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VOL. XLV

APRIL 1927

No. 4

NOTES OF THE MONTH

AMONG the many books dealing with occultism, by far the greater proportion are devoted to the intellectual side of the subject. We have many works outlining elaborate systems of cosmogony; a multitude of volumes embodying the results of psychic investigation in its various phases; and learned historical and speculative treatises on occult philosophy—all excellent and admirable in their respective spheres, but "getting nowhere," to use the apt colloquialism of one of my correspondents. But the literature of occultism, fortunately, is not confined solely to works dealing with the "eye doctrine." A number of occult works are to be found which appeal specifically to the higher nature, and expound the "doctrine of the heart." It is to such works that the more idealistic and spiritual-minded followers of the Path of Occultism are particularly attracted. To this type, mental categories and systems of thought are useful only in so far as they afford a basis for the faith that is within them. To some it is given to walk entirely by faith; many more require a firm

ground wherefrom to "take off" in their leap into the unexplored realms of the inner life. The great majority, however, appear to be quite content with the intellectual plane, and are prepared to spend a lifetime in controversy over what appears to the other class to be non-essentials. Nevertheless, at some period or other in the lives of men, the time arrives when the things of intellect cease to satisfy; when it is felt that Truth is to be found not by logic and deduction only, but by intuition and insight; when life is felt to hold greater secrets even than those which dazzle the eye of science.

Life yields up its inner meaning only in proportion to the efforts expended in the endeavour to read its secret. The myriad souls who are content to drift along the stream of physical existence never dream that anything can exist beyond that which affords them the sensation which they mistake for the elixir of life, but which in the end acts much in the manner of a subtle drug, deadening the finer sensibilities, and driving the unfortunate victim to still wilder and more frantic efforts to snatch peace from pleasure. The secret of life for ever eludes those who search for it elsewhere than within themselves. It is not to be found outside. As we are, so life is. Is life empty? Then the emptiness lies within ourselves. The soul of a saint will find the humblest sphere of life as full of spiritual significance, as adequate for the expression of the best that is within him, as the social butterfly will find the most brilliant and exquisite environment stale and uninteresting. The difference lies not so much

LIFE IS in the environment as in the soul within. For the
WHAT WE saint, the life is transfigured by the inner glory. For
MAKE IT the social idler, the vain search for satisfaction in the
things of sense, however refined and delicate they
may be, drives him ultimately to despair, to the point where
either oblivion is deliberately sought in a whirlpool of vice, or
the realisation is born that a wider, fuller, more satisfying state
of existence lies beyond the arbitrary barrier of the separate
self, and the bodily senses of the individual. Between these
two extremes is found the average person of civilised humanity
to-day—not wholly dead to the inner life, yet spiritually only
partially awake. The power to penetrate the glamour which
so persistently leads the soul along false paths in search of happiness
lies ready to be aroused in every being who is not so deeply
immersed in the world of sense that nothing short of a catastrophe
can awaken him to a sense of the illusory nature of that
which he once mistook for "life."

It cannot be too frequently stressed that the life of purely intellectual interests is but one step towards the goal of emancipation from the fetters that bind the soul to the world of change. Real freedom of life is found only when the realm of intellect is transcended, and the soul has learned to live in the rare atmosphere of the spiritual heights. As a matter of fact, strange as it may at first glance appear, an over-developed intellectual life is one of the most difficult obstacles in the way of spiritual realisation. Too frequently the head stands in the way of the heart. It is really in the heart and its emotions that the subtle essence of life is to be sought. It is for this reason that the true occultist and the mystic are so nearly akin. Not that the emotions themselves are of that essence, but that in their refined and purified state they are capable of reflecting that which lies beyond them. "Blessed are the pure in heart," not the keen of intellect or the profoundly learned. All too frequently learning is a matter of environment and opportunity. Although it may safely be assumed that these in turn depend upon individual karma, it is nevertheless true that spiritual progress, as distinct from psychic development, depends upon the attitude of the individual soul to the life and circumstances in which it finds itself. The records of some of the noblest spiritual lives, in fact, go to prove that the less favourable the environment from the material point of view, the more favourable it is to spiritual unfoldment. Some of the great souls who have attained to spiritual union appear to have drawn an intense inner vitality from circumstances which would utterly crush more tender plants. It is incomprehensible to us, of course, this joy in suffering; and until we learn the secret for ourselves we can only stand in silent admiration before examples of patience and heroism which are inexplicable except on the assumption that these prodigies of spiritual strength were sustained by something far transcending in power the capabilities of the limited personal self.

We, however, in whom the spiritual intuition is just beginning to stir, will be more intimately concerned with lesser things. It is to us that the small but select company of works devoted to the doctrine of the heart, to which allusion was made above, will specially appeal. It is characteristic of such treatises that in proportion as the truths they enshrine are woven into the life, are the secrets they hold revealed. In the estimation of the present writer, as indicated in former Editorial Notes, one of the most deeply interesting works which the literature of occultism has bequeathed

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to us is *Light on the Path*. Of this wonderful little book, the learned T. Subba Row, whose contributions to Theosophical literature in the early days of that Society were all too rare, claims that it holds several meanings, each deeper than the other, the innermost being nothing less than an interpretation pertaining to the Mahachohan level of initiation. According to the compilers of *Talks on the Path of Occultism*,¹ a volume of nearly a thousand pages, devoted entirely to comments on three heart and life booklets made popular by the Theosophical Society—*Light on the Path*, *The Voice of the Silence*, and *At the Feet of the Master*—the first is the most profound, while *The Voice of the Silence* carries one as far as the Arhat stage, and *At the Feet of the Master* applies especially to the First Initiation.

No less than 312 pages are devoted to comments and interpretations by Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater in connection with that most esoteric of occult books, *Light on the Path*, and claims as to its origin are put forward which are of deep interest to all lovers of this inexhaustible treasure-house of inspiration in daily life. The basis of the work, it is stated, was an archaic Sanskrit manuscript, the aphorisms of which were translated into Greek by the Venetian Master, who holds the rank of Chohan. From the Chohan it was received in turn by the Master Hilarion, a Master, by the way, who is said to have played a great part in the Gnostic and Neoplatonic movements. The manner in which the aphorisms as we now have them were transmitted by Mabel Collins is sufficiently well known to occult students generally.

The book, as originally published in 1885, contained three portions : the aphorisms from the ancient manuscript ;
 OCCULT the additions of the Chohan ; and the comments of
 APHORISMS the Master Hilarion. While the book is meant for all disciples and for none else, it is pointed out that the aphorisms bear a double meaning in so far as they apply to initiated or uninitiated disciples. The second part of the book applies especially to the initiated disciple, but the above-mentioned duality is characteristic throughout. Attention is also called to significant groupings of the rules. For instance, the aphorisms fall into sets of three, the first three :

Kill out ambition ;
 Kill out desire of life ;
 Kill out desire of comfort ;

¹ *Talks on the Path of Occultism*. Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater. Adyar, Madras, India. Theosophical Publishing House. Price 12 rupees.

indicating the duty of the disciple to himself in the way of preparation and making himself a fit instrument for the Divine hands to work with.

The second triplet :

Kill out all sense of separateness ;
Kill out desire for sensation ;
Kill out the hunger for growth,

has reference to the duty of the chela to those around him in daily life.

The third group :

Desire only that which is within thee ;
Desire only that which is beyond you ;
Desire only that which is unattainable,

indicates the duty of the disciple to the Divinity within.

A noteworthy point is emphasised by Mrs. Besant in regard to the four preliminary statements :

Before the eyes can see, they must be incapable of tears.

Before the ear can hear, it must have lost its sensitiveness.

Before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters it must have lost the power to wound.

Before the soul can stand in the presence of the Masters it must be washed in the blood of the heart.

These rules, it is pointed out, apply equally to those who are faced with the task of transcending the personality, and to those who have before them the still greater problem of transcending the individuality and entering the Christ life. They apply equally to the Path of Probation and to the Path of Initiation proper. It is also a matter of significance that these four preliminary aphorisms may be approached from diametrically opposite points of view—from that of the black magician as well as from that of the white brother. In a table drawn up to exhibit the characteristics of the dark and white paths respectively, a feature of the right-hand path is brought into vivid relief. While the lust for power may enable the occultist on the dark side to effect the shifting of the centre of consciousness to the level of the impersonal life, it is a vital characteristic of the white brother that he works to throw down every wall or barrier that separates him from the life around. He does not make a protective shell or harden himself, but opens his heart to take up and transmute all the inharmonious vibrations of his environment into spiritual power for the blessing of the world in which he silently works.

The disciples of the great Master, the founder of the religion of the West, are instinctively averse to the frequently proffered advice to "make a shell." This deliberate hardening of the personal aura, while effectively checking the inflow of unwanted influences from outside, at the same time tends to prevent the outflow of the life from within. The ideal of the Christ life is to accept everything without reserve so far as it affects the personal self, and hold it as an offering to be consumed and transmuted in the fires of the Divine, of which the disciple seeks to become a more and more open channel.

As with all truly spiritual works, *Light on the Path* is equally valuable as a guide for the Christian mystic as for the true occultist, except for the fact that the occultist conquers the inner planes one after another, and rises by degrees to the "threshold of divinity," while the mystic aims straight at the goal—Union with God—and looks neither to right nor left in his upward striving. If anything, the rules of this little spiritual guide are more easily interpreted in the light of mysticism than they are in the colder light of occultism.

Meditation on the first section of the rules will bring out most strongly their correspondence with the Purgative Way of the Christian mystic. With the beginning of the second section the soul arrives at the threshold of the Illuminative Way, in which the graces of contemplative prayer come into more and more perfect manifestation; and by imperceptible stages the Unitive Life is entered. Beyond this human aid can avail no further—"no law can be framed, no guide can exist. Yet to enlighten the disciple the final struggle may be thus expressed. Hold fast to that which has neither substance nor existence. Listen only to the voice which is soundless. Look only on that which is invisible alike to the inner and the outer senses."

For the many souls who are attracted to the Eastern tradition, to the doctrine of the Buddha, the *Voice of the Silence* will hold first place. The comments on the aphorisms contained in this section are comprised within 289 pages. Interesting details as to the manner in which Madame Blavatsky came to write the book are given by Mrs. Besant :

"She wrote it at Fontainebleau, and the greater part was done when I was with her, and I sat in the room while she was writing it. I know that she did not write it referring to any books, but she wrote it down steadily, hour after hour, exactly as though

she were writing either from memory or from reading it where no book was. She produced in the evening that manuscript that I saw her write as I sat with her, and asked me and others to correct it for English, for she said that she had written it so quickly that it was sure to be bad. We did not alter in that more than a few words, and it remains as a specimen of marvellously beautiful literary work."

At the end of a chapter devoted to an examination of the lower and the higher siddhis, or psychic powers, a simply expressed and useful distinction between concentration and contemplation is given, presumably by C. W. L.

"To fix one's thought on a verse of scripture—that is concentration. To look at it in every possible light and try to penetrate its meaning, to reach a new and deep thought or receive some intuitional light upon it—that is meditation. To fix one's attention steadily for a time on the light received—that is contemplation. Contemplation has been defined as concentration at the top end of your line of thought or meditation."

A note which should prove of great help in clearing up mental confusion on the part of many students of Theosophical literature is to be found in the remark with regard to the Voice of the Silence, of which it is said that "'The Voice of the Silence' for anyone is that which comes from the part of him which is higher than his consciousness can reach, and naturally that changes as his evolution progresses. For those now working with the personality the voice of the ego is the voice of the silence, but when one has dominated the personality entirely and has made it one with the ego so that the ego may work perfectly through it, it is the voice of the atma—the triple spirit on the nirvanic plane. When this is reached there will still be a voice of the silence—that of the Monad on the plane above. When the man identifies the ego and the Monad and attains Adeptship, he will still find a voice of the silence coming down to him from above, but then it will be the voice, perhaps, of one of the Ministers of Deity, one of the Planetary Logoi. Perhaps for Him in turn it will be the voice of the Solar Logos Himself. . . . But who can say?"

It will be remarked by the observant that whereas in the Eastern teaching, with which *The Voice of the Silence* is so closely allied, the force of kundalini is aroused into activity for the purpose of conquering the subtler planes, in the more mystical teaching of *Light on the Path*, no reference is made to any such operation. One allusion only at the end of the section devoted to the life of

the initiated chela refers incidentally to the "development of the inner senses," which will enable the disciple to inquire of the earth, the air, and the water, of the secrets they hold for him.

Yoga practice in conjunction with the ethics of Buddhism seem to be the essential themes of the teaching given in the *Voice of the Silence*. As previously noted, it abounds in Eastern occultism, and while, in essentials, it is necessarily directed towards the same end as that of *Light on the Path*, the way of approach is somewhat different. In the one case the chief appeal is to the spiritual intuition; in the other, strict mental training along Raja Yoga lines is the method advocated.

The difference between the Buddhism of the Orientalists, and the living Buddhism as it exists in the East to-day, and more especially in Ceylon, is borne witness to by C. W. L., who says that "when in Ceylon I compared the statements of Orientalists with the feelings and thoughts of the Buddhists themselves. There is a great difference between the two, for the former are generally very wooden, but the latter are full of life. Yet the learned monks have an accuracy of knowledge at least equal to that of the most erudite Orientalists. Sir Edwin Arnold, in his *Light of Asia*, has given a very remarkably accurate representation of the living side of Buddhism. Some have said that he read Christian ideas and feelings into Buddhism, but that was not so in the least; I can testify that the sentiments described in the poem really exist among the Buddhist people."

Lastly we come to the section of 321 pages which constitutes the first part of *Talks on the Path of Occultism*. This section is devoted to comments on the little treatise of J. Krishnamurti, *At the Feet of the Master*. C. W. L. introduces the section with the observation that "it is valuable because of its extreme simplicity, and because it bears especially the stamp and approval of the World Teacher, who is so soon to come. It consists of teaching given by his Master to the young disciple, J. Krishnamurti (called Alcyone in the series of his past lives recently published), in the year 1909, when he was a boy of thirteen. His knowledge of English was not then perfect, and since the instruction was given in that tongue, both the teaching and the language had to be made especially clear. The Master K. H., with His marvellous power of adaptability, therefore put all that was necessary for the attainment of the First Initiation into that wonderfully simple style which is one of the great recommendations of this little book."

