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ON THE WATCH-TOWER

IT is quite refreshing to take up Mr. Podmore's book, *Studies in Psychical Research*, and to find therein the fine old style of the arguments of twenty years ago. If one could take it as a pronouncement of the Psychical Research Society itself one would feel that, like the Bourbons, it had learned nothing and forgotten nothing; but this would be unfair to the Society, as it has members like Mr. Myers and Dr. Hodgson, who have learned much, to say nothing of Professor Lodge and Sir William Crookes, who do not require to forget. The world has marched so far into Borderland during these last twenty years, so much progress has been made by impartial and thoughtful people, the tone of society has so changed from an attitude of ridicule to one of courteous attention, that it is most useful to have a work that marks the point to which scepticism rose when the middle-aged among us were young, and thus serves as a sign-post from which the advance of thought may be measured. Mr. Podmore has certain cut-and-dried explanations on which he rings the changes —hallucinatory illusions, telepathy, fraud—and if the facts do not fit in with these, then so much the worse for the facts. "The unconscious heritage of a pristine animism" explains much and

Rip van Winkle

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is full of comfort; it sounds so scientific that the admiring reader fails to observe that it is meaningless.

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A FEW instances will serve to show Mr. Podmore's value as a guide in psychical research. For the phenomena shown by Mr. Home, and borne witness to by Lord Adare, the Master of Lindsay, and other unimpeachable witnesses, Mr. Podmore "can suggest but one plausible explanation," "short of admitting the phenomena to be genuine," and that he will not allow: "the witnesses were to some extent hallucinated." Mr. Home took out coals from a fire with his hand protected by some non-conducting substance, and this "suggestion" made the witnesses see the recorded wonders; he stretched himself to his full height, and this "suggested" the elongation alleged to have occurred; he put his head and shoulders out of the window, and this "suggested" the hallucination that he floated out of one window and back through another. As to Mr. Stainton Moses, there are three "possible explanations" of his manifestations: a new force, conscious and deliberate fraud, and that Mr. Moses "did them in some state in which he was not wholly responsible for his actions." Mr. Podmore wavers between the second and the third, but on the whole inclines to the third—in words. His account, however, is so coloured as to convey the impression that personally he believes in continued "fraudulent ingenuity." One suspects Mr. Podmore of labouring under a continual hallucination when one finds him pouring forth venomous insult of this kind on such a man as Stainton Moses. "Apart from the moral difficulties involved, there is little or nothing to forbid the supposition that the whole of these messages were deliberately concocted by Mr. Moses himself, and palmed off upon his unsuspecting friends." But no isolated sentences can convey the idea of the malicious setting of the whole account. The malice is not intentional; it is the ponderous incapacity to see and understand the principles underlying the whole case, and the purblind ingenuity which twists all the facts to fit a pre-conceived idea, that make Mr. Podmore regard all men as knaves whose experiences are out of the common. What can be said of a man, who can write;

Invincible Ignorance

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"It may be concluded then that . . . . we should not be justified in assuming any other cause for the physical phenomena of Spiritualism than fraud, eked out possibly on rare occasions by fraudulently suggested hallucinations"—save that his insults must be regarded as the outcome of invincible ignorance? Mr. Podmore, being what he is, finds Madame Blavatsky "very much of an enigma." That is probable, but his lack of understanding does not justify him in saying: "She began life, it is true, as an adventuress; and must have obtained at least bread and cheese by her theosophical ventures." Mr. Podmore knows, cannot avoid knowing, that his statement is not only coarsely insolent but demonstrably false. Mme. Blavatsky's noble birth has been established by verified documents, and her father is known to have supplied her with large sums of money; her gifts to the Society are printed, and verified by the auditors' reports. It is true that with the selfless generosity which renders her an enigma to many, she gave with both hands while she had to give, and in the last years of her life was supported by her private friends—never by the Society. But this fact scarcely concerns Mr. Podmore. Theosophists will guess that he re-tells the whole Coulomb story, and omits any reference to the refutations published at the time, and they will be able to rate his opinion at its true value in the light of his general attitude. Where everyone is painted black—except Mrs. Piper, who is left grey in deference to Dr. Hodgson—the effect of light and shade is lost, and one would as soon accept Mr. Podmore's report on a person above the commonplace, as one would take the character of a saint from the Devil's Advocate. We are against our will reminded of Vivien, whose tongue raged like a fire among the noblest names,

. . . . . till she left,
Not even Lancelot brave, nor Galahad clean.

But enough of Mr. Podmore. Fossils possess an antiquarian interest, but for the most part it is best to let the dead bury their dead.

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The *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* contains the following letter:

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Borderland again

I am an officer of the Tyne and Tees Brigade, lately commanded by the lamented Sir Henry Havelock-Allan. A day—or so—previous to the news of his death arriving in this country, a strange thing, which I will now relate, happened.

When I joined our luncheon circle at the Collingwood at the usual time, one of the friends at the table remarked that I looked pale and seedy. To this I replied that I had had a fearful dream about Sir Henry Havelock-Allan. Further accosted, I said that I dreamt I was in India—where, by the way, I have never been—in a wild, lonely mountainous district, reminding one of the Naerodal in Norway. I suddenly heard a groan of agony, and saw our Brigade's beloved General writhing in pain and ghastly pale. Still he spoke —in the distinct tone which we of the Tyne and Tees Brigade know so well —oh, so very well: "Is that you, Romler?" said he, who stood to attention, as always when he addressed me; "I am dying, old boy. Good-bye."

I was overcome and said no more. Some few hours after we got the news of his death. My relating the dream was heard by two fellow officers of the Brigade at the table, and also by a well-known J.P. of the county, and Sir T. J. Lipton's local head manager; so the evidence of the fact is simply conclusive.

I may add that, having been in the Brigade Camp commanded by Sir Henry seven or eight times, I knew him well, and like us all, loved him well. He always showed me the greatest kindness, and the Fifth Durham looked to him with almost ideal admiration, just as we did to our late grand Colonel J. A. Cowen. No fear of our ever forgetting those two: little chance, alas, of our ever seeing their like again.

Yours, etc.,

A. ROMLER, MAJOR, 5TH V.B.D.L.I.

Here is another piece of testimony to add to the ever-increasing number which show that man is not so limited as popular ignorance would have us believe. Another curious incident of the last month was a presentiment felt by a dairy-man that he would be shot one night when on his rounds on his farm; he mentioned this to his wife and she told others. He was shot to death a little later under the circumstances mentioned. The man's name was Thomas Webb, and he lived at the Express Dairy Company's College Farm, Church End, Finchley. He mentioned the presentiment when reading of Mr. Terriss' death, and was shot on January 29th. Yet once more, M. Zola, the *Daily Chronicle* tells us, visited a clairvoyante in 1896, under an assumed name, and published in the *Figaro* a three-column account of what took place. "He was informed

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that a terrible scandal would take place in two years' time, in which he would be involved, and in the end he would no longer be able to remain in France. A Jew, it was further foretold, would be mixed up in this affair, the effects of which would be very lasting."

* * *

THE Paris *Figaro* announces another musical prodigy. A child born in a little Roumanian village in 1882 began composing music when he was between six and seven; "he produces music as an apple-tree produces flowers," said M. Saint-Saëns. Whence brought the young Roumanian his talent—heredity, creation or rebirth?

A musical Prodigy

* * *

A TRADITION has come down from alchemical times of lamps that burned for centuries without tending; has an American inventor stumbled on the secret? Our American brothers lead in the world of invention, and it may be that one of them has given back to this century an old-time convenience. The inventor's brother—Mr. Nickum, of Logansport, Indiana—has made the following statement:

Ever-burning Lamps

> The light is contained in a round glass globe. . . . The light is a beautiful, never flickering, white light, and when the globes are once made and sealed remains constant forever thereafter. There are no wires and no electric current is used, but the light never goes out, and when not in use, can be placed in a bureau drawer or any convenient place until needed. The globe is cold, there being no loss of heat or movement from the interior to the outside. There is no possibility of a fire resulting from the use of the light, for the instant there is a crack in the globe the light will be extinguished. They can be broken in a keg of gunpowder without the slightest danger of an explosion. The nature of construction or process by which this new light is produced the inventor will not at present make public, but a light produced by the ever-present and perpetual vibration of matter is an accomplished fact, and a practical exhibition of the light will be made in the near future.

We shall await the verification of this story with interest, as there are some points in it that arouse doubt.

* * *

IN our January number we mentioned the very interesting

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statements of Mr. Howard Swan as regards the relation between sound and light. He considers that his experiments will lead to the understanding of the "inter-relation between light, sound and thought," and if this be so he will show himself as one of the pioneers in the inviting Borderland not yet recognised by science. He points out that light and electricity are both modes of motion, the effects of waves in ether, and are therefore of the same nature; some forms of electricity are cool and fine, yielding light and capable of playing in the body without injuring it. May there not be, asks Mr. Swan, yet finer vibrations that will benefit the body, a secret nervous force? In search of the answer to this question, he has carried on his experiments. He has trained his mind to imagine clearly some scene, while he sat in the dark; then to push the scene further and further away, diminishing in size as it recedes, till it vanishes, and a blank is left, "blackness and space, with no thought or scene present." If this blank be observed, "faint sheets of delicate phosphorescent light" are seen, often in motion. Let the object imagined be a sunlit scene, or the sun itself:

Sound and Form

> When this scene is afterwards pushed away and blank space is gazed upon in the dark room, it will be seen then that an appearance of faint delicate light is still left. If these appearances are watched as if they were reflections from some hidden electric lamp, behind or before the observer, it will be seen that they are in motion, sometimes slowly rotating, sometimes moving forward like smoke rings, sometimes moving in irregular forms. When the sheet is still it often has the faint tints of red, blue, and green, of the primary colours. When it moves or rotates it takes a delicate creamy filmy phosphorescent tinge. When it moves in rings it is sometimes greenish gold, and sometimes other colours. In the sense that they occur in the brain, these vortex rings are "subjective"; but inasmuch as they can be watched by the observer, if the attention is concentrated on them, much as any other dark room experiments, it is evident that to this extent they are "objective." They probably occur within the eyeball, or within the optic nerve itself.
>
> Now, these rings—and this is the important point of the discovery—are sensitive to sound. Musical notes will dance and jump them into all sorts of spangles, curves, forms or spots: often they assume forms like those exhibited by Mrs. Watt Hughes in her experiments on "Voice Forms."
>
> Further, these rings or sheets of faint filmy light within the brain are

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sensitive to spoken words. Words twist and turn them into various changng forms. When the words bear definite meanings they tend (at least in the author's case, and others have noticed similar effects) to assume geometric or organic forms. For instance, the word "just," slowly produced an image of two blunt triangles, with the points exactly opposite each other; "scatter," was a four-pointed star: "patience," a spiral, slowly assuming the form of a snail (emblem of patience, certainly!): words like kind, good, upright, produced certain similar movements, while words like bad, wicked, wrong, etc., produced entirely different ones. The words can be uttered aloud, or softly to oneself, or by another person, and the words which produce this effect, are abstract or emotional—not picture words.

Further, words denoting virtues cause movement in one direction and those denoting evil in another. Words can thus be arranged in a form which would send the energy of the listener in one direction and thus influence his brain and will. Music powerfully acts in a similar way. It is not necessary to show the bearing of all this on our theosophical studies.

* * *

A Gift from India

ONE of our very earnest Indian workers, A. Mahâdeva Shâstri, B.A., the Curator of the Government Oriental Library, Mysore, has issued a translation of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* into English, with Shrî Shankarâcharyâ's famous commentary, thus putting within reach of English readers one of the favourite studies of the Hindu. The work is admirably done, the English fluent and pleasant to read, the translation exact and scholarly. Moreover, the printer has done well his share of the task. Would that we had more Indian members who could, and would, send us gifts like this.

* * *

A Voice from the Past

THE *Indian Mirror* quotes from the *Pioneer* an account of a discovery which promises to be of great interest. A *stûpa* on the Budpore Estate, Basti District, has been dug out and its contents investigated. The excavators dug through eighteen feet of solid brickwork set in clay, and found buried below this a large stone chest. The chest was opened, and inside were several marble vessels, variously shaped, containing ornaments and relics. These consisted of pearls, gold-leaf stars, gold and gold ornaments, stars

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and other shapes cut in garnets, amethyst and various precious stones, crystals, beads and numbers of small bones. Round the lid of one of these marble vessels is an inscription, and it is said that this appears to indicate that these jewels may have belonged to the Lord Buddha Himself. If this should be verified, the Buddhist world will feel itself enriched.

* * *

A NEW plea has been offered on behalf of a murderer in Chicago. His lawyers urge that the conditions of his parentage, birth and upbringing, were such as to make his life of crime inevitable, and they argue that society should not hang a man whom it has done nothing to aid or teach. He was born at Chicago, Nov. 9th, 1871, while the city was in flames; his father was a drunkard, and the child grew up amid the vilest surroundings. He knew only the most depraved men and women, was a thief and vagabond "by nature," and came into contact with no good influences. His lawyers therefore argue that "being a natural born criminal, and having been left to the corrupt influences of his surroundings, he could not help doing what he did, any more than he would refuse to eat when he was hungry. In doing crime he was simply responding to an uncontrollable desire, or responding to a demand of nature." Let society shut him up, they say, so that he may no longer prey upon it, but do not let it kill him. Was this murderer's soul newly created by Love and Justice, and placed amid such surroundings, given never a chance in life, and left to conclude its sole experience of life on earth on the gallows or in penal servitude? Poor Christopher Merry's lines, if that be so, have not fallen in pleasant places, and he might reasonably complain that he has been less fairly treated than Emerson, Lloyd Garrison, or Theodore Parker, his countrymen.

Who is Responsible?

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BARDAISAN THE GNOSTIC

THE present essay will treat of Bardesanes, "the last of the Gnostics,"* as Hilgenfeld calls him, and so bring to an end the rough sketches of the Christian theosophists which we have endeavoured to reconstruct from the disfigured scraps of the originals preserved in patristic literature.

