and the deepness of the same pit was deeper than any man might attain to see. Therefore he, knowing his secret faults, deemed himself about to slide into that cruel downcast and he for dread trembled and great cries proceeded out of his mouth. To whom dreading and for dread crying appeared a certain man like in shape the majesty of a King, of great beauty and Imperial authority. Then said he, 'I am Bartholomew the Apostle of Jesus Christ that came to succour thee in thine anguish, and to open to thee the secret mysteries of heaven. Know me truly by the commandment of the High Trinity and the common favour of the celestial court and council to have chosen a place in the suburbs of London at Smithfield where in my name thou shalt found a Church and it shall be to the honour of God; there shall be the tabernacle of the Lamb, the temple of the Holy Ghost. This spiritual house the Almighty God shall inhabit and hallow it and glorify it and His eyes shall open, His ears listen on this house night and day that the asker in it shall receive and the seeker shall find and the ringer and knocker shall enter. Wherefore do thou boldly; neither of the costs of the building doubt thee not; only give thy diligence and my part shall be to provide necessaries. Direct, build, and end this work. And therefore of this work know me the master and thyself only the minister.' . . . In these words the vision vanished."

\* *Liber Foundationis Ecclesiae Sancti Bartholomei* in the British Museum.

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# Readers' Letters

Ullesmere,  
Sidmonton Road,  
Bray,  
Eire.

July 15th, 1938.

DEAR SIR,

The article, in the July number of MODERN MYSTIC, "Thomas Aquinas and the Grail" by Walter Johannes Stein is most interesting and informative. In his conclusion the writer states that the descent of Christ from the heights of divine wisdom through the Hierarchies of the angels to human existence is the very kernel of the teaching of the School of Athens and also of the history of the Holy Grail.

The text of Ephesians 3: 8-10 quoted in the article does not, however, appear to support that view. Dr. Stein states one is required to make use of the original Greek as well as the translation but only quotes the Authorised Version of the passage in question. Verse 10 should read:

"to the intent that now UNTO the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known THROUGH (dia) the church the manifold wisdom of God."

and it will be observed that Saint Paul goes on to say, in verse 12, "in whom we have BOLDNESS and ACCESS in CONFIDENCE through our faith in Him."

This rendering is from the Revised Version, and I submit is more in accord with the original Greek.

I would be most interested to know what conclusion Dr. Stein draws from these words? They always convey to me the idea that the church (of which St. Paul speaks) has a mission TO THOSE HIERARCHIES NOW.

Yours faithfully,  
HAROLD SUTCLIFFE.

Editor, MODERN MYSTIC.

4th August, 1938.

The Editor, THE MODERN MYSTIC,  
35 Gt. James Street,  
Bedford Row, W.C.1.

DEAR SIR,

May I enlist your kind co-operation and be permitted to ask your readers to supply certain data for the purpose of research work?

The opinion is expressed on page 32 of my "Transcendental Astrology" that a more scientific understanding of Astro-Diagnosis might be acquired by the aid of certain analyses of the name of the native. Since that was written it has been possible to examine the subject more closely.

Charts of eighteen persons, where the maiden name of the Mother is known, have been examined. Extracting the even numbers of the names including those of the Mother's maiden name the digits obtained provided the following striking results. In eight cases the digit is that of the planet which is the ruler of the Ascendant; in two it is that of a planet in the First House; in six that of a planet in very close major aspect to the rising degree whilst in two instances the results are negative. The latter maps have not been rectified and there is considerable doubt regarding one of them.

Students of Biology will be aware that the hereditary factors of the body are determined by the genes contained in the male and female chromosomes. It may transpire that the even numbers of the Mother's and the Father's surnames are related to genetic laws but the examination of a large number of cases is necessary before the point can be determined. It is here that your readers could very materially help forward this very interesting research work.

I should welcome as much data as they care to send that contains the following factors and with the names in block letters:

- (1) Full baptismal or registered names, care being taken to supply the maiden surname in the case of a married woman.
- (2) The maiden name of the Mother.
- (3) The usual horoscope data; date, time and place. (A copy of the Chart where available, and time permits, would be of very considerable assistance).
- (4) Particulars of any congenital abnormalities, physical infirmities, and health weaknesses.
- (5) Where known details of those matters known in genetics as "hereditary factors." These include the colour of the eyes, skin and hair of both parents and that of the offspring; unusual stature, marked mental capacity, or its lack, hæmophilia, and in fact any marked characteristics or health factor possessed by one or both parents and passed to the offspring. *Kindly state which of the parents possessed the factor.*

Particulars relative to plural births would be especially welcome. All information supplied will be treated as strictly confidential and should the necessity arise for publication names would be omitted.

I thank you and your readers in anticipation and will gratefully acknowledge all replies.

Yours faithfully,  
A. G. S. NORRIS.

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London, W.C.1. England.

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