In a short chapter devoted to the subject of how the book came to be written, it is claimed that every night C. W. L. would take this boy (Krishnamurti) in his astral body to the house of the Master, that instruction might be given to him. The Master, it is suggested, summarised the night's teaching in a few pithy sentences which the boy memorised and wrote down next morning on awakening. It is perhaps only natural that the comments of Mr. Leadbeater should preponderate over those of Mrs. Besant.

The teaching as given by Alcyone in his little treatise is based on the preliminary qualifications for entry on the Path. The Eastern terminology is translated into English as follows: Discrimination; Desirelessness; Good conduct; Love.

Good conduct is further subdivided into self-control as to the mind; self-control in action; tolerance; cheerfulness; one-pointedness; confidence.

Truly it is said that "of all the qualifications, Love is the most important, for if it is strong enough in a man it forces him to acquire all the rest, and all the rest without it would never be sufficient." One is reminded inevitably of the dignified words of St. Paul in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal."

It is probably a matter of personal idiosyncrasy, but for our own part, while we find Alcyone's little book interesting and, in an elementary way, helpful, it does not seem to contain the depth or the large measure of inspiration which may be said of the other little works with which *At the Feet of the Master* is classified. Perhaps to describe it as good counsel for the young would not be an unfair way of putting it. That an early effort of a young boy should be expected to go as deeply into the heart of things as *Light on the Path*, for example, is doubtless absurd. Whether the book merits the large amount of space devoted to its consideration in the work which Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater have now given to the Theosophical world, is a matter for individual judgment.

At noon on Saturday, March 12th, a prominent and popular personality in psychical research and spiritualistic circles—Miss Felicia M. Scatcherd—passed over to the realm with which many years of patient investigation had brought about a sense of intimacy. Miss Scatcherd was a well-known figure in the séance-room. Ever since the early days when, in collaboration with the late W. T. Stead,

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she took part in the formation of the famous Julia's Bureau, her tireless energy and unflagging zeal in the interests of psychical research earned the wondering admiration of all who knew her. Over and beyond her numerous psychic activities, Miss Scatcherd was an ardent supporter of various humanitarian and reform movements, and her services were given unstintingly on behalf of the causes she had so near at heart. Her frank and generous nature caused her sympathies to incline always in the direction of championing the under dog.

In addition to her numerous contributions to the psychic and spiritualistic periodicals, to say nothing of other literary work, Miss Scatcherd had the proud distinction of having occupied for some considerable time the editorial chair of the *Asiatic Review*, with which periodical she remained co-editor until the last. While her loss will be mourned by the large circle of friends whom she leaves behind her, she will doubtless already have been welcomed on the hither side of that veil, with the lifting of which she was for so long familiar, by many others who have preceded her, including W. T. Stead, Sir William Crookes, and even her friend Houdini, that relentless opponent of all things spiritualistic. *Mors janua vitæ.*

THE EDITOR.

THE AISSAOUIAS OF NORTH AFRICA

By L. GRANT

THE Aïssaouia of North Africa is a strange brotherhood. It is not common or widely spread, and it is difficult to find out a great deal concerning it. The members are very reticent and will not, or probably cannot, give any explanation of what they do.

Nominally the sect is a Mohammedan one. At their worship the Aïssaouias call upon the name of Allah and read portions of the Qu'ran. But the strange performances connected with their rites, and the weird things that take place during their celebration belong purely and intimately to an early Nature worship connected with the cult of the Sun. There is, perhaps, little difference between the rites of the Aïssaouias and those of the priests of Baal who cried and cut themselves with knives in the sacred groves at the time of Elijah.

Among the Libyans, the race to which the natives of North Africa belong, the god was called Hammon, or Baal Amon.

He was the giver of life. As his life meant the life of the world, so equally his death was the cause of death. Primitive man was ignorant of the fact that the sun's course was fixed and certain. The annual "death" of the sun, therefore, was a disaster, inspiring absolute terror. It signified the sterilisation of the earth, the apparent death of all nature and vegetation—possibly of all living creatures, even of man himself.

This danger of universal death must somehow be averted. To effect this the ancients mourned the death of the sun-god by sacrificing to him their most precious things. Men mutilated themselves in a terrible manner. Women sacrificed their beauty by tearing and disfiguring their faces and cutting off their hair. To turn away the catastrophe accompanying the death of Hammon, children were sacrificed and put to death.

By degrees, as man became more "civilised," human sacrifices ceased, and animals were offered instead. As the world grew in knowledge the *conscious* worship of the sun-god died out, and the original meaning of these sacrifices and mutilations was lost in antiquity. Still the practice went on in different forms, the rites being gradually absorbed into the new religions. By

the confraternity of the Aïssaouias the character of these early sects seems to be preserved in a very complete degree.

The initiation takes place when the candidates are quite boys. It includes baptism with holy water by the priest. He also spits into the mouth of the novice. This action is common to all rites of magic, and is considered to bestow special gifts to the disciple.

The village of Teboursouk, hidden away up in the mountains of Tunisia, is one of the strongholds of the Aïssaouias. This little place, built against the rocky hill of Sadi Kahma, and protected in front by a ravine, was in the time of the Romans quite an important town.

We arrived there just after Christmas. It was the time of one of the great Mohammedan feasts. The confraternity of Aïssaouias were holding a splendid service in honour of the Prophet's birthday, and the French postmaster of Teboursouk, who happened to come into the tiny French inn where we were staying—the resort of the few Europeans, numbering perhaps a dozen, in the place—offered to take us to the mosque.

The narrow streets of the village were lighted only by the moon. Barbaric music, the tom-tom and the pipe, the alluring sound that always brings back memories of the Arab village after sunset, beat upon the darkness. As we climbed up the narrow tortuous streets, stumbling over the ragged, uneven stones, a ghostly white figure now and then passed us. The soft flap of the loose slipper heel grew fainter and fainter as the wearer disappeared into the black shadows. The broken sound of isolated pipes and tom-toms became more insistent and more concentrated. Then a blaze of light streamed out into the street. We had reached the mosque.

The moment we entered we were impressed with the solemnity of the scene. The French postmaster and our two selves were the only Europeans present.

The hall was an annexe or *mralla* of the mosque, and was divided from it by a green wooden screen. It was a long, low room. Massive pillars, with beautiful capitals, belonging doubtless to the old Roman town of Thugga, supported the vaulted roof.

The building was flooded with an intense but softened light, coming from two great glass chandeliers, and numbers of lamps which hung from the ceiling. It was diffused over the white

walls, and concentrated upon the upturned faces of about two hundred worshippers seated upon the floor. Many of the faces were solemn and grand, even noble.

The room was closely packed from wall to wall. Amongst the seated figures stood the priest, whose office is a hereditary one. He was a handsome old man with a grave face, betraying no emotion.

The natives, standing in a crowd inside the door, took no notice of us, beyond just moving to allow us to come in. The men sitting upon the floor did not even glance towards us as we made our way through the standing crowd.

Presently there was a slight movement. The men nearest the screen formed themselves into two long lines facing each other. A chafing dish containing hashish was lighted and passed up and down the lines, and a monotonous repetition of verses from the Qu'ran began.

Over and over again the low, growling, muttered rhythmical measure rolled down the room. Occasionally the voices were raised in unison, to be answered by a strange cry from behind the grill at the far side of the room.

It was a shrill sound, tremulous and piercing. It was the Zagharit, the cry of Libyan origin which Herodotus says was heard in the temple of Athena.¹ "These cries were used solely in honour of Athena, they were not howls or cries of lamentation, but shouts of triumph."² The same cry was uttered by the Grecian women in their incantations to the moon, and by the Libyan women in their worship of Tanith.³ It had the mingled sound of gurgling water, the cry of a night bird, and the wind. It might be some unknown spirit cry from another world. The timbre of it was so curiously haunting, that once heard it can never be forgotten.

The men upon the floor rearranged themselves and drew closer together. Now they began to beat the tom-toms; softly at first, then louder, and louder and louder. The excitement grew until it became almost breathless. The men shouted, and once more the shrill cry from the hidden women broke upon the troubled atmosphere. When a measure was finished, the

¹ "I think for my part that the loud cries uttered in our sacred rites come also from there (Libya), for Libyan women are greatly given to uttering such cries, and utter them very sweetly." Herodotus, Book IV, 189.

² g Rawlinson's Herodotus, note *in loc.*

³ John B. Bury, *Journal of Hellen*, t. VIII, quoted by Dr. Bertholon.

tomtoms were spun round and tossed high up into the air, then played again, louder than ever.

Then about thirty of the worshippers, raising themselves from the floor, placed themselves in a long line with their backs against the wooden screen, and their faces towards the musicians and the crowd.

The reeling, maddening music of the toms-tom went on, while the standing men began rhythmically to sway their bodies, bowing and bending until their foreheads were even with their knees. They moved their heads from side to side; stamped their feet in unison, while intermittently groaning with a sound that was like the growl of some wild beast, or rattling of stones on the seashore in a storm.

The place seemed to be vibrating with some strong emotion, restless and even appalling—as though one held one's breath, and waited.

Then, suddenly from the crowd standing at one end of the room, a man dashed out into the space upon the floor, in front of the long line. He tore his turban from his head, and threw off his haik, leaving him clad only in loose linen trousers and thin shirt. He danced about wildly, throwing his head backwards and forwards, and tossing his long hair over his face and shoulders. Then he knelt on the ground with upturned face and wide-open mouth. Two or three men seemed to be directing the movements of those seized with frenzy. One of them dropped a stone into the kneeling man's open mouth. This he swallowed with evident enjoyment. This was followed by a couple of nails, and some needles.

Presently another man dashed out of the crowd. One of the directors handed him a torch of lighted sticks. He tore open his shirt and held the blazing fire against his flesh. The flames licked his chest and neck and flared up under his arm-pits. Yet he was not burnt, or even scorched, and what seemed to be even more incredible still, the shirt, thin though it was, did not catch fire.

All the time the rhythmical movements of the long row of standing men and their low muttered growls went on unceasingly. The noise of the *bendirs*¹ and the insidious bewildering music of the *zarna*² never stopped. The emotion grew in strength, and the excitement became painfully intense.

¹ Drums. ² Pipes.

One man after another broke out from the line, to fling himself into the middle of the floor, shaking and dancing and crying with frenzy. As each man entered into the frenzied condition some kind of mutilation or species of strange food seemed to be considered necessary—indeed not only necessary, but a source of positive pleasure. He would follow the director, at the moment perhaps too busy to attend to him, with hungry, beseeching, half-sleepy eyes, and go down on his knees, even begging like a dog, until his strange craving was satisfied. When a stone, or some broken glass, or a horrible wriggling scorpion was dropped into his open mouth, then he seemed glad. He would swallow the one; crunch up the other, and drive and push the steel into his body with evident enjoyment.

At one time the excitement grew to such intensity as to be almost alarming. The frenzy seemed to be spreading through the room. One by one the men from the crowd standing round us near the door broke away. A man who was standing close by us, and reassuring me that there was nothing whatever to fear, suddenly began to shake from head to foot, and dashed wildly out to join the seething mass of struggling men in the middle of the floor.

The numbers presently became so great that it was difficult for the director to cope with them. As he was able, he seized each devotee round the waist and muttered some whispered word close to his ear. Almost immediately the man seemed to be released from his delirium, and became once more calm and sane.

Up to the last the barbaric music continued with unabated fury. Up to the last the breathless excitement increased. Then suddenly it appeared to reach the breaking-point. The tension which had become almost unbearable was relaxed. Something seemed to snap. There was a moment's lull. Then a suppressed murmur went round the outer crowd, and all was finished.

A great cry broke out from the long line of standing men; a cry having in it a sound of triumph, a *Te Deum* after a time of terrible stress, or after a battle.

It was very wonderful and very weird. On going out into the moonlight once more, with the ghostly white figures of the worshippers overtaking and passing one in the silent street, one is possessed overwhelmingly with the sense of having been in the presence of a mystery.

Count Hermann Keyserling has an interesting theory which may well explain this strange worship of the Aïssaouias.

"I can well understand," he says, "why the earliest forms of worship were terrible, and had to be so. . . . Man regards as beautiful that which enhances his consciousness of life. This result is brought about by primitive creatures only by the ecstasy of the flesh. Only in process of intoxication, lust or cruelty do such people get beyond themselves, only thus do they experience what developed man experiences in the serene contemplation of God. For this reason, the cults of the most deeply religious people are always especially cruel in character during the early stages of the race ; at that stage their religious consciousness, as it were, exhausts their passion. . . . Primitive men are profound only in their instincts ; only sensual enthusiasm unites them to their substance ; they can only experience and express what is deepest in them in instinctive actions." ¹

In like manner, and under the same mysterious influence, the predecessors of the Aïssaouias—those belonging to the brotherhood of Hammon and Tanith—were able to undergo mutilations which otherwise would have entailed intense suffering. The nerves are thrown into a state of complete insensibility, and in the case of the Aïssaouias there appears to be no after-consciousness of pain, or visible wound to show that any physical mutilation had taken place.

Instances of a like insensibility to pain have been known among the devotees of other religions.

When Perpetua was martyred at Carthage, and had been exposed to the horns of a savage cow, she was taken back for a few minutes to her companions, streaming with blood from the wounds which the animal had given her.

She had not the least idea that anything had happened. When were her tortures to begin, she asked ; and it was not until she was shown the blood upon her body that she became conscious of the terrible wounds she had already received.

By whatever means obtained, the strange phenomena witnessed at Teboursouk are practical demonstrations of a power that is able to conquer material sensation, "the power to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy."

To some extent the same kind of thing may be witnessed elsewhere in North Africa, in Kairouan especially. But here tourists are often present. The difference between the rites of the Aïssaouias as carried out at Kairouan and at Teboursouk, right

¹ *The Travel Diary of a Philosopher*, Vol. I, p. 94.

away up the mountains, strikes one as the difference between a fashionable London church and the little church amongst the fields where the simple old country folk go to worship.

At Biskra the rites of the Aïssaouias have degenerated into a mere show for visitors. If a certain sum is subscribed in one of the hotels, there is no difficulty whatever in getting a few Aïssaouias to give a performance, but it is just that, a performance and nothing more. When the rites are carried out in this prosaic—one is almost inclined to add vulgar—manner, they are robbed of their interest and all their poetry.

At TebourSouk there are no tourists. Here it was a religious ceremony weird and solemn, and curiously interesting; a strange graft upon Islamism, of which, in common with so many other practices, there is no mention at all in the Qu'ran.