Bardesanes, or Bar-daisan,† was born at Edessa, on July 11th, 155 A.D., and died, most probably in the same city, in 233, at the age of 78. His parents, Nuhama and Nahashirama, were rich and noble, and young Bardaisan not only received the best education in manners and learning which was procurable, but was brought up with a prince who afterwards succeeded to the throne as one of the Abgars; he not only shared the young prince's martial exercises, but in his youth won great fame for his skill in archery. He married and had a son Harmonius.

At what age he embraced Gnostic Christianity is uncertain, but his eager spirit not only speedily converted his royal friend and patron, but induced the Abgar to make it the state religion, and thus Bardesanes must have the credit of indirectly establishing the first Christian state. When Caracalla dethroned the Abgar Bar-Manu in 216, Bardesanes made manful defence of the Christian faith before the representative of the Roman Emperor, so that even Epiphanius is compelled to call him "almost a confessor." Subsequently he went for a time to Armenia, where he composed a history based on the temple chronicles which he found in the fortress of Ani, and

* "Last of the Gnostics" in the sense of being the last who attempted to make any propaganda of the phase of the Gnosis we are dealing with, among the ranks of common Christianity; for the Gnosis was still studied in secret for centuries, and often reappeared in the pages of history in other guises, *e.g.*, the so-called Manichæan movement, for "You may pitch out nature with a fork, still she will find a way home."

† So called from the river Daisan (the Leaper), on the banks of which he was born.

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translated it into Syriac. This Armenian history of Bardaisan was the basis of the subsequent history of Moses of Chorene. Bardaisan was also a great student of the Indian religion and wrote a book on the subject, from which the Platonist Porphyry subsequently quoted. But it was as a poet and writer on Christian theology and theosophy that Bardaisan gained so wide a reputation; he wrote many books in Syriac and also Greek, of which he was said to be master, but even the titles of most of them are now lost.

His most famous work was a collection of 150 Hymns or Psalms on the model of the Psalm-collection of the second temple, as still preserved in the Old Covenant documents. He was the first to adapt the Syriac tongue to metrical forms and set the words to music; these hymns became immensely popular, not only in the Edessene kingdom but wherever the Syriac tongue was spoken.

Of the rest of his works we hear of such titles as Dialogues against the Marcionites, The Light and the Darkness, The Spiritual Nature of Truth, The Stable and Unstable, and Concerning Fate. Nothing, however, has come down to us except a Syriac treatise which was brought to the British Museum in 1843, among the Nitrian MSS. This MS. is entitled Book of the Laws of Countries, and purports to be a summary of Bardaisan's views of fate or karman, as set forth by one of his pupils. The Syriac text and an English translation were published by Cureton in 1855, and as in the case of the discovery of the Philosophumena MS. and Basilides, so once more the possession of an approximately first-hand source has revolutionised the old view, based on the hearsay of the Fathers generally, and of the polemic of Ephraim in particular.* In fact, the latest view (that of Hort) is to rob Gnosticism of Bardesanes, and carry him off into the fold of orthodoxy. As more is known and understood about the Gnostics this same policy will no doubt be adopted in other cases; but surely since orthodoxy has cursed Bardesanes throughout the ages, it

* Since the discovery of this new source, the chief studies of the subject have been made by Merx (*Bardesanes von Edessa*, 1863), Hilgenfeld (*Bardesanes der Letze Gnostiker*, 1864), Lipsius (art., "Gnosticismus," Ersch u. Gruber's *En.*, 1860; art., "Ueber d. Oph. Sys." in Hilgenfeld's *Zeitschrift*, 1863, pp. 435, 899), Hort (art., "Bardesanes," *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, 1877), and F. Nau, *Une Biographie inédite de Bardesane l'Astrologue*, Paris, 1897. By far the most capable study is that of Hort.

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might at least leave him the name derived from those from whom his master Valentinus learned his wisdom, and let him be Gnostic still.

But before considering Bardaisan's views on "fate," let us see whether we can abstract anything of value from the indirect sources. We are indebted for what we know mainly to Ephraim of Edessa, who wrote some 120 years later than our Gnostic. Of the temper of this saint when combatting a dead man, who had done him no injury, and who had been so loved and admired by all who knew him, we may judge by the epithets he applied to Bardesanes, who (he avers) died "with the Lord in his mouth, and demons in his heart." Thus he apostrophises Bardaisan as a garrulous sophist; of tortuous and double mind; outwardly orthodox, a heretic in secret; a greedy sheep-dog in league with the wolves; a faithless servant; a cunning dissembler practising deceit with his songs.

In his zealous fury, however, Ephraim confuses Marcionites, Bardesanites and Manichæans, although Bardesanes strongly opposed the views of the former and the religion of the latter was as yet unborn when the Gnostic doctor wrote. Ephraim's fifty-six Hymns against Heresies, for instance, the metre and music of which he stole from our Gnostic poet, are an indiscriminate polemic against not only Marcion, Bardaisan and Mani, but also against their disciples, the very different views of both teachers and pupils being hopelessly jumbled together. The only clear traces of Bardaisan are four scraps from his Hymns, quoted in the last two Hymns of Ephraim. The first three are as follows:

(1) "Thou fountain of joy
Whose gate by commandment
Opens wide to the Mother;
Which Beings divine
Have measured and founded,
Which Father and Mother
In their union have sown,
With their steps have made fruitful"

(2) "Let her who comes after thee
To me be a daughter
A sister to thee."

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(3) "When at length shall it be ours
To look on thy banquet,
To see the young maiden,
The daughter thou sett'st
On thy knee and caressest?"*

The first fragment is generally referred to the idea of Paradise, which is usually placed above the third of the seven heavens, or in the midst of the seven spheres; it seems, however, rather to refer to the Ogdoad or space above the seven phases of psychic substance, the Jerusalem above of the Valentinians.

The second fragment appears to be an address of the Divine Mother to the elder of her two daughters, the Wisdom above in the Plerôma and the Wisdom below in the Ogdoad, where is the spiritual Heaven-world.

The third fragment is most likely an address to the Divine Mother of all, the Holy Spirit, and refers to the consummation of the world-process, when the spiritual souls shall be taken from the Ogdoad into the Plerôma and made one with their divine spouses at the Great Wedding Feast, in the Space of the Light-maiden, the Wisdom above.

The remaining fragment consists of only two lines, and is as follows:

(4) "My God and my Head
Hast thou left me alone?"

This cry was ascribed to the lower Wisdom, by the Valentinian school, both in the world-drama, when the world-substance invokes the aid of her consort, the æonic world-fashioner, and also in the soul-tragedy of the spirit fallen into matter, the sorrowing Sophia, as in the Pistis Sophia treatise.

Nothing more of a certain nature can be deduced from the polemical writings of Ephraim, and the only scrap of interest we can glean from other writers is a beautiful phrase preserved by the Syrian writer Philoxenus of Mabug (about 500 A.D.) †: "The Ancient of Eternity is a boy"—that is to say, is ever young.

Let us now turn to Bardaisan's views on "astrology" and "fate," or in other words his conception of karman, and quote

* The translation is Hort's.

† Cureton, *Spicilegium Syriacum*, p. vi. (1855).

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a few passages from Cureton's translation of The Book of the Laws of Countries.*

This dialogue was written by a pupil of our Gnostic, and Bardaisan is introduced as the main speaker; in fact, the pupils only break in here and there with a short question for literary effect. We may be therefore fairly confident that we have in this treatise a faithful reproduction of the views, not only of Bardaisan on fate or karman, but also of the Gnostics of his school.

The following extracts from the speeches of Bardaisan will throw much light also on the astrological ideas in the Pistis Sophia.

"I likewise, . . . know that there are men who are called Chaldeans, and others who love this knowledge of the art, as I also once loved it,† for it has been said by me, in another place, that the soul of man is capable of knowing that which many do not know, and the same men meditate to do [sic]; and all that they do wrong, and all that they do good, and all the things which happen to them in riches and in poverty, and in sickness and in health, and in defects of the body, it is from the influence of those Stars, which are called the Seven,‡ they befall them, and they are governed by them. But there are others which say the opposite of these things,—how that this art is a lie of the Chaldeans, or that Fortune does not exist at all, but it is an empty name; and all things are placed in the hands of man, great and small; and bodily defects and faults happen and befall him by chance. But others say that whatsoever a man doeth, he doeth of his own will, by the Free-will that has been given to him, and the faults and defects and evil things which happen to him, he receiveth as a punishment from God. But as for myself, in my humble opinion, it appeareth to me that these three sects are partly true, and partly false. They are true, because men speak after the fashion which they see, and because, also, men see how things happen to them, and mistake; because the

* In his *Spicilegium Syriacum*, pp. 11, *sqq*.

† Before he met with the teaching of Valentinus.

‡ The seven mutually interpenetrated spheres of the Hebdomad, and not the physical planets.

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wisdom of God is richer than they, which has established the worlds and created man, and has ordained the Governors, and has given to all things the power which is suitable for each one of them. But I say that God, and the Angels, and the Powers, and the Governors, and the Elements, and men and animals have this power; but all these orders of which I have spoken have not power given to them in everything. For he that is powerful in everything is One; but they have power in some things, and in some things they have no power, as I have said: that the goodness of God may be seen in that in which they have power, and in that in which they have no power they may know that they have a Lord. There is, therefore, Fortune, as the Chaldeans say."

And that everything is not in our own Free-will, that is that Free-will is not absolute, is plainly visible in everyday experience. Fortune also plays its part, but is not absolute, and Nature also. Thus "we men are found to be governed by Nature equally, and by Fortune differently, and by our Free-will each as he wishes."

"That which is called Fortune is an order ot procession which is given to the Powers and the Elements by God; and according to this procession and order, intelligences [minds, egos] are changed by their coming down to be with the soul, and souls are changed by their coming down to be with the body; and this alteration itself is called the Fortune, and the Nativity of this assemblage, which is being sifted and purified, for the assistance of that which by the favour of God and by grace has been assisted, and is being assisted,* till the consummation of all. The body, therefore, is governed by Nature, the soul also suffering with it and perceiving; and the body is not constrained nor assisted by Fortune in all the things which it does individually; for a man does not become a father before fifteen years, nor does a woman become a mother before thirteen years. And in the same manner, also, there is a law for old age; because women become effete from bearing, and are deprived of the natural power of begetting; while other animals which are also governed

* Compare in the system of Basilides the "benefiting and being benefited in turn."

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by their own Nature, before those ages which I have specified, not only procreate, but also become too old to procreate, in the same manner as also the bodies of men when they are grown old do not procreate; nor is Fortune able to give them children at that time at which the body has not the Nature to give them. Neither, again, is Fortune able to preserve the body of man in life, without eating and without drinking; nor even when it has meat and drink, to prevent it from dying, for these and many other things pertain to Nature itself; but when the times and manners of Nature are fulfilled, then comes Fortune apparent among these, and effecteth things that are distinct one from another; and at one time assists Nature and increases, and at another hinders it and hurts; and from Nature cometh the growth and perfection of the body; but apart from Nature and by Fortune come sickness and defects in the body. For Nature is the connection of males and females, and the pleasure of the both heads [sic]; but from Fortune comes abomination and a different manner of connection and all the filthiness and indecency which men do for the cause of connection through their lust. For Nature is birth and children; and from Fortune sometimes the children are deformed; and sometimes they are cast away, and sometimes they die untimely. From Nature there is a sufficiency in moderation for all bodies; and from Fortune comes the want of food, and affliction of the bodies; and thus, again, from the same Fortune is gluttony, and extravagance which is not requisite. Nature ordains that old men should be judges for the young, and wise for the foolish; and that the valiant should be chiefs over the weak, and the brave over the timid. But Fortune causeth that boys should be chiefs over the aged, and fools over the wise; and that in time of war the weak should govern the valiant, and the timid the brave. And know ye distinctly that, whenever Nature is disturbed from its right course, its disturbance is from the cause of Fortune, because those Heads and Governors, upon whom that alternation is which is called Nativity, are in opposition one to the other. And those of them which are called Right, they assist Nature, and add to its excellency, whenever the procession helps them, and they stand in the high places, which are in the sphere, in

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their own portions, and those which are called Left are evil, and whenever they, too, occupy the places of height, they are opposed to Nature, and not only injure men, but, at different times, also animals, and trees and fruits, and the produce of the year, and the fountains of water, and everything that is in the Nature which is under their control. And on account of these divisions and sects which exist among the Powers, some men have supposed that the world is governed without any superintendence, because they do not know that these sects and divisions and justification and condemnation proceed from that influence which is given in Free-will by God, that those actions also by the power of themselves may either be justified or condemned, as we see that Fortune crushes Nature, so we can also see the Free-will of man repelling and crushing Fortune herself; but not in everything, as also Fortune itself doth not repel Nature in everything; for it is proper that the three things, Nature and Fortune and Free-will, should be maintained in their lives until the procession be accomplished, and the measure and number be fulfilled, as it seemed good before Him who ordained how should be the life and perfection of all creatures, and the state of all Beings and Natures."

Bardaisan thus makes Free-will, Fate, and Nature the three great factors of the kârmic law, all three being ultimately in the hand of God. Each re-acts on each, none is absolute. Nature has to do with body, Fate or Fortune with soul, and Free-will with spirit. None of them is absolute, the absolute being in God alone.

By a strange chance, however, one of the hymns of the great poet of Gnosticism has been preserved to us entire; it is now generally admitted* that the beautiful hymn, imbedded in the Syriac form of the apocryphal Acts of Judas Thomas, preserved in the British Museum codex, is almost undoubtedly from the pen of Bardaisan. It is a beautiful legend of initiation and was first translated by Wright;† it has now quite recently been retranslated by Bevan, using Wright's version as a basis. I had already some

* Nöldeke and Macke were the first scholars to call attention to the fact; see Lipsius' *Die Apocryphen Apostelgeschichten*, i. 299, *sqq.* (1885).

† Wright (William), *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*, ii. 238-245 (1871).