Upon other occasions the rites of the Aïssaouias seem to have been celebrated in a much more horrible, and even in a brutal, fashion. Saint Nil, quoted by M. Doutte, says that in the fourth century the Arabs sacrificed a camel, lapped up the blood, and devoured the raw flesh, in a sacrificial feast. ¹

M. Doutte also gives a description of the same thing happening in 1899, six kilometres from Tlemcon, when a bullock was sacrificed in the open, and its flesh and intestines devoured raw in the most repugnant and horrible manner. ² Shortly after this date these public rites were forbidden.

Compared with this, though having some element of unpleasantness, the rites of the Aïssaouias as witnessed at TebourSouk seem moderate. When one recalls that picturesque scene: the grandeur of the figures of the priests, and also of many of the congregation; the beautiful mosque, with its perfect lighting; the rhythmical movements; the music and the weird poetry of the cry of the hidden women; it is difficult to connect it at all in any way with those disgusting rites of the Aïssaouias described by M. Doutte.

¹ Edmond Doutte, *Magic et Religion*.

² Edmond Doutte, *Les Aïssaouias à Tlemcon*.

IMAGINATION AND ORIGINALITY

By ETHEL ARCHER

THE question has often been asked : " What is imagination ? " One might just as well ask : " What is God ? " To a person devoid of the first, and with no belief in the second, neither exists. So that at the very outset we must realise that " you can find poetry nowhere unless you bring some with you." It is precisely in this respect that so many of the pseudo-critics of poetry have always failed. Yet these same critics would not deny that great inventive power, inspiration—call it what you will—has been shown by the literary giants of the past. This, indeed, with many of them seems to be sufficient reason for concluding that none of our latter-day poets can possibly possess any. Should a young poet write anything worth reading, these absurd creatures immediately want to know " upon whom he founds himself." If, as not infrequently happens, his writing is entirely a matter of inspiration, and he tells them so, from that day forth they take every opportunity they can to accuse him directly or indirectly of plagiarism.

But have these same persons ever seriously tried to understand just what this poetic imagination means, and how a poet comes to possess it ? Poetry is not a trade or profession that can be taught ; it is essentially " a gift of the gods," and until we admit this we shall never advance one step in poetic appreciation or understanding. By following certain rules, any intelligent person can produce quite tolerable verse, but mere verse is *not* poetry.

One of the essential characteristics of a true poet is sincerity allied to a love of truth and beauty *for its own sake*. Though he is naturally influenced to an extent by a writer he admires, he never belongs to any school or coterie. A slavish imitation he abhors above all things, and (his style being largely a matter of temperament) he writes just as he feels.

Since poetry is an attempt to portray some aspect of truth, it follows that all poets with a similar trend of mind will have a tendency to write in the same fashion, though, as sometimes happens, they may never have seen a line of each other's work. Their point of view is the same, their sympathies are identical—how, then, can it be otherwise ? But just as there are no two sun-

sets exactly alike, so there are no two writers to whom an idea presents itself in exactly the same words. Each new poet brings with him something that is in a very unique way a portion of himself.

Originality is above all things a matter of relativity. Obviously, if a writer has never seen or heard a thing before, and the idea spontaneously comes to him, as far as he is concerned it is original. It is probable that many men before the author of Shakespeare's plays realised that adversity had its good uses and many poets before Keats said in one way or another that beauty was a desirable thing, but only Shakespeare wrote the passage beginning: "Sweet are the uses of adversity," and only Keats said: "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever." And, quite naturally, when such sentiments occur to us we remember these lines, not for the newness of the ideas, but for the trueness with which they are expressed, and few persons would try to improve upon them.

Many well-known writers have endeavoured to explain what imagination is. Most of them are agreed that it is a realisation of the unity of things underlying all the apparent diversity, combined with a power of expressing the same; and so the poet who is more consciously in touch with that unity than other men, is able to see resemblances in natures never before so compared. It is perhaps above all things in such good comparisons and apt similes that the art of poetry consists. The old Hebrew Prophets, who were without doubt the greatest poets that the world has ever known, would have been incapable of insincerity. They loved and feared the Creator of the Universe; they knew Him: and as an inevitable result they reflected in their songs (as Moses in his countenance) a portion of the Divine glory.

There can never be true poetry without a deep religious feeling, and this feeling cannot be simulated. It must really be felt. It is worth noting that many of our finest poets have been clergymen, or the sons of clergymen! Young, Thomson, Coleridge, Tennyson are names that at once suggest themselves. Not a few persons have considered that it is largely due to the lack of reverence and a belief in God that we have at the present time so much verse and so little poetry.

With regard to inspiration, a young poet of my acquaintance, who had as a child an exceptionally beautiful poetic imagination, when asked how he got his ideas, said that he *always felt the rhythm* before he was going to write, then the first few lines came to him

"like something out of a half forgotten dream." By several times mentally repeating the first lines he found he had "added others," and so on until the poem was finished. He said: "I always knew that there was just one word or phrase than which none other would do, and until the poem in my head was as perfect as I could make it I never wrote a line of it down." He also said that several of his best things were written between the ages of twelve and fourteen, and that almost at any time at that age, *by making his mind a blank, and at the same time trying to remember the "dream-things,"* he could write. But he *always felt the rhythm first.* Perhaps no writer knew better than Edgar Allan Poe the power of gruesome imagery that could be suggested by mere rhythm. But after all, is not rhythm the basis of everything? My friend was practising concentration in its highest form, or so I think Monsieur Coué would have said.

Speaking of Monsieur Coué reminds me, if I may be forgiven for so purely personal a reminiscence, that I, myself, once tried to put his theory into practice, and as far as it went the result was successful, though the avenue through which my thought travelled was unexpected. Most people, I find, have a special dislike for some bird, insect, or animal. Personally, I dislike pigeons. In the neighbourhood where I live there are a great many of them. For three successive mornings I repeated the general formula, and all the time these inane birds cooed and gurgled on my window-sill. A few days before this I had been reading "The Prince of the House of David." Quite suddenly, whilst the birds were cooing on with exasperating monotony, the following lines came to me (the best, I think, in their way that I have ever written):

"Soft as the brooding Dove whose love-swift wings
From the high heaven sped downward, when of old
She saw, and seeing loved, the King of Kings,
Shadowing His sacred head from the fierce heat:
So dies the song. And swift the morning's gold
Spreads slowly. On the hills the dew is sweet."

Whether this be what some persons like to call a mere coincidence, the fact remains that these six lines got after Couéism enabled me to link on the remaining verses of a poem which had been written more than twenty years before, and so to finish what was hitherto an incomplete poem.

But probably no two writers have the same method. It would be interesting to know if those whose methods are most

similar write in a similar style. Certainly Baudelaire and Poe have much in common, and the style of a writer who is addicted to drugs is usually apparent at first sight. It is exceptionally vivid, gloomy, and exotic, and is suggestive of the dreams by which it is so often fed. Equally this style may be the result of bad health, without any drug-taking—the effect on the brain is much the same in either case.

Most writers have been voracious readers, the exception proves the rule ; but a ready-made gift of language is certainly hereditary. It is doubtful if a case has ever been known where the child of unlettered parents has at a very early age evinced a knowledge of classical phrases or written verse in exquisite Greek metres without having heard or read the same. But if the father, the grandfather, and so on, were great classical scholars, such a thing is quite possible as *knowledge apart from books*. Of one such case I personally have known. In this instance the first poem was written at ten years of age, and was full of classical allusions, yet a sweet Blake-like simplicity breathed in every line. Certainly it was a case of inspiration, and the poem was original, but the inspiration would not have taken that particular form unless the classical feeling had been inherited.

In conclusion, this has been an endeavour to point out that poetry is a gift, though verse writing may degenerate into a craft ; that persons of a similar temperament often write in a similar fashion without having seen each other's work ; that the best work is never the result of a literary pose, and that the true things will ever seem new, since truth, which is essentially eternal, is rediscovered in each successive age.

ECONOMICS IN THE LIGHT OF OCCULTISM

By W. F. A. CHAMBERS

IF it is a fact that the world is now passing through the third stage of its development as conceived by Comte, and is fully merged in the era of Positivism, then it may confidently be expected that it will pass out of it into a further and more advanced "Theological" episode. The transition from Positivism to Theology is already being adumbrated in the discoveries of modern Science, and it will be the task of Occultism in the new régime to translate its own doctrines into the language of Science, and in this way complete the process which has already begun. In truth, the difference between the doctrines of modern Science and those of esoteric Religion is one only of terminology. But barbarians must be addressed in their own tongue if they are to be made to understand, and the current jargon of to-day is undoubtedly scientific and not occult. It must be remembered that language can be a separating influence as much as a uniting one; hence the importance primevally attached to the Logos, or the Word. What matter if the Babylonians speak of labarthu and akhazu, the seizers, if they mean the same as modern Science means by puerperal fever or influenza (La Grippe)? The same has happened in more than one department of knowledge, but it will now be the function of occult Science to act as the At-oner and Reconciler, and finally to be the "Hujjat-Allah," or Proof-of-God, whose advent is so eagerly awaited by the followers of the Bab.

The object of this article, therefore, is to apply the teachings of occult science to one of the latest of modern sciences, the science of Economics. Very interesting, indeed amazing conclusions are reached by this method, and a solution of many of the modern problems of social life will be indicated. Here is the "rollende, grollende, strafende Zerbrecherin übertünscchten Gräber" which Nietzsche extols—the spirit of mastery which will found the new world.

The point of view from which this enquiry starts is more or less that stated in Papus' work on the *Tarot of the Bohemians*. The First Cause is there conceived to be triune in nature. Now, inasmuch as all other worlds were created or emanated from the

First Cause, the Ain from which the Ain Soph and the Ain Aur proceeded, it follows that the creations or emanations will also bear the stamp of the Triune Creator. If this is true, then the statements of modern Science about the material world (called Malkuth, the world of Shells, in the Kabbalist doctrine) should conform to the triune structure of the Universe. There should actually be statistical evidence in support of the theory. To work this out in detail, however, would demand an enormous expenditure of time and energy. But it is sufficient to point out, in the first place, that the preliminary grouping of the phenomena in the universe is, as might be expected, triune, being represented by MATTER-MOTION-INITIATIVE. Here is the point where Science broke down in the nineteenth century, having persistently tried to explain phenomena under the two terms MATTER-MOTION. Sir Oliver Lodge, the chief representative of this aspect of Science in England, said explicitly in a speech to the Royal Society that "Science takes no account of origins." Surely a grave omission on the part of Science, which must invalidate many of her conclusions.

Material phenomena are, in fact, subject to a triple grouping, which coincides with the esoteric doctrine, as the following diagram will show :

AIN	INITIATIVE . .	GOD THE FATHER
AIN SOPH . . .	MOTION	GOD THE SON
AIN AUR	MATTER	GOD THE HOLY GHOST

Modern science already has reached the point at which there is no difference to be discerned between Matter and Energy. It only remains to make the further step and to admit that Matter, Energy and Impulse are one and the same thing, a mysterious Trinity whose structure is in perfect harmony with the nature of the Primal Name, the Yod-He-Vau-He. This is in itself an important step, because it enables us to see more clearly the kind of Trinity which is to be looked for in material phenomena. The many formulæ of Papus do not, in effect, give so useful a utensil for this purpose as the one enunciated above, since it is clear that other trinities, e.g., Male, Female, and Neuter, or +, -, ∞, are not quite so comprehensive nor so accurate, nor are they so easy of application to facts. MATTER-MOTION-INITIATIVE, on the other hand, is a very accessible formula.

It is unnecessary to enter into all the complex action and reaction and the ramifications which extend from a development

of the Trinity above cited. Enough to observe that in proceeding to an examination of the science of Economics the first point to be looked for will be a formula of the very same nature and structure. It is not surprising to find such a basic formula immediately available, though its importance has not been fully recognised by economists. It appears to have been the Frenchman Buridan who first stated it. His countryman Bastiat, the Physiocrat, repeated it. It was taken up by Böhm-Bawerke and the Austrian school, adopted by Gide in France, by Seligman in U.S.A., and finally by Marshall in the smaller edition of his *Principles of Economics*. This is the Trinity "Want-Effort-Satisfaction." "Economics is the science of the satisfaction of men's wants." The correspondence between this formula and the original Trinity is too close to be accidental.

Want	Initiative .	(Production)
Effort	Motion . . .	(Distribution)
Satisfaction . . .	Matter . . .	(Consumption)

Want, which is a stimulus or impulse, impels men to action, which is a complicated form of motion, in order to obtain and incorporate something material or substantial. From this arises a cyclic, pulsating process, for the matter inglobated gives rise to a further Want, wherewith the Trinity is again initiated. But it is to be noted that the new stimulus does not start from precisely the same spot; the conclusion of each Trinity marks a step forward, and therefore the movement described is rather a spiral than a circle. As Pythagoras and Bergson agree, it is impossible to stand twice on the bank of the same river, whether it be a material river or the flow of consciousness.

Economists would like to confine their science solely to material phenomena, and are thus often involved in difficulties otherwise avoidable. The formula really holds good of the three planes:

Want—Effort—Satisfaction on the	Physical plane.
" " " "	Intellectual plane.
" " " "	Moral plane.

When Seligman says "Friendship is not an economic good," he is endeavouring to confine Economics to the physical plane, whereas it is clear that Economics has to deal with many factors which cannot be brought into the scope of physical phenomena alone. It is impossible to isolate the physical values of any article from its intellectual and moral values. A *reductio ad*

absurdum makes this clear. Thus a millionaire would obviously not submit to death for the sake of obtaining a wafer (i.e., Physical food), probably not for a theory that wafers contain indispensable vitamins (Intellectual conception), but quite possibly for a Religious ideal (the wafer conceived as the Host). Thus it is clear that one and the same object, the wafer, assumes more and more economic significance as it becomes invested with a higher proportion of intellectual and moral values.