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six months ago finished my sketch of Bardaisan and quoted the Hymn from Wright's version, when in January Professor A. A. Bevan's text and translation of "The Hymn of the Soul" appeared in *Texts and Studies* (Vol. v., No. 3). Since the time of Wright so much work has been done on this "master-piece of religious poetry," as the Cambridge Reader in Arabic justly calls it, that the translation of the pupil is to be preferred to that of the teacher, and Professor Bevan's work must now be considered not only to have superseded Wright's, but to be the best on the subject.

The high probability of the Bardesanist origin of the poem is based on the following considerations.

The three main accusations of the orthodox Father Ephraim against Bardaisan, who, he says, taught that there were Seven Essences (Îthyê), are: "(1) that he denied the resurrection and regarded the separation of the soul from the body as a blessing, (2) that he held the theory of a divine 'Mother' who in conjunction with 'the Father of Life' gave birth to a being called 'the Son of the Living,' (3) that he believed in a number of lesser 'gods,' that is to say, eternal beings subordinate to the supreme God.

"Now, it is remarkable that these three 'heresies'* all appear distinctly in the Poem before us. There can be no doubt that the Egyptian garb, which the prince puts on as a disguise and casts away as soon as his mission is accomplished, represents the human body. The emphatic declaration that the 'filthy and unclean garb' is 'left in their country' conveys an unmistakable meaning; it would be difficult, in an allegorical piece, to deny a material resurrection more absolutely.† The true clothing of the soul, according to the poet, is the ideal form which it left behind in heaven and will resume after death.‡ As for the Father of Life, the Mother, and the Son of the Living, they here figure as the Father 'the King of kings,' the Mother 'the Queen of the East,' and the Brother 'the next in rank.' Finally the 'lesser

* The quotation marks are Professor Bevan's.

† Since Bardaisan, like all the great Gnostics, believed in reincarnation, such a conception as the resurrection of the physical body was nothing but a gross superstition of the ignorant. Such a "proof" of identity of doctrine as is here brought forward could thus only occur to one who had never realised the meaning of the doctrine of re-birth, though natural enough to official scholarship.

‡ Only after the "death unto sin"; the Light-robe is not for all.

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gods,' appear as the 'kings' (couplet 38), who obey the command of the King of kings."*

I do not know on what authority this beautiful poem has been called the Hymn of the Soul; there is no authority in the text for the title and the Gnostic poet had a far more definite theme in mind. He sang of the consummation of the Gnostic life, the crown of victory at the end of the Path; not of any vague generalities but of a very definite goal towards which he was running. He sang of the "wedding garment," the "robe of initiation," so beautifully described in the opening pages of the Pistis Sophia. Thus, then, in most recent translation runs what I will venture to call

THE HYMN OF THE ROBE OF GLORY

1. When I was a little child,
   And dwelling in my kingdom, in my Father's house,
2. And in the wealth and the glories
   Of my nurturers had my pleasure,
3. From the East,† our home,
   My parents, having equipped me, sent me forth.
4. And of the wealth of our treasury ‡
   They had tied up for me a load,
5. Large it was, yet light,
   So that I might bear it unaided—
6. Gold of . . . §
   And silver of Gazzak the great,
7. And rubies of India,
   And agate (?) from the land of Kushân (?),

* *Op. cit.*, pp. 5, 6.

† Either the Plerôma, or Ogdoad, the spiritual realms. The following notes are all mine.

‡ A Gnostic technical term.

§ Beth-'Ellâyê (Wright). It is highly probable that all the names of countries and towns, some of which Bevan has omitted as too doubtful, are substitutes for states or regions of the higher planes; the identification of some of them has entirely baffled the scholars, and the identification of the rest is mostly unsatisfactory. No doubt Bardaisan, or his son Harmonius, or whatever Bardesanist wrote the poem, was familiar with the great caravan route from India to Egypt, and used this knowledge as a substructure, but the whole is allegorical. It is, however, curious that some of the names identified were famous for their temples or centres of initiation.

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8. And they girded me with adamant
Which can crush iron.*
9. And they took off from me the bright robe,
Which in their love they had wrought for me,
10. And my purple toga,
Which was measured (and) woven to my stature.
11. And they made compact with me,
And wrote it in my heart that it should not be forgotten:
12. "If thou goest down into Egypt,†
And bringest the one pearl,‡
13. Which is in the midst of the sea §
Hard by the loud-breathing serpent,‖
14. (Then) shalt thou put on thy bright robe
And thy toga,¶ which is laid over it,
15. And with thy Brother,** our next in rank,††
Thou shalt be heir in our kingdom."
16. I quitted the East (and) went down,
There being with me two messengers, ‡‡
17. For the way was dangerous and difficult,
And I was young to tread it.
18. I passed the borders of Maishân,
The meeting place of the merchants of the East,
19. And I reached the land of Babel
And I entered the walls of . . .§§
20. I went down into Egypt,
And my companions parted from me.

* A symbol, presumably, for the lower mind, body, or vesture.

† The body; a technical term common to many Gnostic schools.

‡ The Gnosis.

§ Of matter, gross and subtle.

‖ The astral plane perhaps, or the elemental essence in matter.

¶ Two of the higher vestures, of which there were three. The two here mentioned are probably the buddhic and mânasic.

** The Higher Ego.

†† To the Mother and Father, Buddhi and Âtman.

‡‡ The powers that compel to rebirth presumably, the representatives of the Father and Mother.

§§ Sarbûg (Wright). These are evidently various planes or states.

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21. I betook me straight to the serpent,
Hard by his dwelling I abode,
22. (Waiting) till he could slumber and sleep,*
And I could take my pearl from him.
23. And when I was single and alone,
A stranger to those with whom I dwelt,
24. One of my race, a free-born man,
From among the Easterns, I beheld there—
25. A youth fair and well-favoured.
. . . . * * *
26. * * * *
* * and he came and attached himself to me.
27. And I made him my intimate,
A comrade with whom I shared my merchandise.
28. I warned him against the Egyptians
And against consorting with the unclean;
29. And I put on a garb like theirs,
Lest they should insult (?) me because I had come from afar,
30. To take away the pearl,
And (lest) they should arouse the serpent against me.
31. But in some way or other
They perceived that I was not their countryman;
32. So they dealt with me treacherously.
Moreover they gave me their food to eat.
33. I forgot that I was a son of kings,
And I served their king;
34. And I forgot the pearl,
For which my parents had sent me,
35. And by reason of the burden of their . . .
I lay in a deep sleep.†

* The serpent is evidently the passions, which inhere in the elemental essence.

† Is it possible that in the above a real piece of biography has also been woven into the poem? I am inclined to think so. It may even be a lost page from the occult life of Bardaisan himself. Filled with longing to penetrate the mysteries of the Gnosis, he joins a caravan to Egypt and arrives at Alexandria. There he meets with a friend on the same quest as himself. Bardaisan first of all has the misfortune to fall into the hands of some sensual and self-seeking school of magic and forgets for a time his real quest. Only after this bitter experience does he obtain the instruction he sought in the initiation of the Valentinian school. Of course this speculation is put forward with all hesitation, but it is neither an impossibility nor an improbability.

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36. But all those things that befell me,
My parents perceived and were grieved for me;
37. And a proclamation was made in our kingdom,
That all should speed to our gate,
38. Kings and princes of Parthia
And all the nobles of the East.
39. So they wove a plan on my behalf,
That I might not be left in Egypt,
40. And they wrote to me a letter,
And every noble signed his name* thereto:
41. "From thy Father, the King of kings,
And thy Mother, the mistress of the East,
42. And from thy Brother,† our next in rank,
To thee our son, who art in Egypt, greeting!
43. Up and arise from thy sleep,
And listen to the words of our letter!
44. Call to mind that thou art a son of kings!
See the slavery—whom thou servest!
45. Remember the pearl
For which thou didst speed to Egypt!
46. Think of thy bright robe,
And remember thy glorious toga,
47. Which thou shalt put on as thine adornment,
When thy name hath been read out in the list of the valiant,
48. And with thy Brother, our . . .
Thou shalt be . . . in our kingdom."
49. And my letter (was) a letter
Which the King sealed with his right hand,
50. (To keep it) from the wicked ones, the children of Babel,
And from the savage demons of . . .‡

* N es are powers. Compare the beautiful "Come unto us" passages in the Song of the Powers of the Pistis Sophia, *pagg.* 17 *sqq.*

† This reminds us of the beautiful parable of the "prodigal son," who had his dwelling with the swine for a time and at last returned to his father, to be held in higher honour than the son who had not left their common home.

‡ Sarbûg (Wright).

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51. It flew in the likeness of an eagle,
The king of all birds; *
52. It flew and alighted beside me,
And became all speech.
53. At its voice and the sound of its rustling,
I started and arose from my sleep.
54. I took it up and kissed it,
And loosed its seal (?), (and) read;
55. And according to what was traced on my heart
Were the words of my letter written.
56. I remembered that I was a son of kings,
And my free soul longed for its natural state.
57. I remembered the pearl,
For which I had been sent to Egypt,
58. And I began to charm him,
The terrible loud-breathing serpent.
59. I hushed him to sleep and lulled him into slumber,
For my Father's name I named over him,
60. And the name of our next in rank,
And of my Mother, the queen of the East; †
61. And I snatched away the pearl,
And turned to go back to my Father's house.
62. And their filthy and unclean garb
I stripped off, and left it in their country,‡
63. And I took my way straight to come
To the light of our home, the East.
64. And my letter, my awakener,
I found before me on the road,
65. And as with its voice it had awakened me,
(So) too with its light it was leading me
66. . . . . .
Shone before me with its form,
67. And with its voice and its guidance,
It also encouraged me to speed,

* The descent of the Holy Ghost or buddhic consciousness.

† The names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that is to say, the *powers* of the immortal principles in man, Átman (Higher), Manas and Buddhi.

‡ He left his body behind in trance, during the initiation.

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68. * * * *
And with his (?) love was drawing me on.
69. I went forth, passed by . . .
I left Babel on my left hand,
70. And reached Maishân the great,
The haven of the merchants,
71. That sitteth on the shore of the sea
* * * *
72. And my bright robe, which I had stripped off,
And the toga wherein it was wrapped,
73. From the heights of Hyrcania (?)
My parents sent thither,
74. By the hand of their treasurers,
Who in their faithfulness could be trusted therewith.
75. And because I remembered not its fashion—
For in my childhood I had left it in my Father's house—
76. On a sudden as I faced it,
The garment seemed to me like a mirror of myself.*
77. I saw it all in my whole self,
Moreover I faced my whole self in (facing) it.
78. For we were two in distinction.
And yet again one in one likeness.
79. And the treasurers also,
Who brought it to me, I saw in like manner,
80. That they were twain (yet) one likeness.†
For one kingly sign was graven on them,
81. Of *his* hands that restored to me (?)
My treasure and my wealth by means of them.
82. My bright embroidered robe,
Which . . . . . with glorious colours;
83. With gold and with beryls,
And rubies and agates (?)
84. And sardonyxes varied in colour,
It also was made ready in its home on high (?)

* Compare the logion: "As any of you sees himself in a mirror, so let him see me in himself."—Resch, Agrapha (*Texte u. Untersuchungen*, Bd. v., Heft 4), 36 *b*, and *As Others saw Him*, p. 88.

† The mystery of the syzygy; compare also 23 ff. above.

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85. And with stones of adamant
All its seams were fastened;
86. And the image of the King of kings was depicted in full all over it,
87. And like the sapphire stone also were its manifold hues.
88. Again I saw that all over it
The motions of knowledge* were stirring.
89. And as if to speak
I saw it also making itself ready.
90. I heard the sound of its tones,
Which it uttered to those who brought it down (?)
91. Saying, "I . . . . . .†
Whom they reared for him (?) in the presence of my fathers,
92. And I also perceived in myself
That my stature was growing according to his labours."‡
93. And in its kingly motions
It was spreading itself out towards me,§
94. And in the hands of its givers
It hastened that I might take it.
95. And me too my love urged on
That I should run to meet it and receive it,
96. And I stretched forth and received it,
With the beauty of its colours I adorned myself.
97. And my toga of brilliant colours
I cast around me, in its whole breadth.
98. I clothed myself therewith, and ascended
To the gate of salutation and homage;
99. I bowed my head, and did homage
To the Majesty || of my Father who had sent it to me,

* Gnosis; [the robe in the Pistis Sophia contains all "knowledges" (γνώσεις).

† I am the active in deeds (Wright).

‡ The Kâraṇa Sharîra, the causal body or vesture which constitutes the Higher Ego.

§ "It poured itself entirely over me" (Wright), the same simile as is used several times in the Askew Codex.

|| This seems to be One different from the Father Himself, and the subject of 101*a* and 104*a*.

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100. For I had done his commandments,
And he too had done what he promised,
101. And at the gate of his princes
I mingled with his nobles;
102. For he rejoiced in me and received me,
And I was with him in his kingdom.
103. And with the voice of . . .
All his servants glorify him.
104. And he promised that also to the gate
Of the King of kings I should speed with him,
105. And bringing my gift and my pearl
I should appear with him before our King.*

Well may Professor Bevan call this glorious hymn a "master-piece of religious poetry"; it is not only magnificent as poetry, but priceless as a record of occult fact. What then have we not lost by the barbarous destruction of the Hymns of Bardaisan!

G. R. S. MEAD.

* For a further consideration of this "glorious robe" see my essays "The Vestures of the Soul" and "The Web of Destiny" in *The World Mystery*, London, 1895.

AFFLICT not thyself too much and with inquietude because these sharp martyrdoms may continue; persevere in humility, and go not out of thyself to seek aid, for all thy good consists in being silent, suffering, and holding patience with rest and resignation. There wilt thou find the divine strength to overcome so hard a warfare: He is within thee that fighteth for thee, and He is strength itself.—*The Spiritual Guide*, DE MOLINOS, p. 84.