The importance of this formula chiefly lies in the fact that it gives a more advanced Law for the basis of human society than those at present existing. It follows from it that the ideal state is one where the Want-Effort-Satisfaction of the individual is so nicely balanced that the life proceeds in a rhythmical advance towards the Beyond. How far the modern conditions are at variance with this ideal is only too evident. On the one hand we see men whose wants are satisfied without the need of proportionate effort ; on the other, men whose wants are not satisfied in spite of their labours. Great poets like Francis Thompson die of starvation and disease, while men whose aptitudes are confined to petrol engines can make fortunes. But it is not only the satisfaction of wants which is denied to human beings : it is the right of making efforts to satisfy their wants. Unemployment, in other words, is seen to be a wrong done to the individual by the community ; not so much an economic accident as a disease of the state, a crime. The doctrine of Property is also supplemented and corrected in this light, inasmuch as Property, being a satisfaction of want, ought to imply proportionate effort on the part of the owner. The doctrine that man has a right to certain Property, a doctrine originally based on the Twelve Tables, old Roman pagan law, must be completed by attaching to it the doctrine of Responsibility. It would not then be possible for a Royal Commission to recommend buying out the Royalty Rights of Coalowners without at the same time enquiring whether the obligations inherent in ownership of Property had been fulfilled. Thus, while being a complete answer to and refutation of Communism (since man's desires, efforts and satisfactions are not in fact all equal in every individual), it on the other hand implies a severe stricture on the existing régime. Moreover, consultation of the original Trinity finally indicates the solution of the problem—Initiative-Movement-Matter.

In dealing with Unemployment, the first and most essential factor is Initiative. The *Will* to remove the scourge finally must

first be created. The methods for removing it are a secondary consideration. Occultism shows that the Impulse or Will must come first, and must prevail throughout the whole nation. The task is hard, but the history of England shows many an example. where the Will to do has overcome even the impossible. Mere *Good-Will* or pious hopes are in themselves insufficient. The purpose is essential, and from the purpose flows the realisation.

Esoteric doctrines are based always upon hierarchies, worlds within worlds and ranks within ranks. Impulses should proceed from above and not from below. In modern industrial and social conditions the impulse to betterment too often proceeds from the lower classes, and leadership, almost throughout the whole period of the industrial revolution, has been sadly lacking in the upper classes. This defect must be remedied in the dispensation to come.

This is a very brief and sketchy outline of the truths which can be derived from Economic Science through the instrumentality of Occult Science. The ramifications are endless, inconceivable. Among other instances it may be mentioned that Helferreich's theory of Money conforms absolutely to the Trinity stated above, and that the famous Harvard Index numbers are on a triple basis of an identical nature. In Public Finance the most scientific system of Taxation is one similar to that in vogue in the Swiss cantons, the Netherlands, the U.S.A. and other countries, which is based on simultaneous taxation of Capital, Income and Consumption articles. The English system is also essentially triune, in spite of its confused and unmethodical nomenclature. The Income Tax schedules A and B undoubtedly contain an element of Capital taxation, and the whole of the conception of the Income Tax is a taxation of the three forms of income enumerated by Adam Smith and Ricardo, i.e., Rents, Profits, Wages (income from Capital only, from mixed Capital and Labour, and from Labour only).

A full development of the theory would require a volume, but enough has been said here to indicate that Occult doctrines have a definite practical value in approaching the study of a modern science, that they indicate the essential features and the basic elements upon which the superstructure is built. If this is true, the day of Occultism is not over. On the contrary, the dawn of a great future is just breaking.

HARMONY AND HEALTH

By R. E. BRUCE

THAT the harmony and poise in body, mind and spirit acknowledged to be the basis of good health is possible on different planes of being is sometimes overlooked, yet it is just this fact which makes it more difficult of attainment, and which may even be enough to account for the apparent anomaly—mentioned by your reviewer of “An Occult View of Health and Disease,” that “spiritual and apparently well-balanced people are often the greatest sufferers from ill-health, while the selfish, thoughtless and narrow-minded escape very lightly.”

Once we allow for these different planes, it is easy to see that harmony on lower planes is more easy of attainment than on higher ones. Not only this, but, once achieved, it is less difficult to maintain, because the coarser, lower nature, not being so delicately and finely poised and adjusted, is less susceptible to jars.

Those among the thoughtless, selfish, and narrow-minded who enjoy good health, are they whose ideals, as well as their actions, are on a low plane, and who therefore can make a cramped, sordid and selfish existence harmonise with their mind and spirit. It is only when they begin to suspect that all is not well, when they visualise, however dimly, some essential quality lacking in themselves, that health deserts them. The disharmony thus set up can never then be stilled except by transition of *the whole personality* to a higher plane of being.

The state of awakening to a sense of “divine dissatisfaction” with life on this low plane is essentially an intermediate one, and it may be a considerable time before the body, mind and spirit are all adjusted to that new rhythm which the spirit now demands, and during the process of this adjustment ill-health is very likely to occur.

A good example of this may be found in savage races, who, when converted to Christianity, die off in swarms where before they were thoroughly healthy. They are insufficiently developed to grasp and assimilate with the whole personality the teachings of Christ, and cannot respond in every particle of their being to the finer vibrations demanded of them by their newly awakened spirit. So the body pines and dies.

Everyone, irrespective of their degree of spiritual development, is liable to this breakdown of the body, until such development is equal on all three planes.

The state in which intellectual and physical growth have not kept pace with the spiritual seems to be an intermediate one between the physical and the spiritual life, a stepping stone between a life governed by physical desire, and one governed by spiritual desire. But this intermediate state does not always occur. To some noble souls it is given to pass without friction from the lower to the higher planes, and to achieve this passage with the whole personality simultaneously.

A man leading an immoral life will often enjoy a greater degree of health than his more spiritually-minded brother, because his body, mind and spirit are working harmoniously, though the plane on which they function is a low one.

In the moral man who suffers from ill-health, the spiritual side has outstripped the other two, the result being repression of desire, instead of transmutation and transcending of desire.

All desires, whether good or evil, carry with them an amount of energy—or, as the yogis call it, 'Prana'—varying with the strength of the desire. The repression of a strong desire for immorality, drink, or any other physical craving, does not destroy the energy generated, and unless the personality prepares suitable channels in which to make this energy flow, transmuting it into something higher, it hollows out destructive ones for itself, destroying both will power and health in the process. The immoral man or the drunkard has used up the energy generated by his desire, and so temporarily escapes this penalty.

To achieve harmony on a high plane is obviously much more difficult, for it must mean, not only abstention from bad actions, but a sweeping away of the very groundwork of the soul, and a deliberate killing out of those numerous tendencies with which every one of us is born, by the principle of polarity, sowing in their place other and opposite tendencies which must be nursed as carefully as hothouse plants until they become rooted more strongly than those they have supplanted.

For it is quite possible to advance spiritually without the rest of the personality being equally developed. A man may reach great heights of unselfishness, sympathy and love towards his fellows without having trained his will to be strong enough to

transmute and transcend—not suppress—undesirable physical desires, yet until he is master of all these desires (and this does not mean merely master of their outward expression) he has not achieved the harmony indispensable to health. It is possible, under such conditions, to appear outwardly well-balanced, and to achieve a great amount of that inward peace which is the sign and symbol of a harmonious personality. Yet deep down beneath all this a secret canker may exist ; spasmodic and irregular in its appearance, it nevertheless achieves a hardy growth, often in the form of a secret fear of disease—that state, in fact, which in its acute form is called neurosis—continually combated, but never wholly overcome. The seeds may have been—and often are—sown in childhood, or even in former lives. An exceptionally clever doctor once told me that everyone had his secret dread of some one disease. Such fear, continually overcome, yet continually reasserting its supremacy, may exist in an individual otherwise highly evolved.

Fear of disease is perhaps the most widespread, but the fear of impurity, the fear of falling into any kind of sin, and the repression of sins acutely desired all work havoc on the bodily health.

It is infinitely easier to suppress physical desires or physical fears, of whatever nature, than to transmute them. And this brings us to the hidden fulcrum behind all these external manifestations—the relative power of will. It is in the difference between will control in the spiritually evolved that the difference between health and sickness lies.

In some fine natures, sympathy, love, kindness and other spiritual virtues may be, to a certain extent, the line of least resistance, and therefore require little exercise of the will. A naturally good tempered person will not find it very difficult to become even more good tempered, and so on. In some direction, however, there is sure to be a weakness, a purely physical unconquered desire, and it is here that the amount of will control may become the deciding factor between good and ill health.

In the yoga system to attain self-mastery, control of the will is made an essential condition to even the earlier stages of progress. But to gain the mastery over all our desires is a very high achievement. Even the so-called strong man who reaches important positions by a concentration and industry which prove him to possess magnificent will power, generally has a weak point somewhere, some hidden side on which the will power sags.

The more highly developed a man is, the more sensitive is his organisation to the least suggestion, and the more active his imagination to create images, either of success or disaster. Every part of the organisation of such a man is so delicately poised that, when this poise is upset, the havoc is far greater, and the poise more difficult of recovery than with the more coarsely grained man of lower development.

In the long and painful journey from the physically controlled to the spiritually controlled life, it is not—as Evelyn Underhill says in *Practical Mysticism*, “it is not merely that your intellect has assimilated, united with a superficial and unreal view of the world. Far worse: your will, your desire, the sum total of your energy, has been turned the wrong way, harnessed to the wrong machine. You have become accustomed to the idea that you want, or ought to want, certain valueless things, certain specific positions . . . the awakening, then, of your deeper self, which knows not habit, and desires nothing but free correspondence with the Real, awakens you at once to the fact of a disharmony between the simple but inexorable longings and instincts of the buried spirit, now beginning to assert themselves in your hours of meditation—pushing out, as it were, towards the light—and the various changeful but insistent longings and instincts of the surface self. Between these two no peace is possible—they conflict at every turn. It becomes apparent to you that the declaration of Plotinus, accepted or repeated by all the mystics, concerning a “higher” and a “lower” life, and the cleavage that exists between them, has a certain justification even in the experience of the ordinary man. . . .

“This state of things means the acute discomfort which ensues on being pulled two ways at once. . . . You will have no peace until these claims have been met, and the apparent opposition between them resolved.”

FACTS ABOUT "THE SECRET DOCTRINE"

By G. R. S. MEAD, M.A.

IT is with much reluctance that I intervene in the controversy in your pages over the revision of the first edition of Mme. H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*. For eighteen years I have kept silence on Neo-theosophical matters (as I call them in distinction from the general Theosophy of the past) of which I had previously intimate experience for twenty-five years, from 1884 to 1909. I now break that silence, but neither with the hope that I can convince those who think they are doing honour to my old friend Helena Petrovna's literary memory by defending every word she wrote, nor with the slightest expectation that mis-statements and false accusations, to which wide currency has once been given, can ever be overtaken by denial in a single publication, indeed in a dozen periodicals. I do so, because there are no few outside the modern Theosophical movement who do your humble servant the honour of regarding him as truthful and endowed with at least the elementary qualities of an ordinary gentleman. As they have no first-hand knowledge of their own with which to check the contradictory statements on the subject which have appeared in your last issue, those of my friends or well-wishers who have read them may, quite excusably, think there is possibly some obscure germ of justification for the charges brought against my literary honour, and may ask themselves why Mead does not reply. I therefore herewith put on record, for the benefit of the future historian who may perchance deal with this miserable business, my formal and unqualified denial.

On H. P. B.'s decease there remained over no manuscript or typescript *S.D.* material other than is now found in Vol. III. These pieces, or chapters, were omitted from the two volumes of the first edition, either because they were thought, by Mme Blavatsky herself, not good enough or not sufficiently appropriate to be included.

The repeated statement made by H. P. B. in the first edition, that material for an additional volume, or two volumes, was already largely in existence and in process of completion, is not in accordance with fact. Doubtless, had Helena Petrovna had the time and health, and had she lived longer, she could have "delivered

the goods," and written herself, or had dictated or written through her, a series of additional volumes. But in sober reality, her repeated categorical statement on the matter is, to say the least of it, a "terminological inexactitude" which, in a generous spirit, may be ascribed to her "Russian," enthusiastic, imaginative, and psychical temperament. That my old friend Dr. Archibald Keightley, who typed out the MS. of Vols. I and II so assiduously, respects this statement is no proof of independent testimony. He simply trusted to H. P. B.'s assertions in those volumes. He certainly never saw any more material than what was found on H. P. B.'s decease and is now printed in Vol. III. There are numerous similar enthusiastic mis-statements, or confusions of psychic probability with physical fact, to be found elsewhere in Mme Blavatsky's voluminous literary output.

I come now to the editing of the revised edition. My competence, such as it was, and authority for this task depended from the fact that for the last three years of her life, I had Englished, corrected or edited everything H. P. B. wrote for publication, including the MS. of *The Voice of the Silence*, and that, too, with her entire assent and approval. She was quite humble in this respect in regard to the form of the better things she wrote, or had written through her. What I could frequently not persuade her to change, were the acerbities of controversy in which she rejoiced, and the over-emphasis and flamboyance, to put it mildly, of the phrasing of these polemics, which she regarded as her very own, and of which she was inordinately proud. In such cases of difference of opinion, I was always overwhelmed with a torrent of picturesque, not to say abusive, eloquence. The atmosphere was electrically charged and very bracing for anyone who could stand it; but in no way could the irascible and witty 'old lady' be deemed in such outbursts a model of self-control, least of all a teacher of wisdom.

I am responsible for by far the major part of this revision of the original edition of *The Secret Doctrine*, and have no excuse to make except that I did not execute the task more thoroughly. I am therefore glad that your correspondent the Hon. Mrs. Davey has had printed in parallel columns the series of mis-statements as to the additional material in hand, made in the original text, which I corrected, by omission, in the revised edition. It provides the reader with an instructive instance of one class of errors of fact which perforce had to be corrected by any honest editor. Another class of errors, which

I hope the industrious gentleman engaged in comparing verbally the two editions in question has duly noted and profited by, is that of the numerous misquotations. These I made literally exact. They were, unfortunately, not all due to errors in typewriting from the original MS. Some of them had been " pulled " to favour the relevant argument or contention. Again, sometimes for greater clarity I removed a sentence or paragraph from the text to the notes, or *vice versa*. The English had, of course, frequently to be revised; and the spelling of words and technical terms, mostly Oriental in general and Sanskrit in particular, had as frequently to be corrected. Speaking generally, whatever " howlers " I was able to detect, I amended. I did not, however, alter the views and arguments of the authoress. Had I the job to-day, when my equipment is more extensive and judgment riper, of re-editing this first revision, and had I the liberty of blue-pencilling out what is plainly untenable, the bulk of the matter would be very considerably reduced. And this proceeding would be in keeping with such competent judgments, within the Neo-theosophic frame of reference, as of, for instance, the now long deceased T. Subba Row, the most learned member the T.S. ever had, who refused to collaborate with H. P. B. in this her *magnum opus*, which was first planned as simply a revision, or rewriting, of *Isis Unveiled*, and the view of another learned Brahmin, recently Vice-Chancellor of Lucknow University, who agreed with me that the work would be greatly improved by being cut down by half. In any case, why should I have regarded the major part of the material as in any way sacrosanct? Did I not know that chiefly my three friends and colleagues—the now long deceased scientist and polymath, Dr. C. Carter Blake, whose professional work was largely the writing of encyclopædia articles, the present brilliant philosophical writer, E. D. Fawcett, and the well-equipped Bertram Keightley—had " devilled " assiduously for H. P. B. at the British Museum and otherwise? Between them they supplied piles of material, and many a paragraph, which she " revised " for her special purposes.