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THE SUFFERINGS OF ANIMALS

SOME time ago the subject of animals and their status in the order of being attracted considerable attention among contributors to these pages, and attempts were made to solve the problem of their share in the great crucible of suffering. The note struck was not so clear as that which relates to humanity. In the entire teachings of Theosophy nothing comes home to the mind, vexed with the endeavour to assign causes for existent facts, with greater logical force than the far-reaching principle of karma and its correlative, reincarnation. Without these, strict justice at least passes out of sight, and if justice be absent from one plane of existence, what ground have we to postulate that it will prevail on any other? For those who think—probably still the few in the mass of mankind—the world must be out of joint until they find the key to the vast problem, one found to fit every phase of the circumstances under which we live. But the light, which throws such a vivid illumination upon the nature of man as not only a sufferer but a creator of his sufferings, not only a being subject to physical law but a being responsible always in proportion to his advance out of ignorance into knowledge, becomes less clear when we turn from the condition of man and study the animal.

It is true that we have interfered with the course of nature in the animal world; that we have developed ferocious propensities which would otherwise have remained undeveloped in numbers of animals partially domesticated, or at least trained by us. We have made them slayers of their kind, as well as toilers for our well-being, and have accentuated cruel instincts, if we may so describe them, which would otherwise have died a natural death after the cravings of hunger had been satisfied. In these respects the animal is our victim, and the karma of these deeds descends on the heads of the selfish and incompetent teachers. On the other hand there has been a considerable body of domestic animals, fairly well used, who owe to us aid in their ascent in the

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evolutionary scale. They have been well treated for the most part because they were useful or valuable, and the lessons they have learned have been various, including a comprehension of the meaning of certain words and signs connected with their food or occupations. In the case of the special domestic pet—dog, cat or bird—the creature becomes semi-humanised, and finds its greatest happiness in the presence of its particular owner, ready indeed for incarnation in a more perfect form.

Would that the outline of the picture could remain here! But alas! history points backwards to the sorcerer's cruel deeds in the past, and to the vivisector's savage art in the present, and although we recognise the law which must bring retribution upon the misguided men who conceive that benefits can result from crime, or that Nature will ever disclose her choicest secrets through the violation of her sanctities and the sacrifice of all that is best and noblest in man, there yet remains this question awaiting answer: Why is this creature, Nature's continual child, ignorant and helpless, condemned to suffer? In the case of man, he may endure physical and mental pangs that he may learn to cease to inflict them; his body may perish by flame in order that he may, through a law of sympathy, come to shrink with horror from chaining his fellow to a stake and burning him alive for such chimeras as heresy; he may be maimed that he may realise that fighting with his brother has a cruelty and brutality in it that injure both. In this way, being a man with the germ of conscience, physical ills, terrible as they appear, may become blessings in disguise. But the animal who lies helpless in the vivisector's trough knows nothing but that it suffers; it has no knowledge of the future, no hope that the worst that can happen will come to an end, that its night of anguish may unfold into a day of rest; it is bound in the present, and its meed of torture is greater than that which falls upon the human being. There is, too, the willing horse, burnt to death in its stable; the cow no longer useful to the dairy driven to the slaughter-house, its enjoyment of the meadows where it has passed so many peaceful days exchanged for a terror born of the unfamiliar presence of the butcher and the scent of blood. There are the cattle-ships, with their pens of misery; and there are the streets

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of cities in which countless creatures, that were once well-fed and housed and kindly cared for, toil miserably in their last days.

Beyond this there is in addition the instinct of so many of the lower creatures to destroy each other.

> The Mayfly is torn by the swallow, the sparrow speared by the shrike,
> And the whole little wood where I sit is a world of plunder and prey.

The "cry of the children" in the factories fell upon pitying ears. Is no pity awakened for the miseries of the child-creatures even more helpless and more dumb, they whom we call the brute creation?

What of all this? Has the last word been said, the final explanation of these conditions given? It is true the animals suffer but little mentally, and that mental sufferings far exceed physical when man attains a certain development. But that does not blind us to the fact that physical sufferings to the animal are terribly severe. If it does not deserve them, then it is outside that great circle of justice which enables us of the human race to say sooner or later: "Behold! I have sinned! hence have these things fallen upon me!" And even the human savage, destitute of civilisation, of religion, of any developed moral sense, well knows that when he lifts his club to slay his brother, he is committing an injury upon him. This is not true of the Mayfly or the shrike.

If, then, any portion of creation is outside the law of karma, if creatures are born who suffer because suffering is part and parcel of physical conditions, and produces certain results of educational value, though dissociated from cause and effect, how does this affect our conception of the divine working in evolution? Is it harsher and harder than we had fancied, "careless of the single life," less mindful of the means than of the vast ends?

A great Teacher once said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father"; and in the same Scriptures it is also written: "For we know the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together." The first saying breathes of a moral law underlying the physical; the second of the limitations to which creatures cast in the physical mould are subject. Which is nearer the truth?

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The doctrine of the transmigration of souls by no means furnishes a clue to the solution. Disintegration may be possible, but never retrogression, and the circumstances of human life are so varied that they afford the discipline required for the shortcomings of every "soul that sins," and for all sins; a discipline that creates a far deeper impression on the Ego than any descent into the comparatively blind estate of the animal could do. Added to this conclusion, there is the fact that suffering is on too vast a scale in the animal world to permit of any logical aspect of such a theory. There are millions of flies, for instance, captured by millions of spiders, in the insect world alone. What the spider is to the fly we can only conjecture until we are able to realise psychically the conditions of other lives, but that the fly suffers certain pangs from the dart of the spider and its bites goes without saying. If not so intelligent as the bee or the ant, the fly will yet be found to occupy a fair position in a realm of Nature singularly crowded and over-productive.

To suffer individually and to be educated in a "block' seems a harsher creed than that of the poet, who, contemplating the "pangs of Nature," recorded his eternal hope that

> Not a moth with vain desire
> Is shrivel'd in a fruitless fire,
> Or but subserves another's gain.

Deep in the divine design lies doubtless the perfect answer to such questions as these. We have not yet exhausted all knowledge, nor declared that we can trace all effects to all causes; we are not yet complete interpreters of all the phenomena we see; we hardly yet know the realms assigned severally to justice and to education—where one begins and the other ends; we perceive and know only so far as we penetrate and recognise ourselves. Without suffering, it is certain that the animal *essence* would never receive its first impulse to ascend and evolve out of the physical world, to become that which will command it; and yet with it, it receives that which has been sown by no moral deserts that we can recognise. So far the question may be summed up. In the future greater insight may produce complete knowledge.

SUSAN E. GAY.

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BROWNING'S "RABBI BEN EZRA"

In reading the works of many of our great poets one has little difficulty in comprehending their views upon those problems of existence that occur to every thoughtful person. If we take up Keats, Shelley, Wordsworth, Milton, we know that the point of view taken by each will colour the poem to a large extent, as regards its bearing upon the mystery of life. This does not show itself so markedly in Tennyson, who to a greater extent sinks his own personality in that of the character which he happens to be pourtraying. But in none of these do we find that entire surrender of self, that whole-hearted merging of the writer's personality in his subject, that we see in Browning. In this particular Shakespere is the only parallel case.

Therefore, in making a study of any of Browning's works we must ever bear this in mind, and not fall into the error of necessarily identifying the philosophy we find in them with that of Browning himself. But that does not preclude us from being helped by them. Browning was such a giant in his range, so profound in his sympathy, so filled with a burning consciousness of the upward striving spirit of humanity, that whether he is pourtraying the limpid contentment of Pippa or the fiery struggles of Paracelsus, he has a deep message for us, the message of the growth of the soul into wider sympathies and clearer heights of vision. As he says in the dedication of *Sordello*: "My stress lay on the incidents in the development of a soul, little else is worth study. I, at least, always thought so—you, with many known and unknown to me, think so—others may one day think so."

The poem under our consideration is put into the mouth of Abraham Ben Ezra, a prominent Hebrew Rabbi of the twelfth century, and the author of several kabalistic and mystical works.

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Out of the experience of age he speaks words of hope and wisdom:

Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life for which the first was made:
Our times are in His hand
Who saith, "A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God, see all nor be afraid!"

Then he proceeds to say that he does not despise youth on account of its doubts and struggles in its search after the highest good, but sees in these very doubts a mark of the God-like attributes of the human soul, which will not rest contented with mere earthly pleasures, but is ever drawn on and on to something higher. Not by feasting on joy do we rise, but by everything that spurs us onward:

Then, welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids not sit nor stand, but go!
Be our joy three parts pain!
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe!

In spite of apparent failure, life is a success if only it be filled with effort and aspiration; this is a theme on which Browning is always great and helpful. He recognises the purity of motive, the mental attitude, as something of far higher importance than outward success or failure on the physical plane. He returns to this topic later in the poem, as we shall see. At present, he goes on to show the difference between the attitude of the worldly sensual man who lives and thinks for the sake of the bodily life, and the spiritual man who uses the body as the fulcrum of the lever by which the soul is raised:

What is he but a brute
Whose flesh hath soul to suit,
Whose spirit works lest arms and legs want play?
To *man*, propose this test—
Thy body at its best,
How far can that project thy soul on its lone way?

Yet he recognises the fact that the body is not to be despised; it is a vehicle of the soul; eyes, ears, brain gather and

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store knowledge and experience, and the heart is thankful for its passing phase of existence, though recognising it as transitory and incomplete, to be sometimes re-made and completed; for the soul, entangled in the delights of flesh, yearns for rest; if rest could be found in any attainment, any mental "prize," such rest might be compared with that of the "possessions of the brute," alluded to in the eighth stanza. At the same time he does not, like Plotinus, feel ashamed that he has a body, but recognises the use of the physical vesture as an aid to spiritual evolution:

Let us not always say,
"Spite of this flesh to-day
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole!"
As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry, "All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps soul!"

In his old age, the main struggle of the present life being over, the battle having been won, he is ready to pass away to other scenes of action as "a *man* for aye removed from the developed brute; a God though in the germ." Having reached this stage, having reaped the experience of earth-life, he now recognises the necessity of a rest in which to assimilate the fruits of his labour, in which to forge the weapons for the next fight. It is comparatively immaterial to us whether this be thought of as being done in the restful period of old age or in the calm of the heavenworld; the idea is the same, the assimilation of experiences, the preparation for another struggle in the future:

And I shall thereupon
Take rest, ere I be gone
Once more on my adventure brave and new:
Fearless and unperplexed,
When I wage battle next,
What weapons to select, what armour to indue.

Youth ended, I shall try
My gain or loss thereby;
Leave the fire ashes, what survives is gold:
And I shall weigh the same,
Give life its praise or blame:
Young, all lay in dispute; I shall know, being old.

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And so, as one may review a past day, he will review his life; placed now above the struggle, he can be impartial and just. For in the work-time of life man has enough to do "to act to-morrow what he learns to-day," and catch stray hints of the divine purpose of life. Youth for effort and strife after truth; age for repose and knowledge. Age, as the result of a life so spent, shall absolutely know "Right and Good and Infinite," subject to no dispute from the striving voices of earth, upon whose *dicta* age can sit in unwavering judgment. The world shall no longer be judge of the value of his life; it is a matter between himself and God. The decision of the point rests not upon "the vulgar mass called *work*," the only thing the world's "coarse thumb and finger" can value, but all the inner instincts and purposes of the man:

> Thoughts hardly to be packed
> Into a narrow act,
> Fancies that broke through language and escaped;
> All I could never be,
> All, men ignored in me,
> This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.

The last line suggests the noble and striking metaphor of the "Potter's wheel," which occupies the concluding seven stanzas of the poem, and in the application of which Browning rises to heats of poetry that may be called truly great. To those who would make sure of the passing pleasures of the body because life is fleeting and all is change, the Rabbi answers from the heights of his philosophy, from his knowledge of the reality of spirit, of the purpose of existence and of its consummation, of the final unchaining of spirit from matter when the cycle of necessity is trodden:

> Fool! All that is, at all,
> Lasts ever, past recall;
> Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure
> What entered into thee,
> *That* was, is, and shall be:
> Time's wheel runs back or stops: Potter and clay endure.

> He fixed thee mid this dance
> Of plastic circumstance,
> This Present, thou, forsooth, wouldst fain arrest:
> Machinery just meant

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To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.
What though the earlier grooves*
Which ran the laughing loves
Around thy base, no longer pause and press?
What though about thy rim,
Scull-things in order grim
Grow out, in graver mood, obey the sterner stress?
Look not thou down but up!
To uses of a cup,
The festal board, lamp's flash and trumpet's peal,
The new wine's foaming flow,
The Master's lips a-glow!
Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what needst thou with earth's wheel?

This daring and profound piece of symbolism is one of the grandest flashes of inspiration in our modern literature. Every line is rich with suggestion, and will repay meditation and thought. Quietly, after this magnificent outburst, the poem draws to a close. Coming back to the present, the Rabbi sees the need of the further work of the Potter's hands upon him, though in the past he has never forgotten that his aim and end was to be made a cup worthy to slake God's thirst. He prays God to take and use his work, amending all flaws, perfecting the cup in the way and time that seem best to Him.

To the lover of the essentials in Theosophy poems like this have a rare value. For the greatest worth of Theosophy to us is not in the accuracy of its system of thought, nor even in the elucidation of the relations of the lower and higher selves, nor in karma, nor in reincarnation. All these are subsidiary to the central truth of man's inherent divinity, of the God in man fashioning man more and more after His own likeness, until man's consciousness expands to God-like proportions, becoming infinitely wiser, nobler, more compassionate, until he returns to God laden with rich experience—a perfected cup filled with the new wine of spiritual life, fitted for the Master to slake His thirst withal.

* Note the continuation of the metaphor of the making of the cup, from its base in youth to its rim in old age.