If, again, " the Master K. H. " whatever meaning we may attach to that phrase (whether that of a living person or of a psychic complex) transmitted the words: " Every mistake or erroneous notion corrected or explained by her (H. P. B.) from the works of other Theosophists was corrected by me or under my instruction "—this sentence was directed to the address principally of T. Subba Row and A. P. Sinnett, and does not, except for the very credulous, avouch, or assume responsibility for, all

the innumerable other points of controversy with non-Theosophy in which H. P. B. delighted. To-day, moreover, we know that all such psychic "communications" must needs be transmitted through the make-up of the medium, both cis- and trans-liminal, and that they are more or less always, even in the most favourable instances, coloured by his or her personality. H. P. B., it must be remembered, had been, or was, in lively, not to say embittered controversy, on some points of Neo-theosophical dogma, with both the above-named gentlemen.

Next, I come to Vol. III. With this I refused to have anything to do whatever. I judged the *disjecta* or *rejecta membra* from the manuscript or typescript of Vols. I and II not up to standard, and that it would in no way improve the work. They could, I thought, be printed preferably as fugitive articles in *Lucifer*, but could not possibly be made into a consistent whole. Mrs. Besant, who put a far higher valuation on everything H. P. B. had written than I did, persisted in her view, and by herself edited the matter for publication. But even when every scrap that remained was utilised, it made a very thin volume. I therefore persuaded her to add the so-called Instructions of what was known as the "Esoteric Section" or "Eastern School," which had hitherto been secret documents. My argument was that the "occult teachings," as they were deemed by the faithful, were now in the hands of hundreds, scattered over the world, some of whom were by no means trustworthy, and that it was highly probable that we should any day find them printed publicly by some unscrupulous individual or privately circulated illegitimately. Fortunately, Mrs. Besant agreed, and they were included in Vol. III, save certain matter dealing with sex questions. A load of anxiety was lifted off my mind. I thought that the making of these "Instructions" accessible to the general public might possibly put an end to this unhealthy inner secret school. But this hope, alas, was not to be fulfilled.

Speaking generally, I should say that H. P. B. herself, at any rate, would now be the first to thank me for the pains I took in revising the non-essentials of her *Secret Doctrine*.

Finally, I come to the *amende honorable*, and to the self-contradictions of my old friend and colleague James M. Pryse, a lawyer by profession, and a most capable printer to boot, who with me ran the "H. P. B. Press" for a number of laborious and stormy years. The explanation for his change of view about my work of revision is quite simple. "Jim's" first statement dates

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back to the sad years subsequent to the notorious "Judge case," when he "followed" William Q. Judge, the leader of the T.S. movement in America, implicitly believed in him, and was one of my many at that time bitter opponents in the endeavour to keep the movement sane and clean. J. M. P. wrote that criticism under the influence of Judge's erroneous belief, which is the *fons et origo* of the whole of this fantastic mare's nest. W. Q. J. held strongly, at the time I was revising the printed text of Vols. I and II, that the *S.D.* throughout, in all its parts and all its diction, was transcendently "occult," inspired verbally by the "Mahatmas," as he himself told me when he first saw the printed revised text. I thought he was utterly mistaken, and so I told him. We were very fond of one another, and intimate friends; and (though this will give a shock to those who have made a cult of his memory) I still have a feeling of strong affection for him, in spite of my judgment, based on private knowledge, that his conduct in the matters which led to the "case" was utterly wrong and reprehensible. It is, however, quite common for us to love sincerely those of whose conduct we are forced to disapprove. Judge was not a man whose opinion on literary subjects I could anyhow dream of taking, while his views on "occultism" as revealed to me personally in the matter of the "case" I had incontinently and decisively to reject. I would believe no word against him till he came over to London to meet the very grave charges brought against him and I could question him face to face. This I did in a two hours' painful interview. His private defence to me was, that his forging of the numerous "Mahatmic" messages on letters written by himself, after H. P. B.'s decease, to devoted and prominent members of the Society, in the familiar red and blue chalk scripts, with the occasional impression of the "M" seal, which contained the flaw in the copy of it which Olcott had had made in Lahore, was permissible, in order to "economise power," provided that the "messages" had first been psychically received. He also more than hinted that it was entirely in keeping with precedent, and that this was his authority for what he had done. Shortly after Judge's decease, one of his two chief mediums came to London to see me privately. In a four hours' interview she went with painful minuteness into every detail of how it had all been done, and wound up with an utterly amoral proposition purporting to come from the "Mahatmas," which was a very tempting offer had I been a charlatan. I very impolitely told the lady to inform *her* "Masters" that they might go to h—l. Subsequently, another old friend who had been in Lansdowne

their sombre mendicants' robes, "like bronze statues, mourning the gentle soul as it sped from the humble clay at their feet."

Two centuries later a child was born under the radiant skies of India, near the city of Lahore. He was the son of a well-to-do man, an accountant, and his future was also full of promise. But as soon as he reached adolescence he flung away all his prospects to give his possessions to the poor. At last the money which his father gave him to start a business of his own found its way into the beseeching hands continually appealing to his charity. Then the irate father sent his son away to Sultampum, but there Nānah found a new means to serve his fellows. He took service in the household of a wealthy Hindu, and gave all he earned to the poor. He was a faithful servant and in time became the steward of the Hindu magnate. He married and had two sons. But when he was thirty-five a heavenly message reached him in a vision and changed the course of his career.

In his dream Nānah was transported to the gates of paradise, and a goblet filled with the water of life was pressed into his hand. He heard a celestial voice, saying: "Nānah, I am with thee. Go thou, repeat my Name, and cause others to repeat it." Nānah consecrated the remaining years of his life to carrying out the divine command.

At that time the Punjab was divided between the religion of the Hindus and the creed of the Mohametans. Nānah amazed his countryfolk by declaring: "There is no Hindu, there is no Mussulman." He travelled far and wide, preaching the Unity of God and the fellowship of men, even going as far as Benares to convert the Hindus in the stronghold of their faith. He celebrated God in songs which sprang from the same pure source of inspiration as the Canticle to the Sun of St. Francis. These poems are the kernel of the Sikh Bible, the *Adi Granth*.

The cause of causes is the Creator.
 In His hand are order and reflection.
 As He looks upon so it becomes.
 He Himself, Himself is the Lord.
 Whatever is made, is according to His own pleasure,
 He is far from all, and with all!
 He comprehends, sees, and makes discrimination.
 He Himself is one, and He Himself is many.
 He does not die nor perish, He neither comes nor goes.
 Nānah says: He is always contained in all.

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Like St. Francis, the Hindu teacher extended his benevolence to the animals. He was so fearful of inflicting pain upon any creature that he abstained from all animal food.

Nānah converted a multitude of men, and when he felt the approach of death he besought his disciples to take him to the river Ravi, where he awaited the silent messenger, according to the custom of his countrypeople, by the side of the running water. His followers gathered round him mourning with the same passionate sorrow as the disciples of St. Francis, whilst the sublime soul of the humble teacher sped forth upon its celestial flight.

The earliest successors of Nānah were lowly and humble men like their teacher, but subsequently they deviated along the golden-bordered paths of wealth. The tenth teacher, Guru Govind Singh, transformed the fraternity into an army, to be flung against the Mohammedans. He named the army *Khalsa*, the Pure, and bestowed his own name upon each of the members: Singh, the Lion. But throughout all these changes the fundamental principles of Guru Nānah remained the same, and when Guru Govind Singh died he refused to name a successor, declaring the *Adi Granth* was a sufficient guide. So the pure source of Nānah's teaching still flows undefiled. The memory of the little poor man of Lahore is cherished as faithfully under the radiant sky of India as that of the saint of Assisi under the luminous skies of Italy.

THE MAGIC ROD

By REGINA MIRIAM BLOCH

THE late Sir William Barrett has treated the extremely interesting subject of the divining rod—the *Wünschelrute* or “wishing-rod” of the Germans and the *baguette devinatoire* of the French—with his usual exhaustive thoroughness, and we feel glad that Mr. Theodore Besterman was able to present this posthumous work to the inquiring public.*

Throughout the ages a confused mass of legend has surrounded the rod; from David who spoke of the comforting of God’s rod and staff, to the mystic thyrsus borne in the hands of the god Hermes, which smote those it struck with madness; the rod wherewith Moses charmed water from the face of the rock; that in the hands of Aaron; Tannhäuser’s rod, or the mysterious *henkau* which the Egyptian priests used in the great funerary ceremony of “opening the mouth” of the mummy. The Druids bore alder and quicken boughs. Every fairy has her magic wand, though Solomon rather varied the usual programme by being always accompanied by a special bird, the peewit, which, it was believed, could gaze through the earth as through glass and inform its master, who understood the language of all creatures, of the whereabouts of hidden treasures and springs. The magical *Key of Solomon* gives full instructions for the preparation of the wizard’s staff and wand:

“The staff should be of elderwood, or cane, or rosewood; and the wand of hazel or nut-tree, in all cases the wood being virgin, that is of one year’s growth only. They should each be cut from the tree at a single stroke, on the day of Mercury, at sunrise.”

The reference to Mercury is interesting to the folklore-lover, as he is the traditional owner of the *caduceus* or rod, and because the usual hazel-wood is specified.

Folklore, however inexact, can never be ignored when found in such conglomeration and with such insistence as in the case of the rod. Under its clouds of smoke one is sure to find the smouldering embers of a lost altar-fire of truth. It is therefore unwise to scoff at rhabdomancy.

Sir William Barrett, after most painstaking research, revealed a perhaps less allegorical but far more human and psychologically

* *The Divining Rod*. By Sir William Barrett, F.R.S., and Theodore Besterman. London: Methuen & Co. Price 18s.

fascinating version of water-divining or dowsing. He showed that the movement of the rod is due to the involuntary muscular action of the dowser, to whom he attributed a supernormal perceptive faculty, which enabled him to detect the hidden object of his search. This natural gift of the actual diviner plays havoc with many of the ideas which formerly surrounded the rod itself. As Mr. Besterman dryly remarks in his introduction, "The substance of which the rod is made may be of any kind of wood and metal. Rods may be manufactured articles such as tongs, snuffers, or even (be it whispered) a german sausage."

Though this may rudely dispel romance, the transference of the dowsing gift from the instrument to its bearer is of great significance. We are now well aware of the existence of rarer and indefinable faculties amongst men and the lower animals. Among such faculties may be numbered clairaudience and clairvoyance and the strange gift of psychometry. These finer perceptions are present even in the insect world. Fabre the great French naturalist noted the existence of certain tiny insects which registered a storm long before it had even entered into our own hemisphere. Medicine speaks of queer and yet more obscure forms of sensitiveness in the case of women who are seized with sickness when entering a room in which a hidden spider lurks. This nervous reaction merely reveals the possibility and feasibility of the existence of the human water-finder or dowser.

In the volume before us, the authors examine the claims of water-diviners, and the great mass of circumstantial evidence from the earliest records of the art to the present day.

The first dowsing in Europe seems to have been for minerals, and in Britain itself in the Welsh silver-mines. It was not till about 1655 that John Aubrey, writing of "the springs medicinall of Wiltshire, reports that 'Mr. Nich. Mercator told me that water may be found by a divining rod made of willow' . . ."

Coming to our own times, many interesting instances of scientific facts are adduced, from the two famous British dowsers of the nineteenth century William Scott Lawrence and John Mullins, to those notable contemporary diviners William Stone, Benjamin Tompkins, and Leicester Gataker. The last-named dowses with his bare hands! He "began dowsing about 1890, and has had a very successful career. The son of a captain in the Bengal Staff Corps, he was educated at the Bath College. Soon after leaving he discovered to his surprise that a forked

twig revolved in his hands in the same way as it did with a local diviner." This phenomenon is said to be accompanied by a sensation of nausea in the region of the stomach, sometimes to the point of physical sickness.

The most interesting aspect of Gataker's dowsing is the fact that he does not ordinarily use any kind of rod, but his hands only. In the words of an eyewitness: "His procedure appears to be a rapid survey of the ground. He walks along with a quick step, with his hands hanging by his side, until (according to his statement) he strikes a stream of water, when he at once becomes visibly agitated. With outstretched hands he appears carefully to feel his whereabouts until he ascertains the direction the stream is flowing and follows it up. Then he marks the spot of greatest supply and estimates the depth and quantity likely to be obtained."

The nausea and agitation which are said to accompany the exercise of Gataker's strange sense only go to prove that, like all and other unusual and supernormal faculties, water-divining does not manifest itself without physical discomfort, just as many people become ill before a thunderstorm and pay the price for being human barometers.

Several members of the fair sex have been dowsers, notably the exceptionally interesting contemporary amateur water-diviner Miss Clarissa Miles, who has also "made extensive and successful experiments in thought-transference." From what she says there seems to be no doubt that dowsing itself is only a more scientifically practical form of psychometry.

Sir William Barrett's exhaustive investigation of this obscure phenomenon rescues another much-maligned subject from the dusty realms of Superstition to those of practical and lucid fact, and proves how a rare but recurrent faculty can be pressed into the common service of mankind.

CORRESPONDENCE

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

"SEEKING THE MASTER."

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW

SIR,—It is with much regret that I find myself compelled to give a very definite challenge to a statement in Dion Fortune's last article.

It was there stated: "There is such a thing as telepathic suggestion, and if you have reason to believe that this is at work, if you find ideas obtruding themselves in your mind which would not normally find tolerance there, then you would do well to conduct the meditation that shall make clear your path in a Church where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, for into that Presence and potency can come nothing that maketh or worketh a lie."

Now this statement and its implication are *not true*. There is no environment where "telepathic suggestion" of the "group-mind" or other origin is *more* likely to have effect upon those who open themselves in the practice of meditation. The power which is used by all priesthoods of all churches wherewith to impregnate their "sacraments" or "holy water" is nothing more nor less than that form of magnetism known technically as "akâsa" or "astral light." It is the electric power generated in the atmosphere of the Planet by the positive and negative impulses coming from the Sun and Moon respectively, and it can be drawn down by occult ritual or "invocation," and "fixed" in a material object. The "ju-ju" of the African witch-doctor, and the "holy" water of the priest are both impregnated with exactly the same force.

This is a neutral natural force, neither good nor evil in itself, but (as Eliphas Levi said of it) "it can be used either for the greatest good or the greatest evil." But—*it has nothing to do with God; it has nothing to do with Christ; it has nothing to do with the Holy Spirit*, for the realm in which this Trinity operates is within the soul only, and never, directly, outside it.

The sensitised environment created by the bringing down of this Astral Light (the "Christ" of the Liberal Catholic Church) *may* help aspiration, but it does *not* protect the seeker from hostile "suggestions." On the contrary, it lays him all the more open to them, and I would warn your readers that meditation and relaxation in such an atmosphere is the most dangerous thing they can do, especially at the present time.

If only seekers after Truth and the Great Realisation will endeavour to stand upon their own feet, and just *live the life* of Purity

and Service, keeping away from personal contact with any and all "Teachers," "Initiates," "Masters," etc., they will be on perfectly safe ground. The true Mystic needs none of these; he comes by the path of personal aspiration and absolute consecration to the Divine Will, into direct contact with the Holy Spirit within his own soul, and this without the need for the assistance of any priest or other individual "initiator." The idea of the *necessity* for a personal "master" is an astral delusion, though it is true that there are numerous entities on the Astral Plane who are only too ready to take advantage of such; entities who are quite prepared to give out 95 per cent. of truth in order to slip in one particular lie when the critical faculty of the dupe has been sufficiently dulled.

I am sorry to have to be so severe with "Dion Fortune" over this question, but this is too serious a matter to be passed over. Of *her* personal sincerity and integrity I have no shadow of doubt, but when one finds such a grave error in doctrine as I have here indicated, it makes one decidedly dubious as to the real nature of the inspiration at the back of the "Christian Mystic Lodge of the Theosophical Society," of which she is the apparent leader.

Yours truly,
ION.

THE WORLD CRISIS.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—Is it not time to review with more intimate seriousness the present crisis to which your last leading article refers with such accuracy and restraint?

There are certain symptoms which, to the casual observer, may seem unrelated; but, to the seeing eye, may appear as integral parts of one great plot.

One of these symptoms is the eagerness displayed in certain quarters to attribute the life of the Spiritualistic movement to the same "Masters" as those who originated the Theosophical Society, the latter being, so they would have us believe, subsequent to the birth of the Spiritualistic movement, and of less importance.

To find the truth about this, one should read Madame Blavatsky's *Key to Theosophy*. Even Sir Arthur Conan Doyle admits that she was guided by one of "the Masters." Her attitude towards mediumship, upon which the whole fabric of the movement popularly called Spiritualism rests, is approved and emphasised by the same "Master" in his own "Letters" (referred to in *Light* recently).

Whence and why this eagerness to saddle upon "the Masters" all the precipitate and perilous follies of this psychic cult?

At the same time that the abovementioned attempt is made, there is a recrudescence of the effort to discredit poor H. P. B. Some would

call her a fraud, others would condemn her because she "suddenly abandoned the cult (of Spiritualism) and changed her guide 'John King' to 'Master Koot Hoomi.'"

Madame Blavatsky's change of attitude towards Spiritualism is explained in her own way in her writings. But, were it not so, one has evidence enough of 'John King's' work to explain it. He is not only ubiquitous; he can assume so many disguises that he sometimes, perhaps, deceives even "the elect."

In your Notes you quote the statement, attributed to the regional Bishop, that "the Liberal Catholic Church is not concerned with the Master Jesus at all." This is very interesting. I have seen an advt. of the Liberal Catholic Church which states that "The orders of its clergy are derived from the Old Catholic Church of Holland," and concluded, "The seven historic sacraments are administered." The question then arises, whether the Old Catholic Church was or was not a Christian Church. It is claimed that the priests of this Church have the power to evoke the occult forces which make of the "sacraments" their medium and channel. "Archangels" are present at these ceremonies. Maybe! But what guarantee have we that these powerful beings are archangels of light? Satan has also his hierarchy of angels, but their purpose is not the same as that of the white hierarchy.

The matter is clinched by the statement that the Liberal Catholic Church is "not concerned with the Master Jesus at all."

The ardent efforts to unite the present T.S., the Spiritualistic movement, the Liberal Catholic Church, the Order of the Star, the Co-Masonic and other orders *under the same Masters*, makes it imperative at this juncture to do our best to discover who these "Masters" are. Who are these unseen "Guides" who would take over the entire control of evolution on this planet?

Faithfully yours,

A.

THE MASTER JESUS.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—In the last issue of the OCCULT REVIEW there is a serious mistake not of your making. In the middle paragraph there is a quotation from *Transactions* of the Christian Mystic Lodge in which I am represented as giving the information presumably to Miss Dion Fortune that "the Liberal Catholic Church is not concerned with the Master Jesus at all." I have never given any such information to anyone. It is the exact reverse of the real concern of the Liberal Catholic Church. No wonder it seemed to you rather strange that I should have expressed such a view.

Whether by the Master Jesus is understood the great Founder of the Christian Church, the Lord Christ, or a Being distinct from the Lord

Christ but intimately associated with Him in His work in Palestine 2,000 years ago or thereabouts, the Liberal Catholic Church is very much concerned with Him. The Liberal Catholic Church has no other reason for existing than to be in some measure an instrument by means of which the Lord Christ may convey His blessings and His sacramental gifts to His people in this world of incarnate life. But probably by the Master Jesus the writer in *Transactions* means not the Lord Christ, but one who was once a disciple of His and is now himself a great adept. Accepting this distinction, even so it is not true to say that the Liberal Catholic Church is not concerned with Him at all, and I certainly have never said it. The Liberal Catholic Church is very much and very reverently concerned with the Master Jesus in this sense.

Could you, sir, possibly make the necessary correction of this misstatement in your next issue? I should be deeply grateful to you if you would.

Yours sincerely,

✠ F. W. PIGOTT.

A MESSAGE FOR ALL BRETHREN.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—I am no world-teacher, nor Messiah, nor learned with book knowledge, but a humble messenger of the mystical Masters who work for the upliftment of the world and not, as many occult Masters do, for the domination of brethren by the power of will.

Many are deluded by the wonderful things accomplished by following certain instructions given under seal of secrecy. Yet what is proved? Simply the possession of a knowledge of Nature's finer forces. A miracle-worker is not necessarily a man of God acquainted with the laws of the Divine.

It is in the astral world that so many wonders happen through the possession of special knowledge. It is to the astral world that so many attain, and wherein they rest content, thinking they have reached the apex of development, because the lower kingdoms are subservient to the conscious power of the lower will. It is on the astral plane that we find the different heavens of man's creating, each ruled by an astral-created god of its own. To the uninitiated who see these forms they seem very real, but they only exist as long as man's thoughts hold them together. Some last for hundreds of years, others for thousands. Each man-made heaven wants the soul for its own. It is the heaven of lesser lights, through which the seeker after Truth must speed, regarding merely as an exhibition of the subtler powers the phenomena of this plane. It is here also that man, if he has merely repressed and not overcome his evil desires, runs riot with results that are far more diabolically disastrous than if he gave full play to them on the physical

plane. Knowing this, can any of us say we are without sin, until we know that every fault has been overcome and not just held in check?

The possession of astral powers does not prove the divine. Hence the discords and jealousies, secrets claimed as the property of one Order only. Is this not a sign that the divine laws are not at work among them? Can we claim anything as ours alone, when we really know? When we have a spiritual feast, do we want to sit in solitude? We all become receivers and transmitters according to our capacity, but hold nothing as our own, well knowing the Great Secret—"All in all."

Not through books nor through knowledge of occult laws do we reach the mystical Masters. Their strait and narrow way is by the path of suffering and sacrifice. Yet deeply hidden from the eyes of men is joy supreme, for the angel that holds the cup of sorrow also holds the cup of joy. Poverty, patience, abstinence, simplicity, chastity, hope, faith, courage, truth, love—these are the steps of the mystic ladder. Here is a message for all brethren:

"Offer thyself as sacrifice for the world's woes. Bare thy heart to the spear of the world's sufferings. Dedicate thy soul to doing good to all. The secrets of the silences have been unsealed, and the work of the Ever-living Fire is made known unto those who have lived in obedience to the Master Will. In the silence of the Secret Place within thy soul, I will speak to all who are sincere; and I will touch the brow of the sorrowful and help them to overcome their grief and pain. If within the Secret Place thou wilt let thy highest and noblest thoughts rise as an offering of sweet incense, I will be near thee in thy meditation, and stand by thee in thy hour of trial."

Yours in the bond of Love,

PARACLETA (Messenger).

EASTERN v. WESTERN ADEPTS.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—In the article entitled "Secrecy in Occultism" which appeared in your columns recently, a challenge seemed to be thrown down to the Western world by such phrases as these:

"The Eastern Tradition has its outpost in the Theosophical Society. Has the Western Tradition an equivalent?"

And again:

"What are our Western Adepts doing to feed the sheep of their Master?"

In reply, may I say that the Western Adepts of the Great White Lodge, the Elder Brothers of Humanity have not been unmindful of the spiritual needs of Western people?

In 1908, that Elder Brother and Adept, who himself wears a Western body, chose, *tested*, accepted, and instructed, as his accredited messenger

and servant, Max Heindel, to give out to the Western world the Teachings which he received from the Brotherhood of the Rosicrucians.

This Teaching is comprised in the volume entitled *The Cosmo Conception*, first published in December 1909.

To Max Heindel, the *chosen* pupil of the Western Adept, was given not only the wondrous, illuminating revelations contained in that book, but also the task of re-discovering the almost-forgotten truths of Mystic Christianity as the Master Christ taught it. In the Teachings now given forth to the Western world the Path of Initiation is again made plain.

There are now Study Centres in this country, where weekly meetings are held and lectures given.

Further information will gladly be given in response to applications addressed, c/o The OCCULT REVIEW Office, to

Yours truly,
SISTER FRANCES.

SPIRITUALISM AND THEOSOPHY.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—In your last issue Sir Arthur Conan Doyle complains, in reference to Mr. Chaylor's article in your January issue, that "Theosophists eternally split the psychic movement by going out of their way to offend those who are really moving in the same direction as themselves."

It is not very clear as to how Mr. Chaylor has offended in this manner; especially as Sir Arthur now says that "a great many spiritualists are inclined towards reincarnation, karma, and other theosophic views." Let us hope that these "other views" include the fact that the phenomena of the séance room are not invariably the conscious action of the discarnate human "spirit." Theosophists will also doubtless be pleased to learn from Sir Arthur that spiritualists "are really moving in the same direction as themselves."

But as regards the "split" it does not appear to have occurred to Sir Arthur that the spiritualists are greater sinners than the theosophists in the matter of "going out of their way to offend." His present letter is a glaring example. He does not deal with any of Mr. Chaylor's statements, but simply says that the article "denies the truths of Spiritualism." What truths? He says further that the theosophists are "utterly mistaken upon the one point on which we are able thoroughly to test them"; but he does not say what that one point is, or how Mr. Chaylor's article has any reference to it. Instead of that he deliberately "goes out of his way" to make Mr. Chaylor's article an excuse for an attack on Theosophy in general and Mme Blavatsky

in particular. Poor H. P. B. ! Always and ever when the spiritualists object to anything in the teachings of Theosophy, it is H. P. B.'s *character* that is attacked : as if that had anything at all to do with the truth or otherwise of the teachings—that is to say the *explanation* of the *phenomenal facts* of Spiritualism, which have never been denied.

Sir Arthur now makes three statements about Mme Blavatsky, none of which is true. (1) That she was at one time “ a furious and intolerant Spiritualist.” (2) That she “ suddenly abandoned the cult at a time of its temporary eclipse in America.” (3) That she “ changed her guide John King to the Master Koot Hoomi.” What has any of these three statements got to do with the truth or otherwise of Mr. Chaylor's article ?

(1) Mme Blavatsky did undoubtedly in the first instance espouse the cause of Spiritualism in America ; but it is absolutely untrue to say that she was ever a spiritualist in the sense that Sir Arthur would have us believe. The explanation is very simple, and can be understood by anyone who is not blindly prejudiced. She did think in the first instance that she could make use of the spiritualistic movement, at that time attracting so much attention, for the purpose of teaching the real occult laws which govern such phenomena, and with which she was most fully acquainted : being able to produce or to stop the phenomena *at her own will*—as testified by her sister, Mme Jelihowsky, long before that period. (See A. P. Sinnett's *Incidents*, p. 153, and Col. Olcott's *Old Diary Leaves*, Vol. I, chap. 1.)

Mme Blavatsky wrote to her sister as early as 1866 as follows :

“ Now I shall never be subjected to external influences. The last vestiges of my psycho-physical weakness is gone, to return no more. I am cleansed and purified of that dreadful attraction to myself of stray spooks and ethereal affinities. I am free, free, thanks to THOSE whom I now bless at every hour of my life.” (*Incidents*, p. 152.)

But Mme Blavatsky was quickly undeceived as to the possibility of thus utilising the Spiritualistic Movement. Prior to the founding of the Theosophical Society in 1875, she wrote from New York to her sister : “ The more I see of spiritist séances in this cradle and hot-bed of Spiritism and mediums, the more clearly I see how dangerous they are for humanity.” Sir Arthur should remember that she is here speaking of Spiritualism at that time, fifty years ago. Whether her language applies to Spiritualism to-day cannot be discussed here. Mme Jelihowsky says that her sister :

“ Described many séances in terms of horror in consequence of the sights she was enabled to see as a result of her clairvoyance. She saw details hidden from the others present : perfect invasions

of hosts of soulless remains of mortals, 'woven' of fleshly passions, of evil thoughts, of vicious feelings which had outlived the body. To her sister she wrote further : " With horror and disgust I often observed how a reanimated shadow of this kind separated itself from the inside of the medium ; how, separating itself from his astral body and clad in someone else's vesture, it pretended to be someone's relation, causing the person to go into ecstasies, and making people open wide their hearts and their embraces to these shadows whom they sincerely believed to be their dead fathers and brothers, resuscitated to convince them of life eternal. . . . Oh, if they only knew the truth, if they only believed ! If they saw, as I have often seen, a monstrous, bodiless creature seizing hold of someone present at these spiritistic sorceries ! It wraps the man as if with a black shroud, and slowly disappears in him as if drawn into his body by each of his living pores." (See *The Path*, N.Y. Vol. IX, p. 379.)