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And that great practical teaching of Theosophy as to the relative value of thought and action—how that is emphasised in the poem. "Thought," we are told, "is the most potent factor in the creation of human karma";* it is thought that modifies the mental body and makes it of more or less value as an instrument for the higher Self, the God within. And this is precisely what Browning tells us in the seventh and twenty-fifth stanzas; the Rabbi's "worth to God" lies not in his work, but in his aspirations, his thoughts, his ideas that never found expression. There is no need for us to trouble ourselves as to signification attached to the word "God" in the poem, save to recognise the essential idea of the "power that makes for righteousness," the divine Will that moulds our lower selves into closer and closer likeness to Itself Let our concern rather be with the right mental attitude towards this Power, which is so well set forth by Browning. It is one of manly, whole-hearted acquiescence in the divine purpose, a bending of the lower will to the higher, a use of every power and faculty as an instrument whereby the soul may draw nearer to God, a life *in* the world but not *of* the world, a meeting of karma "with open arms," a full and joyful acceptance of the conditions of life as the best possible school of training. Not feeble whining about "the dreary desert of life," not sentimental longings for a "heavenly home," but rather a ringing cheer of battle as we meet our destiny face to face, and out of the present strife fashion the calm of the future.

H. ERNEST NICHOL.

* *The Ancient Wisdom*, by Annie Besant, p. 328.

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CONCERNING INTELLIGIBLE BEAUTY

FROM THE GREEK OF PLOTINUS

TRANSLATED BY W. C. WARD

(CONTINUED FROM p. 472)

VI.

WE must not suppose, then, that the Gods and the transcendently blessed inhabitants of the intelligible world consider propositions [*i.e.*, acquire knowledge by discursive methods], but we must regard all the things which are assembled there as so many beautiful pictures, such as one might imagine to be in the soul of a wise man, not painted pictures [*i.e.*, not counterfeits], but truly existing. For this reason the ancients said that ideas were beings and essences.

It seems to me that it was either from the accuracy of their science, or from a natural instinct, that the wise men of the Egyptians, when they wished to signify something of their wisdom, did not make use of written characters expressing words and propositions, or representing sounds and utterances of axioms; but by drawing pictures [*i.e.*, hieroglyphics], and typifying each thing in their sacred mysteries by one particular emblem, they manifested its significance. Thus each of these pictures is a science and wisdom (σοφία) in itself, being both a suggestion and a condensation, and not a discursive or analytical description. Subsequently, from this synthetic method was developed another mode of representation,* which expressed the meaning in a discursive manner, and discovered the reasons on account of which [the pictorial representation] was so devised as to cause anyone who is capable of such admiration to admire the

* "This refers," says M. Bouillet, "to the hieratic characters, which differed both from the hieroglyphics, of which Plotinus has spoken in the preceding sentence, and from the demotic writing [*i.e.*, the writing in common use]. With the hieratic characters were written the sacred books which formed the commentaries upon the hieroglyphics."

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"wisdom" [*i.e.*, the primitive symbolism], when he considers how, although it does not in itself express the reasons of its nature, it yet makes these reasons apparent in the [subsequent forms of writing] which are based upon it.

Thus in like manner the Beautiful, being hardly or not at all discoverable by investigation [for it is apparent only to intuition], must, if anyone should indeed discover it, subsist similarly prior to investigation and reasoning—to apply what we are speaking of to one great example—as that which is the cause of harmony in all things.

VII.

Since we agree that this universe is derived from a cause other than itself, and exists as in dependence on that cause, are we then to suppose that the Creator of it worked out in his own mind first the earth, and its stationary position in the centre, then water, and its place upon the earth, and the other things in their order up to the heavens; that he then contrived all living creatures, and the particular form of each, such as they now are, and the inward parts and outward members of each; and that lastly, after arranging all these things in his mind, he set to work to produce them? But for him invention of such a kind was not possible; for whence did it occur to him, seeing that he had never yet beheld any such things? Nor was it possible for him, taking his material from some source outside himself, to work upon it as artificers now work, who make use of hands and instruments; for both hands and feet were of later origin. It remains, then, that all things have a [potential] existence in another;* and, since nothing intervenes, by the proximity of Being to that other there shone forth, as it were of a sudden, a likeness and image of Himself; whether produced by Himself directly, or by the ministry of Soul, or of some particular soul, it matters not at present. All things in the universe, then, emanate from Him, and are more beautiful as subsisting in Him. For here they are impure, but there they are pure, and are possessed by forms [εἴδεσι, ideas] from beginning to end. In the first place matter receives the forms of the elements, then to these

* *I.e.*, in the matter which serves as their subject.—Bouillet.

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forms other forms are added, and yet again others; so that it is difficult indeed to discover matter, thus hidden under many forms. But since even matter itself is a kind of form in the very last degree (εἰδός τι ἔσχατον),* all is form; and this universal form produced all things as forms (their exemplar being form); and this in silence, since the maker was himself all things, being both essence and form. Wherefore the creation was thus without labour, and it was the creation of a universe, inasmuch as the Creator was a universe [*i.e.*, the creative Intellect is one with the intelligible universe]. Thus there was no obstacle, and he continues to rule; and although [in particulars] things become obstacles one to another, yet it was not so, nor is it now, with regard to that creation; for the Creator comprises all things in himself. But it seems to me that if we too were at once exemplars and essence and forms, and if the form which here creates were our very essence, that our own creative work would be accomplished without labour, although man, such as he has now become, creates a form different from himself. For now, having become a man, he has ceased to be universal; but ceasing to be a man, he "soars on high," as Plato says, and governs all the world."†

But to return: you can indeed assign a reason why the earth is placed in the centre, and why it is spherical, and why the ecliptic is thus appointed. There, however [in the intelligible world], it was not because there was a need for things so to exist that the Creator thus determined them; but because He is as He is, for this reason these things subsist rightly; as if the conclusion existed before the syllogism, and not as proceeding from the premises. For things do not there exist as consequences, or from design, but prior to design and consequence; since all these, and reason and demonstration and faith, are posterior. But since they proceed from Him as their principle, all these things so exist; and it is well said that we ought not to seek the causes of a principle, and especially of a principle such as this,

* Anything which is capable of definition is in that respect form, εἶδος. Matter, indeed, is the "indefinite," yet even in saying this we in some sense define it, so that a certain last vestige of form is attributed even to matter, the indefinite or formless.

† *Phædrus*, § 55.

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which is perfect, as being also the end. And that which is both beginning and end is all things at once and without deficiency.

VIII.

This principle [divine Intellect], then, is that which is primarily beautiful; and it is total beauty, and everywhere total, so that in no part of it is there any deficiency of beauty. Who, then, shall say that it is not beautiful? For certainly he will not have the right to say so who does not comprehend beauty as a whole, but comprehends it only partially, or not at all. Indeed, if that be not beautiful, what else can be? For the principle which is prior to it [the superessential One] does not will to be beautiful; but that which first becomes manifest, inasmuch as it is form and an object of intellectual perception, is indeed admirable to behold.* Plato, therefore, wishing to signify this in a manner more striking to our apprehension, represents the Demiurgus approving his accomplished work; † wishing by this to indicate how admirable is the beauty of the exemplar and of the idea. For whenever one admires a copy, his admiration is directed to the original of which it is a copy. And if he fail to understand what it is which affects him, it is no wonder; since lovers also, and those in general who admire sensible beauty, are ignorant that what really affects them is intelligible beauty; for it is on account of this that they admire sensible beauty.‡ But that Plato alludes to the exemplar [*i.e.*, the intelligible world], when he says that the Demiurgus admired his work, he shows plainly enough in the sequel; for, says he, he admired it and willed to render it yet more like to the exemplar itself; and he indicates of what kind is the beauty of the exemplar, whereas he says that that which is generated derives its beauty from it, and is as an image thereof. For, indeed, if the intelligible world were not transcendently and beyond conception beautiful, what could there be more beautiful than this visible world? Where-

* That which is first manifest is intelligible Being, *i.e.*, Being as an object of perception to intellect. But this is one with the divine Intellect itself, being the objective aspect thereof.

† See Plato's *Timæus*, § 14.

‡ Compare the *Phædrus*, § 63.

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fore those who find fault with this world do so wrongly,* except inasmuch as it is not the intelligible world.

IX.

Let us then form a mental image of this world, wherein each of its parts shall remain such as it is, yet shall be at the same time commingled with all the others. Let us conceive all things as collected into one, so that, whichever object first presents itself to the sight, we may straightway behold, as if enclosed within a transparent globe, the semblance of the sun and of the other stars together with it, and earth and sea and all living creatures; and, in fact, let it be so that all things whatsoever may be beheld within it. Be there then in the soul a distinct image of a globe, having all things in itself, whether they be in motion or at rest, or some in motion and others at rest. Now retaining this image, conceive in your mind another, from which corporeal dimension is taken away. Take from it also locality, and all notion of matter, and do not try to conceive this second sphere as smaller in dimension than the first [for it is to be void of all dimension]. Then calling upon the God who has made the world of which you have thus pictured to yourself an image, pray Him to be present.† And He will come, bringing with Him His own world [the intelligible world] with all the Gods that subsist therein; for He is one and all, and each of them is all, and they are conjoined in one though distinct in powers, but by the multiform power of unity they are all one. Or rather, the One God‡ is all, for He never becomes less, though all these Gods are produced from Him. But they are all together, and again each of them is separate from the others, yet without interval, nor have they any form which is apparent to the senses; for otherwise one would be here and another there, nor would each be all in himself. Neither hath each one parts differing from other parts or from himself, for there every whole is not as a power divided, and existing as a power according to the mea-

* Plotinus here alludes to the Gnostics.

† The above passage is of very great interest as setting forth the means thereby the state of ecstasy was reached. The Yoga system of Plotinus is before the reader.—G. R. S. M.

‡ *I.e.*, the divine Intellect, not the One itself.

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sure of its parts. This [intelligible] universe is universal power, proceeding to infinity, and infinite in power; and so great is that world that the very parts thereof are infinite. For where can anything be said to exist, that the intelligible comes not before it? Great indeed is this sensible world, and within it all powers are collected; but greater would it be, and that beyond words to express, were there not with it a corporeal power of which the very essence is smallness. And yet it might be said that the powers of fire and of the other bodies are great; nevertheless by their burning and corrupting and wasting, and ministering to the generation of living creatures, they do but imitate the infinity of true power. These indeed corrupt, whereas they also are corrupted, and generate, whereas they are themselves generated. But the power which is there [in intellect] alone hath true being, and alone is truly beautiful. For where were beauty, bereft of being? And where were essence, deprived of beauty? For according as anything is deprived of beauty, so does it fail of essence. And therefore is being desirable, since it is the same with beauty; and beauty is lovely, since it is also being. But which of these is the cause of the other, what need is there to inquire, their nature being one? Moreover, the false essence of body has need of an extrinsic semblance of beauty, that it also may appear beautiful, and, indeed, in order to its very existence; and it exists in so far as it participates ideal beauty, and the more it participates the more perfect it becomes; for thus it draws nearer to the true essence which is beauty.

(TO BE CONCLUDED)

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THE COMTE DE ST. GERMAIN

Political

THE earliest definite hint of any political work on the part of the Comte de St. Germain is from the pen of Madame d'Adhémar (*Souvenirs sur Marie Antoinette*, i. 8).

When sketching the portraits of those who were received into intimacy by Louis XV. at Versailles, she says: "The king was also much attached to the Duchesse de Choiseul, *née* Crozat; her simplicity, her frankness, more virtues than were necessary to make a success at Versailles, had triumphed over the drawback of her birth, and she was frequently present at the suppers in the smaller apartments. One man also had long enjoyed this favour, the celebrated and mysterious Comte de St. Germain, my friend who has not been rightly known, and to whom I shall devote some pages when I have to speak of Cagliostro. From 1749, the king employed him on diplomatic missions, and he acquitted himself honourably in them."

This passage would remain incomprehensible, unless we glance briefly at the history of the period. Dark and stormy is the scene on which we enter; difficult indeed is it to disentangle the knotted web of European politics which enmeshed the various nations. Austria and France had signed in 1756 an offensive and defensive alliance, especially directed against England and Prussia; Russia was with them; during the Seven Years' War the throne of Prussia tottered more than once, until the Austrians were defeated at Torgau in 1760. Poland, that "Niobe of Nations," was watching the clouds gather slowly on her horizon; racked within by strife stirred up by Russia, she struggled vainly against the stronger Powers; her day was slowly ending. England, at war in America and with France, striving also to conquer India, was also a centre of discord. All Europe was in dissension.

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Into this arena of combat the Comte de St. Germain was asked to step by the King of France, in order to make that peace which his Ministers—involved in their own plans—could not, or would not, make.

Louis XV. was practically the originator of the whole system of secret diplomacy, which in the eighteenth century seems to stand out as a new departure in the diplomatic political world. The Gordian knot which could not be disentangled, Louis XV. tried to cut; hence we find the King of France employing secret agents, men who could be trusted with delicate missions, men foredoomed to bear the blame of failure, fated never to be crowned with the palm of success.

Outside the various Foreign Offices, or beyond the pale of their secret archives, it is very little known that the Comte de St. Germain had any diplomatic mission whatsoever. In many histories and memoirs there is no mention of this phase of his life, therefore it is necessary to cite such writers as are available to bear their testimony on this point.

Not least amongst these stands Voltaire, the sceptic, who in his voluminous correspondence with Frederick of Prussia says, April 15th, 1758: "Your ministers are doubtless likely to have a better out-look at Bréda than I; M. le Duc de Choiseul, M. de Kaunitz, and M. Pitt do not tell me their secret. It is said to be only known by a M. de St. Germain, who supped formerly at Trenta with the Council Fathers, and who will probably have the honour of seeing your Majesty in the course of fifty years. He is a man who never dies, and who knows everything." (Lettre cxviii. de M. de Voltaire. *Œuvres de Voltaire*, ed. Beuchot, lviii. 360.)

The allusion "supped at Trenta" is a reference to the gossip which originated from Lord Gower's impersonation and misrepresentation of M. de St. Germain, of which mention has already been made. The important point in this letter is that Voltaire refers to a political connection of M. de St. Germain with the Prime Ministers of England, France and Austria, as if he were in the intimate council of these leaders. The Baron de Gleichen gives some details in his memoirs, and as he became later deeply interested in the mystical work of the Comte de St.