There are a dozen more references which could be given to show not merely why Mme Blavatsky was obliged to abandon Spiritualism, but also that her *teaching* about the matter never underwent any change. In a letter to *The Spiritualist*, Dec. 13th, 1874, she wrote :

" As it is I have only done my duty ; first towards Spiritualism, that I have defended as well as I could from the attacks of imposture under the too-transparent mask of science ; then towards two helpless slandered mediums . . . but I am obliged to confess that I really do not believe in having done any good—to Spiritualism itself. . . . It is with a profound sadness in my heart that I acknowledge this fact."

In another place she says : " Yes, I am sorry to say that I *had* to identify myself, during that shameful exposure of the Holmes mediums, with the Spiritualists. I had to save the situation, for I was sent from Paris to America on purpose to prove the phenomena and their reality, and show the fallacy of the spiritualistic theory of spirits. But how could I do it best ? I did not want people at large to know that I could *produce the same things AT WILL*. I had received orders to the contrary, and yet I had to keep alive the reality, the genuineness and *possibility* of such phenomena in the hearts of those who from materialists had turned spiritualists, but now, owing to the exposure of several mediums, fell back again, returned to their scepticism. . . . Did I do wrong ? The world is not prepared yet to understand the philosophy of Occult Science." (See *Old Diary Leaves*, Vol. I, p. 12.)

(2) The above is a sufficient answer to Sir Arthur's second assertion as well as to the first.

(3) "John King" was never in any sense H. P. Blavatsky's "guide"; nor did she ever "change him" into the Master Koot Hoomi. Was "John King" one of "THOSE" to whom she refers in her 1866 letter as having freed her from the influence of all such "spooks"? She met her Master "M" in London in 1851 in the flesh, having previously only seen him in astral vision. As for the Master "K. H.," there is an authentic letter written by him to Mme Blavatsky's aunt, Mme Fadeeff, as far back as 1870, and delivered to her phenomenally "in the most incomprehensible and mysterious manner, by a messenger of Asiatic appearance, *who then disappeared before my very eyes.*" This was at Odessa, and Mme Blavatsky was at that time in India. Was that "John King"? As regards the identity of "John King," Sir Arthur may be referred to Col. Olcott's *Old Diary Leaves*, Vol. I, chap. i.

Is it too much to ask Sir Arthur that when he takes exception to any statement which runs counter to his own theories as to the "truth" of Spiritualism, he will deal directly with that statement on its own merits, and not "go out of his way" to give vent to his own personal prejudice against the greatest pioneer of the age in "the direction in which Spiritualists are moving"?

For the Defence Committee of the Blavatsky Association,

IONA DAVEY,

Hon. Secretary.

MADAME BLAVATSKY.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—I am honoured by the fact that Mr. Basil B. Howell, the Secretary of the Theosophical Society in England, informs your readers that the world is waiting on me for some further enlightenment on Madam Blavatsky: I am to explain her "motive," presumably, in a letter to your pages. It is no light task that is thus officially assigned to me, nor do I see why I am obliged to attempt it. But I will say a few words on the subject.

If Mr. Howell will glance at the Introduction to *Isis Unveiled*, written as long ago as 1877, he will there read an open declaration of malicious intent to make known in the East every instance of misbehaviour on the part of professing Christians. It is quite easy to follow up the growth of this seed germ of *malice* through the writings of Madam Blavatsky and the so-called "Mahatma Letters." Besides this there is the second motive, of *power*, which is revealed in the many supposed wonder-workings of the lady by which she gained ascendancy over so many of her dupes—I suppose with some satisfaction to herself. What must it have been, for example, to have captured Col. Olcott

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PERIODICAL LITERATURE

THE National Laboratory of Psychical Research at 16, Queensberry Place, London, has published the first part of its PROCEEDINGS, which we commend to those who are concerned with its important subject and may desire to support an unique undertaking and the cause of a new science. The Laboratory, now in full activity, may well mark an epoch in metapsychical research. The present issue is occupied throughout all its length with a Report on telekinetic and other phenomena witnessed through Eleonore Zügun, a Roumanian peasant girl aged thirteen years. The poltergeist and other manifestations occurring in her presence and, as it is affirmed, through her mediumship are known already in Europe, but it is to be understood that the document before us deals solely with séances held at Queensberry Place between October 1 and October 22, 1925, both dates inclusive. The Report is the work of Mr. Harry Price, at least as compiler and editor, and is arranged under fifteen heads, *plus* four Appendices, of which three are by Dr. R. J. Tillyard, F.R.S., while the last is a deposition on imprints of Eleonore Zügun's hands taken by Mr. Noel Jaquin, who has made a study of hands and finger-prints. The published conclusion of the Laboratory Council is that "a case has been made out for the abnormality of the manifestations witnessed."

"Nothing will stop war save the Second Advent of Christ," is the first sentence which confronts us in the latest issue of THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW, and it is not an editorial affirmation or the forecast of a contributed article, but is quoted from a paper on War which appears over the signature of General Sir Ian Hamilton in the new edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Mr. S. L. Bensusan, who edits the magazine in question, says justly that the pregnant words would doubtless pass unnoticed were they those of a popular preacher or an official of the Theosophical Society; but it happens that they come from "one of the greatest authorities" on the Art of War, belonging to "the highest type of soldier" and "a man whom thousands would follow to the death." They occur in the course of presenting a personal and military view of the world outlook, which Mr. Bensusan summarises axiomatically as "War or the Second Advent." It does not follow that General Hamilton is expecting that Advent to-day or to-morrow, in a century or an age to come. He appears to regard "the shield of Locarno" as "a poor protection" against "the glamour of the sword," but this does not mean that he will feel with the editor that recognition of "the unity of life and of man's purpose in the world will do more to put an end to war than all the efforts of the League of Nations." Least of all may he think that "Theosophical educational work," focussed in the notion of a World University, will or can in the nature of things provide a bulwark or palladium. It is obvious that such a hope enlists all our sympathy if it does not command our faith; but at the moment we are content to reflect on the

alternative prospect offered to our minds by one "who has given fifty-four of his seventy-three years to the Army" and is a man of thought and culture as well as a man of war. For the rest, we remember the old dictum that man's need is God's opportunity, and also the seeming lesson of an immemorial past, namely, that a Saviour of Society comes when Society has power no longer to maintain or save itself. . . . A "Servant of Islam," writing in *THE HERALD OF THE STAR*, tells us that Muslims also are expecting a Teacher, described, however, as one of "a subordinate type," Muhammed being doctrinally affirmed and held to be "God's last prophet." We are informed further that one who claims to be a World Teacher has arisen at Karnataka with a commission "to bring about the union of Muslims and Hindus." He accepts the dogma concerning the "last prophet," and being concerned, presumably, with the propagation of the faith under a new aspect he has attracted no hostile notice, if he is not taken seriously. It does not appear that his mission is significant for the author of the article, who is looking for a broader Islam and does not think that any one manifestation of religion in time and place can guide humanity for ever. . . . According to *THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST*, Jesus of Nazareth came at His appointed time, or five centuries before "the Piscean Age," and an Aquarian Messiah is to follow, five centuries before the "Aquarian Age," otherwise in or about the year A.D. 2000. His way is being prepared already by the Bahai Movement, the Theosophical Society, the Star in the East, and so forth, organisations included which might have been omitted to advantage in a list of precursors. With this may be compared one of the "official notes" which affirms that "the Master is only to be found within," and another article, in the immediately succeeding issue, which denounces the doctrine of spiritual development depending on persons or events external to ourselves as "sacerdotal" and not "theosophical." Very like indeed; but the question for us who stand apart from the whole hapless subject is what some of the debaters really want and what anyhow they happen to believe. If the Master within is everything, what profits an Aquarian Messiah? . . . In its monthly notes, and elsewhere in a Supplement, *THE THEOSOPHIST* tells in brief its story of the Benares Convention, attended by eight hundred delegates, the largest number on record. Mrs. Besant explains also that she has "settled down for awhile in the Ojai Valley" with Krishnamurti, and she describes the beauty of the place. There is no further information so far as she is concerned in the Adyar official organ. But *THE MESSENGER* of Chicago speaks of her "public announcement" in California of a new Theosophical Centre and Settlement at Ojai, which will be "similar to the one in Holland." There she expects to spend three months of each year. Further particulars are given by Lady Emily Lutyens, writing in *THE HERALD OF THE STAR* on the work of Star Centres. . . . We desire to acknowledge receipt of *LUCIFER*, a new Theosophical monthly, published in Spanish at Rio de Janeiro and representing the Lodge Pythagoras in that city.



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LA REVUE SPIRITE has a short study on the doctrine of reincarnation in the religion of Orpheus, and though it is much too slight to do more than establish the bare point of fact, it does us good service otherwise in directing attention to a recent work on Orphism by André Boulanger which might have escaped our notice otherwise. . . . LA ROSE CROIX is of considerable bulk in its most recent issue, and though it confuses Thomas Vaughan with Eirenaeus Philalethes, its citations from the latter pseudonymous adept—whose identity remains a mystery—are grouped in a convenient form. The excursions on the Philosophical Stone, Cosmic Alchemy and Modern Experiments in Transmutation are of real interest. As to the last, they belong to the researches of Strindberg, Tiffereau, and M. Jollivet Castelot himself. The operations are set out in full, and it would seem that a qualified chemist has therefore the opportunity to determine once for all the validity of the claims advanced by the President of the French Alchemical Society. . . . LE SYMBOLISME continues to represent the field of Masonic research as it is explored in Paris. M. Albert Lantoine produces his evidence regarding the actual date on which the Chevalier Ramsay delivered his famous Masonic Oration, being the month of March 1737. There is an address to the Brotherhood in Italy on the part of Oswald Wirth, and it commands our cordial agreement, as it recommends a return to the first principles of the Emblematic Art and the renunciation of those pretensions which have rendered the Institution obnoxious to the Fascist government. . . . LE VOILE d'ISIS presents in elaborate form a scientific explanation of the Dowsing Wand and its phenomena, but it must be commended to specialists, being too technical for the general reader. There is also an article on the Pyramids of Gizeh, the tombs by which they are surrounded and the measurements of the Great Pyramid. The translation of Lytton's *Strange Story* continues from month to month and from year to year, as if never the end would come. The experiment is unfortunate, as it exceeds the scope of a monthly magazine, and meanwhile another French version has appeared in volume form. We look forward, however, to those important special issues which are a marked characteristic of our old-established contemporary, and we note with satisfaction that in the course of its new volume there is not only to be one on Philosophical Alchemy, but that the subjects of Astrology and the Compagnonnage will be developed further in this attractive form. . . . Dr. Osty devotes thirty-six pages of the REVUE METAPSYCHIQUE to an account of séances held at Paris with the Polish medium Gusik, but the conclusions reached are tentative and provisional. On the one hand Dr. Osty cannot persuade himself that the phenomena produced during two months of very careful experiment are explicable by fraud and trickery, given even the most skilful con-

jurer on earth, but on the other hand he does not look to Gusik for a scientific demonstration of *la télékinésie et la téléplastie*. The question remains open.

The Christology of Rudolf Steiner is considered in an article of over twenty pages which occupies the front place in ANTHROPOSOPHY : we desire to speak of it in terms of respect because the deceased German occultist has some devoted followers in this country, as the fact of this new quarterly review itself exhibits ; but the translated study of Albert Steffen belongs to the woof of dream. It is followed by further Christology on the part of Dr. Steiner himself, which accounts for twenty-six pages of solid setting and includes a sympathetic criticism of gnostic teaching. Christ and the twentieth century are, however, the subject at issue, and one of the theses is that " the nineteenth century was on false paths when the life of Christ Jesus was reduced to the mere life of Jesus of Nazareth." It follows that " during the twentieth century something new must be added to the wonted habits of thought"—no doubt Dr. Steiner's Theosophy, which seems throughout dogmatic or, if preferred, is a personal revelation on the Mystery of Golgotha. A third paper—also by Dr. Steiner—gives sixteen pages to alleged or suggested knowledge of the state intervening between death and another birth : it is described as " aphoristic sketches." They appear to be " about it and about," a prolonged affirmation of knowledge which is attainable by " awakened spiritual consciousness " while still in the body of earth. There is unfortunately no gift of the knowledge itself, and we are left where we were as to the state between two incarnations. Outside these contributions we may mention three other articles : (1) a study of proposed possibilities in the life of sleep, built about the Donegal legend of Tir-na-nog, or the Hill of Fairy Dwellings : it is not therefore a contribution to folk-lore, and the legend is merely a pretext. (2) Mr. Montague Wheeler's survey of architectural tradition, which suggests that " behind the architecture of the past there was at work a religious influence." (3) a critical analysis of Oswald Spengler's *Decline of the West* under the portentous caption of " The Doom of Western Civilisation." It is very well done by Mr. G. S. Francis, the author's views being presented as " fatalistic historical concepts," the " will to power," the dawn of material expansion, " the reign of the Western Cæsars "—in a word, the reign of finance and the money spirit. Perhaps it is needless to add that a way of escape is indicated, or that it has been taught by Dr. Steiner in the development of " living, creative thought"—otherwise, the transformation of the world by " the ever-renewing powers of the spirit." In conclusion, we continue to regard ANTHROPOSOPHY as a brave experiment, but the extent of its appeal is another and to us a doubtful question.

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REVIEWS

A PROPOS DE L'INTRODUCTION À LA MÉTAPHYSIQUE HUMAINE. By Ernest Bozzano. 7½ in. × 4½ in., pp. 250. Paris: Jean Meyer. 1926. Price, 10 francs.

SOME months ago M. René Sudre published in France a book which aroused a great deal of interest, and that in many directions. This book was an impassioned indictment of spiritism and all its works, evidences and manifestations. M. Bozzano, that doughty champion, now comes into the arena in its defence. But this metaphor is too violent: M. Bozzano does not oppose passion with greater passion, and violence with more violence, as is too often the event in such cases as this. He is cool, detached, logical, and the case he puts up for spiritism is the best I have read in French. But the most exhilarating part of the book is that in which he pulls to pieces his opponent's flimsy tower of prejudiced and unimpartial argumentation. A very agreeable book to read in a despondent mood.

THEODORE BESTERMAN.

NORMAL AND SUPERNORMAL TELEPATHY. By Mrs. Vance Thompson. 8 in. × 5½ in., pp. 34. Los Angeles: The McCulloch Press, 1927.