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Germain, his version is of much value, giving as it does an insight into some of the complications in France. He writes: "The Marshal (de Belle-Isle) was incessantly intriguing to get a special treaty of peace made with Prussia, and to break up the alliance between France and Austria, on which rested the credit of the Duc de Choiseul. Louis XV. and Madame de Pompadour wished for this special treaty of peace. . . . The Marshal drew up the instructions; the King delivered them himself with a cipher to M. de St. Germain. (*Mémoires de Charles Henri, Baron de Gleichen.* 1868, xi. 130.)

Thus, then, is the mission duly signed and sealed by the King himself, but, as we shall see, even the royal protection could not avert the suspicion and distrust which so unpleasant a position naturally incurred, and when M. de St. Germain arrived at the Hague he came into collision with M. d'Affry,* the accredited Ambassador from France.

Before entering on the ambassadorial despatches there are a few words from Herr Barthold to be noticed, giving an interesting account of this diplomatic mission; he—after criticising somewhat severely, and with good reason, the unreliable statements about our philosopher made by the Marquise de Créqui and the Markgräfin von Anspach—goes on: "But of this mysterious mission of the Adept, as financier to the crown and diplomatic Agent, to which he was initiated, not at the ministerial desk, but in the laboratory of Chambard, she makes no mention. Nor has this point—so essential to the understanding of the way business was conducted in France, both in Cabinet and State, at this period—ever been much commented on. About this time we find St. Germain at the Hague, evidently on a private mission, where the Comte d'Affry was French Ambassador, but the two had no relations with each other. Voltaire, who is generally a good reporter, ascribes the Comte's appearance to the Secret Treaty of Peace." (*Die Geschichtlichen Persönlichkeiten.* Berlin, 1846, Barthold, ii. 81.) The date mentioned by this author is not quite accurate, as we shall see.

* Ludwig Augustin d'Affry, a Swiss, born 1715 at Versailles, Ambassador at the Hague in 1755, became in 1780 Colonel of the Swiss Guard, died in 1793 at his castle Barthelemy in Waadt.

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That the Duc de Choiseul was profoundly annoyed when this information reached him, is to be understood; his pet schemes were in jeopardy, his intrigues against England were on the eve of failure; it appears that M. d'Affry "bitterly reproached M. de Choiseul for having sacrificed an old friend of his father, and the dignity of an Ambassador, to the ambition of making a Treaty of Peace under his very eyes, without informing him of it, through an obscure foreigner. M. de Choiseul immediately sent back the courier, ordering M. d'Affry to make a peremptory demand to the States-General to deliver up M. de St. Germain, and that being done, to send him bound hand and foot to the Bastille. The next day M. de Choiseul produced in Council the despatch of M. d'Affry; he then read his own reply; then, casting his eyes haughtily round on his colleagues, and fixing them alternately on the King and on M. de Belle-Isle, he added: 'If I did not give myself time to take the orders of the King, it is because I am convinced that no one here would be bold enough to desire to negotiate a Treaty of Peace without the knowledge of Your Majesty's Minister for Foreign Affairs!' He knew that this Prince had established, and always maintained, the principle, that the Minister of one department should not meddle with the affairs of another. It turned out as he had foreseen. The King cast down his eyes like a guilty person, the Marshal dared not say a word, and M. de Choiseul's action was approved; but M. de St. Germain escaped him. Their Highnesses, having made good their assent, despatched a large body of guards to arrest M. de St. Germain, who, having been privately warned, fled to England. I have some grounds for believing that he soon left it again to go to St. Petersburg." (*Mémoires de Charles Henri, Baron de Gleichen*, xi. 131, 132.)

No better account could be given than this, by one present at the French Cabinet Council, of the way in which Louis XV., weak and irresolute, allowed his arrangements to be cancelled without a word. Passing, however, rapidly on, to follow the events at the Hague, we next have some interesting despatches from M. de Kauderbach, Minister from the Saxon Court at the Hague, wherein he recounts much that has already been given in these pages in praise of the Comte de St. Germain, of his powers

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and knowledge, and then goes on to say: "I had a long conversation with him on the causes of the troubles of France, and on the changes in the choice of Ministers in this kingdom. This, Monseigneur, is what he said to me on the subject: 'The radical evil is the monarch's want of firmness. Those who surround him, knowing his extreme good nature, abuse it, and he is surrounded only by creatures placed by the Brothers Pâris,* who alone cause all the trouble of France. It is they who corrupt everything, and thwarted the plans of the best citizen in France, the Marshal de Belle-Isle. Hence the disunion and jealousy amongst the Ministers, who seem all to serve a different monarch. All is corrupted by the Brothers Pâris; perish France provided they may attain their object of gaining eight hundred millions! Unhappily the King has not so much sagacity as good nature; he is not, therefore, aware of the malice of the people around him, who, knowing his lack of firmness, are solely occupied in flattering his foible, and through it are ever preferably listened to. The same defect as to firmness is found in the mistress. She knows the evil and has not courage to remedy it.' It is he then, M. de St. Germain, who will undertake to cure it radically; he takes upon himself to put down by his influence and operations in Holland the two names so prejudicial to the State, which have hitherto been regarded as indispensably necessary. Hearing him speak with so much freedom, one must look upon him either as a man sure of his ground, or else as the greatest fool in the world. I could entertain your Excellency much longer with this singular man and with his knowledge of physics, did I not fear to weary you with tales which must seem rather romantic than real." (Article, "Un Prince Allemand du XVIII. Siècle, par Saint René Taillandier"; *Revue des deux Mondes*, lxi. 896, 897.)

The Saxon diplomatist, from whose despatches these extracts are gathered, very shortly changed his friendly tone, on finding that the Duc de Choiseul did not favour the plans of Louis XV.; the self-respecting diplomat then began to disparage the man whom so lately he had lauded as a prodigy, hence the next despatch is amusingly different in tone, and runs as follows:

* The Brother Pâris-Duvernoy were the great financiers, the bank monarchs, in the time of Louis XV.

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"April 24th, 1760. I have this moment heard that the courier whom the Comte d'Affry received last Monday brought him an order to demand from the State the arrest and extradition of the famous St. Germain as a dangerous character, and one with whom his most Christian Majesty has reason to be dissatisfied. M. d'Affry, having communicated this order to the *Pensionnaire*, this Minister of State reported it to the Council of Deputy Commissioners for the province of Holland, an assembly of which the Comte de Bentinck is President. The latter gave the man warning, and made him start for England. The day before his departure, St. Germain was four hours with the English Minister. He boasted of being authorised to make peace."

Later on, in another despatch, this wary diplomatist returns once more to the attack. "The adventurer gave himself here the airs of a secret negotiator, selected by the Marshal de Belle-Isle, from whom he showed letters in which there were in fact some traces of confidence. He wished it to be understood that the principles of the Marshal, differing from those of M. de Choiseul, and more in accordance with the inclination of Mme. de Pompadour, were warmly in favour of peace; he darkened the picture, painting in the strongest colours the cabals, the difficulties and the dissensions that he declared reigned in France, and by these flatteries he thought to gain the confidence of the English party. On the other hand he had written to the Marshal de Belle-Isle, that M. d'Affry knew not how to appreciate or carry out the plans of the Comte de Bentinck-Rhoon, who was a man of the best intentions in the world, and desired only to make himself useful to France in order to promote the success of her negotiations with England. These letters were sent back to M. d'Affry, with a command to forbid St. Germain to meddle with any transactions, on pain of expiating his rashness for the rest of his days in a dungeon on his return to France." (*Op. cit.*, 897).

Truly ludicrous is the difference in the tone of these documents; M. de St. Germain was endeavouring to carry out the wishes of the King, and trying to help an exhausted country; these efforts for peace were frustrated by de Choiseul, who had

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his own schemes to forward with Austria. Nothing more natural could have occurred than that the new helper should be attacked by the opposite party.

It is evident, from the paper cited, that M. de St. Germain was in the confidence of the Marshal de Belle-Isle—who also wanted peace—for the Saxon Ambassador uses the phrase "some traces of confidence," when speaking of the correspondence he had seen and the evidence of confidence he was forced to admit. From this distance of time we can see that the picture of France sketched by M. de St. Germain was by no means too dark; France impoverished, rushing wildly on to greater ruin, the end of which was to be a scene of blood and butchery. He who had the power of seeing the evil days that were drawing so steadily nigh, could he paint that picture too darkly, when endeavouring to stay the ruin of fair France?

But we must take up some other threads of this tangled skein. The King of Prussia was, at this period, in Freyberg, and his own agent, M. d'Edelsheim, had just arrived in London to confer with the English Ministers; the following account is given later by Frederick II. of the condition of affairs: "On his arrival in that city (London), another political phenomenon appeared there, a man whom no one has been able to understand. He was known under the name of the Comte de St. Germain. He had been employed by France, and was even so high in favour with Louis XV., that this Prince had thought of giving him the Palace of Chambard." (De l'hiver de 1759 à 1760, *Œuvres Posthumes de Frederic II., Roi de Prusse.* Berlin, 1788. iii. 73.)

The mission of M. d'Edelsheim is not clearly stated, but we find that not only did M. de St. Germain have to leave London, failing to bring about the peace so sorely desired, but that the Prussian agent fared even worse; the details are given by Herr Barthold (*op. cit.*, 93, 94): "The Prussian negotiator . . . . returning from London *viâ* Holland to fetch his luggage from Paris, was induced to remain a few days with the Bailly de Frouloy, and then, receiving a *Lettre de Cachet*, he was put into the Bastille. Choiseul assured the prisoner that it was only by these means that he could silence the suspicions of the Imperial

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Minister, Stahremberg, but this '*scène indécente*' was simply a trap to get hold of the Baron's papers. Choiseul, however, found nothing and told him to decamp, advising him on his leaving Turin not to re-enter the kingdom. Frederick takes care not to find fault with his agent, who through over-zeal had drawn discredit on himself in Paris; on the other hand, one may conclude that it was he who, through an article in the London *Chronicle*, succeeded in frustrating St. Germain's project."

In this extraordinary maze of secret negotiations it is difficult to find the truth, for in the work just cited we hear that St. Germain was seen in the Bois de Boulogne in May, 1761. When the Marquis d'Urfé informed the Duc de Choiseul of his presence in Paris that Prime Minister replied: "Je n'en suis pas surpris, puis qu'il a passé la nuit dans mon cabinet." (*Op. cit.* 94.) This informant proceeds: "Casenova is therefore satisfied that de Choiseul had only pretended to be annoyed with M. de St. Germain, so as to make it easier for him to be sent to London as agent; Lord Halifax however saw through the plan."

This would indeed be one method of cutting the political entanglement of France!—an intrigue of a pronounced sort arranged by the King, apparently without the knowledge of his chief Minister, in order to arrive at a peace for which the whole country pined. In this difficult situation the Marshal de Belle-Isle selected the Comte de St. Germain as the messenger of peace. Alas! missions of peace rarely result in anything but discomfort and slander for the bearer of the message, and the history of the world recorded one more failure, a failure caused by the ambitions of the political leaders.

Leaving now the condition of affairs in France and passing on to England, we find some very interesting correspondence between General Yorke, the English representative at the Hague, and Lord Holdernesse in London. By especial permission from the Foreign Office we have been kindly permitted to make use of these extracts. The full correspondence is too lengthy to print in the limited space permissible in these pages. The first despatch is from General Yorke to the Earl of Holdernesse; it is dated March 14th, 1760, and gives the full account of a long interview between the Comte de St. Germain and himself. The

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former claims, he says, to have been sent by France to negotiate concerning the Peace, but says that Mons. d'Affry is not in the secret. The answer to this document comes from "Whitehall, March 21st, 1760," and is from Lord Holdernesse to General Yorke; in this he directs the latter "to tell M. de St. Germain that by the King's orders he cannot discuss the subject with him unless he produces some authentic proof of his being employed with the consent and knowledge of the French King." In the next despatch, dated Whitehall, March 28th, 1760, "the King directs that the same answer should be returned to Mons. d'Affry as has already been given to M. de St. Germain. The King thinks it probable that M. de St. Germain was authorised to talk to General Yorke in the manner he did, and that his commission is unknown to the Duc de Choiseul."

The insight of George III. in this case is remarkable, unless in his private correspondence with Louis XV. some hint as to the real condition of things may have been given by one king to the other. In any case the fact remains that owing to M. de Choiseul the Treaty of Peace was not arranged; and, as we have seen, M. de St. Germain passed on from England to Russia. Turning now to some other witnesses, we find M. Thiébault in his memoirs saying: "While this singular man was at Berlin, I ventured one day to speak of him to the French envoy, the Marquis de Pons Saint-Maurice; I privately expressed to him my great surprise that this man should have held private and intimate relations with persons of high rank, such as the Cardinal de Bernis, from whom he had, it was said, confidential letters, written at the time when the Cardinal held the portfolio for Foreign Affairs, etc.; on this last point the envoy made me no reply." (*Mes Souvenirs de vingt ans de séjour à Berlin*, par D. Thiébault. 3rd ed. Paris, 1813, iv. 84.) This passage implies other diplomatic missions, of which no details are to be found.

Another writer, who has also been quoted, makes an important statement to the effect that when M. de St. Germain was in Leipzig the Graf Marcolini offered him a high public position at Dresden. Our philosopher was at Leipzig in 1776, under the name of Chevalier Weldon, and did not at all conceal the fact that he was a Prince Ragotzy. This informant says: "The Lord

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High Chamberlain, Graf Marcolini, came from Dresden to Leipzig and made to the Comte—in the name of the Court—certain promises; M. de St. Germain refused them, but he came in 1777 to Dresden, where he had much intercourse with the Russian Ambassador, von Alvensleben." (*Abenteuerliche Gesellen*, G. Hezekiel, Berlin, 1862, i. 46.) This statement can be corroborated by the writer of the life of Graf Marcolini, which has been carefully compiled from the secret archives of the Saxon Court (with especial permission) by the Freiherr Ô'Byrn.