MRS. THOMPSON places on her wrapper the statement (a typically American instance of being up to the minute): "On January 7th, 1927, men talked across the Atlantic, from New York to London, at a cost of twenty-five dollars a minute. In fifty years—or less—men will TELEPATH across the Atlantic, at a cost of *nothing at all*." It will be gathered from this that the author believes the ability to send and receive telepathic messages to be capable of universal cultivation. Her theory is that a given message should be put into the mind as a geometrical figure, and thus despatched. She gives a brief list of such geometrical figures.

THEODORE BESTERMAN.

KEY TRUTHS OF OCCULT PHILOSOPHY. By Marc Edmund Jones. 8 in. × 5½ in., pp. 270. Los Angeles: J. F. Rowny Press.

IN noticing a book like this the most useful service the reviewer can perform is to state what is claimed for it, and what it is. On the title page are the words "An introduction to the Codex Occultus," and before Mr. Jones's name the word "By" is carefully avoided. In addition to the usual copyright notice we find this: "Imprimatur. This Treatise is Published under an Authority Comprehensible to Those Quiet Workers Who Will Place Importance upon the Matter." In an accompanying leaflet the reader is informed that he has in his hands a "volume of encyclopedic compass. You own a book that is a pioneer in its realm, and that therefore must lay down its own foundation within itself." The book is stated to represent ten years of study by the author, and also eighteen months of special research and reference work by more than a score of his pupils and associates.

So much for what is claimed for the book. As for what it is, I have carefully examined it and find that it consists of teachings taken from Theosophical, Spiritualistic and modern Rosicrucian works. There is, of

course, no harm in this. But I do regret that the author should think it right, the more complete his debt is in any given instance, to be the more emphatic in his repudiation of his source. The book is handsomely produced.

THEODORE BESTERMAN.

AS THEY CAME THROUGH: Songs of Life. By M. H. Wallis. Published by the Author, 83, Stanhope Avenue, Finchley, London, N.3.

IN her Foreword to this unpretentious little paper-covered volume, Mrs. Wallis explains how she was first impressed to write these "Songs of Life": "When, in October 1924, my fifty years of service to Spiritualism was completed, it appeared that for me public work was finished; yet I had a restless feeling, coupled with the thought that something remained to be done." When, later, Mrs. Wallis began to receive poetical inspirations, the ultimate result was this little collection of thirty-three poems. One of these, entitled "Why do you Mourn, my Child?" is especially touching, and, while being full of "a sure and certain hope," cannot fail to awake a responsive note in any heart which has loved and, for this short pilgrimage, has "lost" a fellow-traveller.

"Grim shades of death—then consciousness of life—
Eyes closed—then vision in the spirit land—
Chaotic thoughts—then freedom from all strife—
The Rubicon is passed—beyond I stand.

"So hold my hand, and, yielding to my thought,
Receive the message I with love now give,
'How sweet the consolation I have brought—
I am not dead—but do most surely live.'"

"To those who Mourn and are Afraid" is another Song full of encouragement and cheer, emphasising the supreme truth that: "Life is all One, both here and 'there.'"

Mrs. Wallis does not offer her verses on the altar of literature, but probably many of those who have gained comfort from her mediumship will like to possess this little book as a memento of her work for Spiritualism.

EDITH K. HARPER.

THE MYSTERY OF BELVOIR MANSIONS. By Ben Bolt. London: Ward, Lock & Co. Pp. 318. Price 7s. 6d. net.

WE find here all the ingredients of the usual detective story: the blue-eyed maiden with wonderful red-gold hair with whom the young Captain falls violently in love at sight; the genial friend always ready to help in "following the trail"; the sinister mystery-millionaire, the villain of the piece; and a regular jumble of captures and escapes, of druggings and sandbaggings and aeroplane flights, before the identity of the murderer is finally discovered. It is quite well done, though the characters are animated waxworks rather than real people, and the abundance of incident carries the reader along through a good many improbabilities. The story has no "occult" interest whatever, but those who like detective-tales may find it useful for wiling away an idle hour.

EVA MARTIN.



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NIRVANA. By George S. Arundale. India : Theosophical Publishing House. Pp. 219. Price 6s.

THIS book constitutes, as Bishop Leadbeater says in his short Preface, "a valiant attempt to describe the indescribable." The writer, after experiencing "a marvellous expansion of consciousness" in sleep, believed that he had reached the Nirvanic plane, and felt impelled to make a record of his sensations. He is, frankly, trying to put into words things which cannot be spoken, and for this reason the record is inevitably a disappointment. Yet it does make an impression of absolute sincerity. This, no unbiased reader can deny ; though again and again it falls short and "lets one down" through sheer inadequacy of language.

The chief quality sensed by one who succeeds in rising to these supreme regions seems to be the quality of Light—Life which is Light—"Light the Healer, Light the Redeemer, the Creator, the Preserver, the Regenerator." We may note that Light the Healer is already being recognised even on the earth-plane, and it is not difficult to believe that in time light-treatment will be the chief, if not the only, method of healing used by man. Nor is it difficult to believe that the development of this Nirvanic consciousness makes earth-life very difficult, and at first a continual strain. The necessity for preserving a true balance, a sense of proportion, begins to be felt, and as the writer very truly remarks—"I must not ignore time because I know something of Eternity. I must not ignore the darkness because I know something of the Light. . . . I must not ignore man because I have learned something of God."

The book is illustrated by two remarkable photographs of the Himalayas, which are taken as symbolising the various stages of consciousness attainable by man. To read it is an illuminating—even though in one sense, as said before, a disappointing—experience, and it should not be missed by anyone who desires to learn something of "the worlds within" from a source whose sincerity cannot be doubted.

EVA MARTIN.

STUDIES IN SYMBOLOGY. By Ronald A. Lidstone. London : The Theosophical Publishing House, Limited. Price 7s. 6d. net.

WHETHER there is a symbolism inherent in the nature of things, and especially in numbers, is a debatable question. But that the ancient thinkers believed there to be is beyond doubt. I certainly do not think that the antiquity of a belief provides any guarantee of its validity ; but not less certainly do I think it worth while to discover what the men of old did believe. Unfortunately, those who have undertaken to expound authoritatively the ancient symbolologies appear to agree in one particular only, namely in contradicting each other. Meantime the cryptic utterances of the ancients remain cryptic, and their thoughts are hidden from us.

I welcome, therefore, this scholarly little book by Mr. Lidstone in which he has endeavoured—very successfully, I think—to shed light on this obscure subject by a careful analysis of some of the cryptic utterances to which I have referred, and the comparison of them one with another. He has chapters "On the Number Twelve," "On the Crucifix and the Tarot," "On the Initiations and the Tarot," and "On the Types of Man,"

In the treatment of the number 12, Mr. Lidstone has established correspondences between the twelve foundation stones of the New Jerusalem of the Book of Revelation and the twelve stones of Aaron's breastplate of the Book of Exodus, which can hardly be due to chance, but indicate that the minds of the authors of these books had travelled the same road or were subject to the same influence. And it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that this common idea of the symbolical significance of this number had its basis in primitive astronomy. The symbology of 7 can also be traced to the same source.

Mr. Lidstone's book contains many other points of interest. I trust he will extend his studies. I have only one criticism to offer, and that is that the very useful diagrams with which each of his chapters are provided would be still more useful if incorporated in the text, instead of being printed together at the end of the book.

H. S. REDGROVE.

AN ASIAN ARCADY. (The Land and Peoples of Northern Siam). By Reginald le May, M.R.A.S. With coloured frontispiece and 99 illustrations and map. Roy. 8vo, pp. 274. Heffer & Sons, Cambridge. Price 21s.

THIS fascinating volume contains such a variety of interests that it is difficult to know where to start. The reader can open the book at any point—and read on longer than he intended! It is a very full description of the peoples and customs of Northern Siam, a land of beauty and interest, little known, but here detailed by a skilful and sympathetic hand familiar for many years with all its phases.

Doubtless the chief interest for readers of this *Review* will be found in the folk stories which are interspersed here and there throughout the volume, and the accounts of religious rites, of animism and witchcraft and current magical practices, which are related with no attempt to deduce anything from them. Among the many excellent illustrations are figures of Buddha, coins, and temples, as well as characteristic people of interest to the anthropologist. Music, dancing, sports and games, all receive their due share, among which some item of information, often a detail to the author, conveys much to the student. The details are unusually full, and the volume is one of the most absorbing that the writer has met for a long time.

W. G. R.

MAYA AND MEXICAN ART. By T. A. Joyce. Foolscape quarto, pp. 191. Fully illustrated. Published by "The Studio, Limited." Price 10s. 6d.

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though much has been done in relation to Egypt. Consequently, the publication of a number of excellent examples such as we have here, is doubly welcome. The description is slight and guarded, as befits a modern school bent on proving no theory and stating nothing but the bare facts, as far as possible.

The psychological bias among the peoples was so different, that where Egypt was essentially pacific, the Mayans were as essentially warlike and bloodthirsty in their sacrificial rites. The war god was consequently more worshipped and appeased, where in Egypt the god of creation received more homage. Hierarchic rule was common to both and endured much longer in Mexico, until a century or so prior to the Spanish invasions, which saw the remnants of the races.

The whole of the abstruse Mayan hieroglyphic system is not yet known, but some of their time glyphs are here reproduced. They show an interesting development of figures from geometrical or semi-geometrical signs. The mural "decoration" also appears to denote certain scientific knowledge which they possessed. Altogether this interesting volume will provide some useful material for study.

W. G. R.

FUNERAL CUSTOMS: Their Origin and Development. By Bertram S. Puckle. Demy 8vo, pp. 283. London: T. Werner Laurie, Ltd. 16s. net.

It may seem at first sight that this is compilation only, a mere note-book methodised, and that even as such it is not exactly the work of a practised hand: it does, however, represent a point of view, being the liberation of death from that accumulation of ugly trappings which centuries of vain observance have heaped thereon. The discussion of cremation on both sides of the question exhibits an impartial and also an informed mind. The Christian point of view is brought forth clearly and also one of the grounds on which it was based from the beginning, being the Burial of Christ on the rock-hewn sepulchre, behind which there lies the age-long horror of cremation among the Jews. But the fact that "the Christian Church put all the weight of her increasing influence against cremation and has never "altered her attitude" has something more at the back of it than Jewish feeling or what happened to the body of her Founder, which was not buried after all: there is surely the insuperable difficulty which is offered to the idea of a physical resurrection, on which Christian doctrine insists. There is otherwise some curious matter, not readily accessible, drawn into a chapter on "body-snatching," but that upon burial customs is no more than occasional memoranda on a very large subject. After all, however, the volume is meant to be for general reading and is by no means addressed to specialists. As much may be said of the section on death-warnings. On the whole, Mr. Puckle's collection serves its slight purpose passably well. The notes recall many familiar authorities, but a few writers are named with whom I am glad to become acquainted on my own part. I miss all reference to Weever's *Funeral Monuments*, which is one of the stories of old. A word should be said in conclusion about the excellent manner of production and the illustrations, which are very creditable to the publishers.

A. E. WAITE.

THE RIDING LIGHT. By Neil Scot. London: G. T. Foulis & Co.
Price 7s. 6d.

A first novel this—but assuredly not a novel of inexperience. The author not only commands a style of rich expressiveness but has tact fine enough to endure the discipline of a theme which seems to require the freedom permitted to Continental fiction. The heroine (Leslie) is a Scottish aristocrat whose lonely and thwarted childhood is the prelude to a life dominated by compassion and love. She charms men unconsciously, and without feeling celestial love “gives” herself to two lovers before she recognises her true affinity. Fear and pessimism are her chief enemies, and her horror in expecting motherhood while regarded by her decorous relatives as a maiden, is graphically depicted against a background of worse misery. The author’s ideality, which places the novel above the rank of entertainments, is nevertheless not its most admirable feature to the critic of mere art. For what stand out in the gallery of our mind and refuse to have their faces turned to the wall are the figures of the heroine’s aunt, her maid and her factor, whose artistic value is due to his particular setting. As an egoist the aunt, crammed with material interest, passionless save for the passion for ruling a fair estate, is worthy to stand beside any other flower of selfishness in fiction.

The occult interest of “The Riding Light” is fundamental. The author has constantly in view the “white” and the “sinisters” on the spiritual planes who affect atmosphere and intensify mental feeling and will.

The characters include an evil magician, a surgeon who becomes a magnetic healer, and a voice from the other world. At the same time the novel triumphs rather as a moving story in a world of half lights than as an interpretation of life by one who has walked with Virgil or with Sinnett—or with Andrew Jackson Davis. Such as it is, it is an artistic treat.

W. H. CHESON.

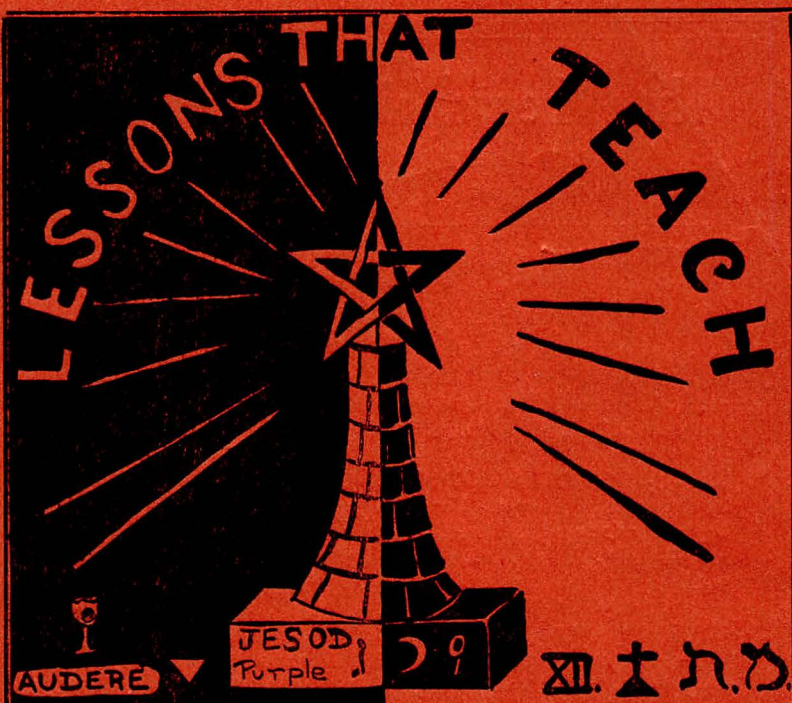
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