The Graf Marcolini was a man renowned for his integrity and upright character; his biographer says: "Considering the strong opposition shown by the Graf Marcolini to the swindling in the Schröpfer affair, the sympathy he extended to the Comte de St. Germain on his arrival in Saxony is all the more wonderful. . . . Graf Marcolini repaired to Leipzig with the intention of interviewing St. Germain on hearing of his arrival under the name of Welldoun, October, 1776 . . . the meeting resulted in the Graf offering St. Germain an important post in Dresden if he would render a great service to the State; the 'Wonder Man' however refused these offers." (*Camillo, Graf Marcolini, Eine Biographische Skizze*, v.F.A.Ô'Byrn, Dresden, 1877.)

Nowhere are to be found the details of any of these diplomatic missions; we can only gather the fragments and, piecing them together, the fact stands clearly proved, that from Court to Court, among kings, princes, and ambassadors, the Comte de St. Germain was received and known, was trusted as friend, and by none feared as enemy.

ISABEL COOPER-OAKLEY.

TO BE CONTINUED)

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THEOSOPHY AND THE NEW ASTRONOMY

(CONCLUDED FROM p. 534)

WE are able to state another great fact, namely, that the nebulæ are really stars in process of formation, and that all stars have once been nebulæ. All the nebulæ which we now see in the heavens are at the present time undergoing a process of condensation into stars. Both stars and nebulæ are swarms of meteoritic stones, the only difference being, according to the classifications of the spectroscope, that in stars the swarm is more condensed than in nebulæ. According to the latest classifications, there are at least twenty-eight different forms of nebulæ There are extensive diffused nebulæ, nebulæ which are brighter in more than one place, narrow long nebulæ, irregular nebulæ. round nebulæ, nebulæ that are gradually a little brighter in the middle, nebulæ that are gradually much brighter in the middle, nebulæ that are suddenly much brighter in the middle, round nebulæ increasing gradually in brightness up to a nucleus in the middle, round nebulæ that show a progression of condensation, nebulæ that have a cometic appearance, nebulæ that draw progressively towards the period of final condensation, planetary nebulæ and spiral nebulæ. It is most wonderful to observe some of the fantastic shapes which some of these nebulæ assume. Some of them give evidence of the fact that in reality they are the intersecting points of vast streams of stones travelling through space like a river. Sometimes these streams meet each other as they are moving in opposite directions, sometimes they intersect at right angles, sometimes they whirl round each other, and form a vortex, or whirlpool, like two intersecting currents of water. We are all familiar with the group of stars called the Pleiades, or, as they are commonly called, the Seven Sisters, in the constellation Taurus. In reality this group is a vast nebula,

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and the seven stars which we see in it are the points of intersection of the meteoritic swarms of which it is composed. This Pleiades group of stars has been the object of very careful study, and it has been ascertained that all the stars in this cluster have a common movement through space, and they therefore form a single system. As a matter of fact, there are 1,400 stars altogether in the group of the Pleiades, and powerful telescopes show wisps of nebulous matter winding about among the principal stars in the cluster, and appearing in streaks and streamers throughout the whole group. The principal stars appear to have a strong physical relationship; their spectra are ascertained to be identical, and they are moving through space in the same direction and at the same rate.

Careful observations show that internal changes are going on in many of the principal nebulæ. Norman Lockyer in his great work, *The Meteoritic Hypothesis*, says: "It must be premised at the outset that the conditions under which these swarms—all in motion—exist in free space, must be very diverse; they may be condensing by virtue of the collisions of their particles and the action of gravity, undisturbed so to speak; they may be condensing while gigantic intakes of foreign swarms go on; possibly, though not necessarily, in many planes, the intakes, like comets in our own system, being deflected or annexed. Again, streams or sheets of nebulous material, invisible if undisturbed, may encounter others, and in this way luminous patches of undefined shape may be produced by motions, crossings and interpenetrations, the brighter portions being due to a greater number of collisions per unit volume." He shows that as the condensation goes on, the rotational motion will be accelerated. In the nebula of Andromeda we notice gaps due to indraught action, which we can see from the photographs is now going on. We have a concentration towards the centre, the dark gaps representing either the absence of matter or the presence of meteor dust in a region where it is all going the same way.

The main difference then between a nebula and a star is simply the difference in the length of time during which the condensation has been going on. When a star or sun starts its physical existence, it starts as a widely diffused aggregation of meteoritic stones,

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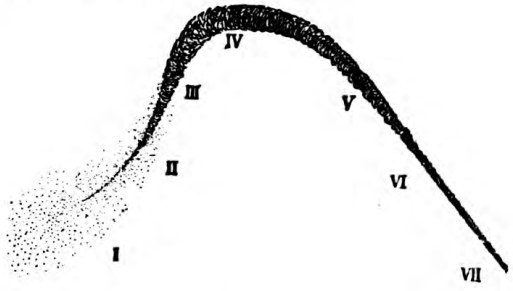
or perhaps dust, the particles of which travel with considerable velocity among one another. It has very little heat energy, and consequently gives out little or no light. The classification of Lockyer places all the aggregations or masses of matter in the universe in seven groups, based according to their temperature and spectroscopic indications in their different stages of evolution. The following is a rough sketch of his temperature curve, showing the process from diffused aggregation and no heat to increasing condensation and highest temperature, and from highest temperature down to complete consolidation, back to no heat, based on spectroscopic analysis:



TEMPERATURE CURVE SHOWING THE VARIOUS GROUPS OF HEAVENLY BODIES THE TEMPERATURES OF WHICH ARE EITHER INCREASING, AT A MAXIMUM, OR DECREASING.

He says: "We have on the left arm of the curve those bodies in which we get a rise of temperature due to collisions and condensation. Along the top of the curve we have the gradual formation of a globe of gas. Toward the top of the curve we get hydrogen enormously developed; we deal with a greater and greater quantity of hydrogen as the temperature gets higher. The gas begins to cool, and gradually condenses, until at the lower right hand arm of the curve, as a result of the total action, we get the formation of a body like the earth."

Each star or sun then has seven periods of life:

1. It commences as a widely diffused swarm or aggregation of stones distributed in space. The spectrum shows radiation lines and flutings to be predominant.

2. The swarm tends to form a centre of gravity towards which the particles begin to gravitate, and in gravitating collide. The spectrum shows mixed radiation lines and absorption predominant.

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3. The swarm has formed a more definite centre or nucleus. Collisions are more frequent. The spectrum is line absorption predominant, with increasing temperature.

4. The swarm continues its condensation. It occupies less space. It is approaching the period of greatest heat. Many of its meteorites are driven into vapour by their collisions. The amount of heat generated is greater than the amount radiated, hence it is getting hotter. The spectrum of this stage shows the simplest line absorption to be predominant.

5. The swarm has attained its period of greatest heat. Many of its meteorites are driven into gas. It is now a first class star. It has formed a gaseous atmosphere, and its radiation is beginning to be slightly in excess of its heat generation. The spectrum shows line absorption predominant, with decreasing temperature.

6. The swarm is beginning to consolidate. The paths of the meteorites are more confined, hence the heat derived from their motion is less than that radiated into space. It forms a star of the second class, having a yellowish red colour. The spectrum shows carbon absorption to be predominant.

7. The swarm has nearly completed its consolidation. There are no motions of its particles, consequently no light nor heat. There is extinction of luminosity.

Lockyer says: "The chemical elements are themselves forms of hydrogen. As the temperature runs down, the hydrogen gradually disappears. It must go to form something else. We get association due to reduced temperature in the same way that we get dissociation due to increased temperature. With decreasing hydrogen we get gradually association and an increasing quantity of the metallic elements (Group V.) and subsequently of carbon, which becomes absorbing instead of radiating. We get dark band spectra instead of light, as on the other side of the curve. The light of the stars is gradually blotted out by an enormous quantity of carbon compounds in some form or other, till at last it gets blood red and is lost to human ken. The solar atmosphere consists chiefly of iron, calcium and similar metals, but hydrogen is disappearing; there is a small trace of carbon. The sun's atmosphere at present is almost identical with a

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mixture of meteorites driven into vapour by strong electric currents." A great many stars are not stars like the sun, but simply collections of meteorites, the particles of which may be thirty, forty or fifty miles apart.

These then, according to the meteoritic hypothesis, are the seven periods of life of those luminous orbs which constitute the masses of matter of the material universe.

In the case of double and multiple stars, Lockyer concludes that these have condensed from double and multiple nebulæ. In the case of variable stars, Lockyer says that most of the variable stars which have been observed belong to those classes of bodies which are uncondensed meteor swarms or condensed stars, the light of which is nearly extinct, and round which a swarm or swarms is circulating. In the case, for instance, of the star Algol, which is one of the most notable variable stars, it is now definitely ascertained that this variability is caused by the revolution of a large dark body round Algol, which intercepts the light from Algol. The period of this revolution is sixty-nine years.

The following then are a few of Lockyer's general conclusions :

1. All self-luminous bodies in the celestial spaces are composed of swarms of meteorites, or of masses of meteoritic vapour produced by heat. The heat is brought about by the condensation of meteor swarms due to gravity, the vapour being finally condensed into a solid globe.

2. The existing distinction between stars, comets and nebulæ rests on no physical basis.

3. In a single swarm of sufficient magnitude the ordinary process of evolution will in time produce successively the luminous phenomena, the sequence and characteristics of which are defined by the Groups I. to VII.

4. New stars, whether seen in connection with nebulæ or not, are produced by the clash of meteor swarms.

5. The colours of stars follow in orderly sequence through the different groups, and depend upon the temperature and the physical condition of the swarm or condensed mass with absorbing atmosphere. The order is as follows:

Group I. Blue, greenish blue, white or pale gray.

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Group II. Yellowish red.
Group III. Yellow to white.
Group IV. Bluish white.
Group V. White to yellow.
Group VI. Reddish yellow to blood red.
Group VII. Dark, or nearly dark bodies.

There are suns that are just beginning their life of almost infinite years, suns in the middle of their course, and suns which are growing old and casting feeble beams. Here, then, we see in operation on a scale infinitely vast, the laws of growth, maturity and decay. We find that the entire inorganic universe is subject to laws of evolution as well as the organic.

Having ascertained that comets, nebulæ and suns are all swarms of meteoritic stones in various stages of condensation, let us proceed to unify a step further, and ask, what information can we obtain respecting the planets? The name of J. Norman Lockyer, among a host of other great observers in this work, stands pre-eminent. His voluminous researches on this whole subject are rapidly revolutionising our ideas concerning the material universe, and furnish inductive proof of the strongest kind to eastern cosmology. Lockyer's works on spectrum analysis, the meteoritic hypothesis, solar physics, and on the evolution of the heavens and the earth, are the inaugurators of a new cosmology based on the scientific method. To him more than to any other man now living is due the vast development in the science of spectrum analysis, especially in its application to astronomical investigations. Lockyer's work unifies the material universe, and shows that the different groups and species to which the masses of matter in the material universe belong, are due, just as in the organic world, to different stages in the evolutionary process.

It remains for us now to ask the question, what are the planets? There are in all, so far as known, eight planets following definite orbits, and arranged at various distances from the sun. They are called Mercury, Venus, the Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune. They all have their own periodic times of revolution. Now what are these bodies called planets? Let us see first what information science gives us of our own

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earth. Let us take our earth as a sample planet. Now, it is acknowledged by the greatest physicists, that, according to the laws of physics, the interior of the earth must be in a state of the most intense heat. It is known that the melting point of any substance, or the point at which it passes from the solid to the liquid state, depends on two things, first, upon the kind of substance, and, second, upon the pressure to which it is subjected. All substances which contract in bulk when melting have their melting points lowered by increase of pressure; and all substances which expand in the act of melting, have their melting points raised by increase of pressure. Ice is a substance which contracts in the act of melting. One pound of water occupies less space than one pound of ice. Therefore, by applying pressure to ice, its melting point is lowered. At atmospheric pressure, ice melts at thirty-two degrees. With a pressure of one ton per square inch ice melts at two degrees under its ordinary melting point. Nearly all the metals and earths are substances whose melting points rise with increase of pressure. The melting point of wax is raised twenty degrees by 500 atmospheres pressure, and by applying 100 atmospheres pressure to solid paraffin, its melting point is raised seven degrees. This law, in conjunction with the law that pressure increases the temperature of a substance, doubtless explains the enormous heat which exists in the interior of the earth. It is a well-known fact that the further we go down into the earth, the higher the temperature becomes. It is found on an average that for every sixty feet of descent into the earth the thermometer rises one degree in temperature. At this rate then the temperature two or three hundred miles below the surface of the earth must be at a white heat. Now, the amount of heat which each square foot of the earth's surface radiates into space each year is 126 heat units. This, rendered into its mechanical equivalent, is equal to three and a half horse-power. The immense heat, then, which exists in the interior of the earth, is produced, not by combustion of any kind, but by the immense pressure to which the materials of the earth are subjected from the superincumbent strata. Everything is made white-hot, and would immediately melt, were it not for the law that that same pressure also elevates the melting

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point of these substances far above their ordinary melting points. The rigidity or density of the earth is about the same as a ball of steel of the same size. It is calculated that every mile of descent adds a pressure of 800 atmospheres, or five and a half tons per square inch. We can therefore imagine how much heat must exist in the earth's interior. This pressure brings the earth's interior to an incandescent state, yet it keeps the materials absolutely rigid and solid.

It is to mathematical physics that we must look for information respecting the physical condition of our earth in the far distant past. Lord Kelvin first showed in 1844 how to deduce in certain cases, from a consideration of the laws of heat conduction, the temperature of a body in past time from its observed condition in the present. Professors Tait and Thomson (Kelvin) tell us that, knowing the earth's present temperature, and the rate at which the earth is at present losing heat, we can calculate backwards how its heat was arranged a hundred thousand or a million years ago just as certainly—says Professor Tait—"as we can predict from our mathematical calculations what will be its distribution at any future time, if physical laws remain as they are. Going back millions of years into the past, it is found that the earth must have been hotter and hotter; and going back to a time in the infinitely distant past, it is found that there is a limit of time beyond which the equations become uninterpretable." "So far," says Professor Tait, "as our equations represent what would be the course of nature provided the existing physical laws remained true, there must have been at this definite epoch of past time, the introduction of a new state of affairs, something which arose from a previous state by means of a process not contemplated in our investigation." His conclusions are that the equations lead to a state of things which could only be produced by a falling together of the parts of which the earth is composed, or by the condensation of an aggregation of particles impinging upon each other with high velocities. According to the mathematical researches of these eminent scientists, then, what now constitutes the solid earth originally consisted of a vast swarm of meteoric particles moving among one another with high velocities, the condensation taking

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place owing to the passing of the energy of motion of the particles into heat due to the collisions of the particles.

The researches of Lockyer on this subject leave little room for doubt that such has been the origin of the earth, and also of the other planets in the solar system. His conclusions are mainly established by the work of the spectroscope. The planets also existed as swarms or aggregations of stones which have condensed from their vapours, produced by the collision of their particles. In all probability they were drawn into the solar system by the sun as comets, thus becoming permanent members of the system. It has been conclusively demonstrated that the rings of Saturn consist of swarms of stones still circulating around the main body. There are several of our planets still in a more or less molten condition, and still so hot, that the forms of life, as we know them here on earth, cannot exist there at present. In the great economy of nature, they are in all probability undergoing a process of evolution, whereby in future ages they will become the habitations of animal life. The advent of man upon our earth dates far back in the cycles of geological history. The earth, by the ceaseless operation of all the natural forces, both from within and from without, was for millions of years prior to the appearance of physical man undergoing a succession of physical changes, so that it could become the abode of the higher types of the animal kingdom, as we know them.

We have discussed this subject from a spectroscopic basis. Let us now for a few minutes approach it from another standpoint. What I wish to do is to show that modern science cannot help arriving at the same goal as the esoteric philosophy. It may use a different method, but as there is only one truth, it is bound to arrive at that truth. There is more than one method of travelling to a certain point. You may get there by railroad, and I may go by a balloon, and you should not condemn my method of travelling because I get there before you.

Now Professor George H. Darwin has shown that it is highly probable, from a mathematical point of view, that the meteoritic hypothesis is the true one, and that the nebulæ may consist of swarms of meteorites colliding with each other. This is carrying

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what is called the kinetic theory of gases into cosmical physics. We know that a gas consists of billions of atoms or molecules colliding with one another, the number of collisions per second depending on what is called the temperature and the pressure of the particular gas. For instance, a particle of ordinary atmospheric air vibrates or collides with its neighbouring particles something like ten million times per second, and travels about 1570 feet per second. A free molecule of hydrogen has a velocity of upwards of a mile in a second, and its direction of motion is changed millions of times in a second. Now, the same law may hold good in the infinitely great as in the infinitely little. One fact against the nebular theory is that there is no perceptible trace in the solar system of the nebulous gas from which the whole is supposed to have been evolved. On the other hand, there is evidence of abundance of solid bodies flying through space in the form of meteorites.

Professor Darwin says: "The luminous gas which undoubtedly forms the visible portion of the nebulæ, is simply gas volatilised from the solid state, and rendered incandescent by the violent impact of meteoritic stones. These gases cool quickly, cease to be luminous, and condense again into the solid state, but the collisions being incessant, the whole nebula shines with a steady light. The immediate antecedent of the sun and planets was not a continuous gas, but a swarm of loose stones. Celestial bodies are drawn on so large a scale that meteorites may be treated as molecules, and their collisions are so frequent that the whole may be treated as a gas. If two stones meet, the chance of their fracture is greater if they are great than if they are small, and the breakage may go on until a certain size, dependent on the average velocity of the meteorite, is reached, after which it may become unimportant. When the gases generated in collision cool, they will condense into a metallic rain and this may fuse with the meteorites." Darwin subjects the meteoritic theory to a most rigid mathematical analysis, choosing as a particular test case the development of the solar system and the sun from a swarm of stones, and he finds that it answers the present condition of affairs better than any other theory. He says: "It follows, therefore, that if the meteorites

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possess virtual elasticity, and if breakages are counterbalanced by fusions, then a swarm of meteorites provides a gas-like medium of a fine enough structure to satisfy the demands of the meteoritic hypothesis. At various centres of condensation, which we now call suns, planets, satellites, the swarm of meteorites became denser and denser. The collisions were too frequent to let the gases cool and condense again, and thus by degrees the meteorites were entirely volatilised. Thus round these centres we should have at length a mass of glowing gas, and towards the middle fluids and solids. The collisions among free meteorites became rarer, because they were scattered more sparsely; and less violent, because at each successive collision, some relative motion was lost. Finally, the collisions were nearly annulled. The residue of the meteoritic swarm then consisted of sparse flights of meteorites moving in streams. The zodiacal light is probably due to the reflection of sunlight from millions of meteorites which have not yet been swallowed up by the sun." Referring to the numerous meteoritic rings existing in the solar system, Professor Darwin says: "But these are the dregs and sawdust of the solar system, and merely serve to give us a memento of the myriads which existed in early days before the sun and the planets and their satellites were born."

What could be a more beautiful and true presentation of this whole theory than the presentation given us from the archaic teaching contained in *The Secret Doctrine*, which I have already quoted. It says: "The Central Sun causes Fohat to collect primordial dust in the form of balls, to impel them to move in converging lines and finally to approach each other and aggregate. Being scattered in Space, without order or system, the World Germs came into frequent collision, until their final aggregation, after which they became Wanderers [comets]. Then the battles and struggles begin. The older [bodies] attract the younger, while others repel them. Many perish, devoured by their stronger companions. Those that escape become worlds."

Fohat here represents the eternal energy, the root of all pulsation and motion; this energy forms centres or vortices, which collect the primordial dust of the universe in the form of balls. It is now well known to modern science that space is full

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of an impalpable dust; this it is which aggregates into meteoritic particles, and this same energy causes these balls or meteorites to move in converging lines, and finally to approach each other and aggregate. This is exactly in accordance with the scientific theory. The meteorites are first scattered in space without order or system; they come into frequent collision, until their final aggregation, after which they become wanderers (comets). In the most scattered nebulæ there is no apparent order. Everything is diffused and vast; then as they begin to gravitate to the centre, their collisions become more frequent, a rotatory motion is set up, until their final aggregation in the form of globular swarms, after which they become comets. As Mme. Blavatsky says: "When carefully analysed and reflected upon, this will be found as scientific as science can make it, even at our late period." How truly prophetic!

What could more grandly describe the great "struggle for existence," the "survival of the fittest" principle going on among cosmical systems in the abysmal depths of space, than the following from the secret teachings: "Born in the unfathomable depths of Space, out of the homogeneous Element called the World Soul, every nucleus of cosmic matter suddenly launched into being, begins life under the most hostile circumstances. Through a series of countless ages, it has to conquer for itself a place in the infinitudes. It circles round and round, between denser and already fixed bodies, moving by jerks, and pulling towards some given point or centre that attracts it, and, like a ship drawn into a channel dotted with reefs and sunken rocks, trying to avoid other bodies that draw and repel it in turn. Many perish, their mass disintegrating through stronger masses, and, when born within a system, chiefly within the insatiable stomachs of various Suns. Those which move slower, and are propelled into an elliptic course, are doomed to annihilation sooner or later. Others moving in parabolic curves, generally escape destruction, owing to their velocity."

This is exactly according to modern science. We know that in all probability many of these meteoritic swarms do "fall into the insatiable stomachs of various suns," and this is probably the method whereby the vitality of the suns is maintained.

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Anyone who has followed the process of nebula condensation which I have attempted to describe in a previous part of this paper, will recognise the wonderful agreement between the two philosophies.

We thus see, as Madame Blavatsky remarks, that "all such knowledge, if justice be only done, is an echo of the archaic doctrine, an attempt to explain which is now being made. How men of the last few centuries have come to the same ideas and conclusions that were taught as axiomatic truths in the secrecy of the Adyta, dozens of millenniums ago, is a question that is treated separately. Some were led to it by the natural progress in Physical Science, and by independent observation; others—such as Copernicus, Swedenborg, and a few more—their great learning notwithstanding, owed their knowledge far more to intuitive than to acquired ideas, developed in the usual way by a course of study."

So far as the formation of laya centres is concerned, science has very little to say. A laya centre, according to the eastern teaching, is that point in the universe where a new world takes its origin, and to which the energy and life of a previous world are transferred after the latter has completed its evolutionary process. It would seem that these laya centres are formed in the nebula, and the whole subsequent evolutionary course of the nebula, through vast and inconceivable cycles of time, down to its form as an extinct and vanished world, is the potential becoming active through the guiding forces of superior Intelligences. Blind, mechanical forces are incapable of bringing about evolution; according to Theosophy, worlds and cosmical systems are pursuing their evolutionary career under the direction of great Intelligences. Nor is science able to state anything in regard to pralaya, that time when the whole visible universe will vanish into nothingness with the indrawing of the Great Breath.

"We have often witnessed the formation of a cloud in a serene sky. A hazy point barely perceptible—a little wreath of mist increases in volume and becomes darker and denser, until it obscures a large portion of the heavens. It throws itself into fantastic shapes, it gathers a glory from the sun, is borne onward

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by the wind, and, as it gradually came, so, perhaps, it gradually disappears, melting away in the untroubled air. But the universe is nothing more than such a cloud—a cloud of suns and worlds. Supremely grand though it may seem to us, to the infinite and eternal intellect it is no more than a fleeting mist. If there be a succession of worlds in infinite space, there is also a succession of worlds in infinite time. As one cloud after another replaces clouds in the skies, so this starry system, the universe, is a successor of countless others that have preceded it—the predecessor of countless others that will follow."

JOHN MACKENZIE.

WAITUKURAN.—Twenty minutes for luncheon. With me sat my wife and daughter, and my manager, Mr. Carlyle Smythe. I sat at the head of the table, and could see the right-hand wall; the others had their backs to it. On that wall, at a good distance away, were a couple of framed pictures. I could not see them clearly, but from the groupings of the figures I fancied that they represented the killing of Napoleon III.'s son by the Zulus in South Africa. I broke into the conversation, which was about poetry and cabbage and art, and said to my wife—

"Do you remember when the news came to Paris—"

"Of the killing of the Prince?"

[Those were the very words I had in my mind.]

"Yes, but what Prince?"

"Napoleon, Lulu."

"What made you think of that?"

"I don't know."

There was no collusion. She had not seen the pictures, and they had not been mentioned. She ought to have thought of some *recent* news that came to Paris, for we were but seven months from there, and had been living there a couple of years when we started on this trip; but instead of that, she thought of an incident of our brief sojourn in Paris of sixteen years before.

Here was a clear case of mental telegraphy, of mind-transference; of my mind telegraphing a thought into hers. How do I know? Because I telegraphed an *error*. For it turned out that the picture did not represent the killing of Lulu at all, nor anything connected with Lulu. She had to get the error from my head—it existed nowhere else.—*More Tramps Abroad*, MARK TWAIN; pp. 217-218. Part of diary.

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PROBLEMS OF ETHICS

In this and some subsequent papers I propose to discuss some of the Problems of Life and Mind that exercise the brains and wring the hearts of thoughtful people. Needless to say that these problems will be studied with the aid of the light thrown upon them by Theosophy, that divine wisdom which enlightens us just so far as we are able to receive it. There is no idea in my mind so ambitious as that of solving these problems: I only seek to offer to my fellow-students some thoughts that have been helpful to myself and may also be serviceable to others.

Theosophy, from its very nature, cannot form a new religion, a new church, or even a sect separate and apart. It is a unifier, not a divider; an explainer, not an antagonist. Whenever a Theosophist is aggressive, combative, denunciatory, he is failing in his high mission, for the "wisdom that cometh from above is first pure, then peaceable." He is bound to be tolerant even with the intolerant, knowing that no evil can be destroyed save by its opposite good. Hence in seeking solutions for life's problems he does not vehemently assail the solutions already suggested, but seeks to distil from each any trace of truth it may contain. In all the schools of thought around us, ethical, sociological, scientific and religious, some aspect of the truth is being set forth, and the fact that its exponents regard it as the whole truth does not lessen the intrinsic value of the particular fragment they present. Any view which has been held by large numbers of people, for long periods, over wide areas, recurring time after time, showing a perennial life, has in it some truth which preserves it; it is the duty of the Theosophist to seek for this truth and to bring it to light, freeing it from the errors which have enveloped it. Whenever human hearts and lives attach themselves to any view, they are not attracted by the

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errors which compose its form but to the truth which is its life. The failure to appreciate this distinction between the life and the form which temporarily envelopes it has given rise to the bitterness of controversy, to the extremes of intolerance that we find in the history of thought. The divine wisdom which includes all truth cannot be hostile to any fragment of itself, whatever may be the transitory form in which it is set. The student of the divine wisdom, then, must recognise and revere it under every veiling form, as Isis recognised and reverently gathered up the torn fragments of the body of Osiris the beloved. Thus may the errors which belong to Time fall away, while the eternal truth endures, manifesting itself with ever-increasing fullness.

In our study, then, of the problems which surround us, we must search diligently in each school of thought for the truths which it is seeking to express, for the facts in nature which underlie its teachings. If this search be conducted successfully, the various schools will to a great extent be unified, Theosophy synthesising their different fragments. Quarrels arise because each school regards its partial truth as the whole, denying the truths of its neighbours while affirming its own. Peace will brood over the world when all schools concern themselves with the duty of outlining as perfectly as possible the aspects of truth which they perceive, and refrain from censuring as falsehoods those aspects which are invisible from the standpoints they severally occupy. "Men are usually right in that which they affirm, wrong in that which they deny," once quoth a philosopher, and his remark might be printed in golden letters over the mantelpiece of every student.

The problems of Ethics are concerned with the relations which exist between man and man, between nation and nation, and between man and the non-human world. Ethics has been called the Science of Conduct, therefore the Science of Relations, and its aim is to regularise and render harmonious the relations between an individual and his fellows, human and non-human. A man is not an isolated unit but a part of an organic whole;

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Ethics considers him as such a part, and lays down the laws by which that whole may accomplish its orderly evolution.

Every system of Ethics, if incomplete, may be brought in a final analysis under one or other of three heads—authority, intuition, utility. Any one of these three offers itself as a separate foundation on which a system of Ethics may be erected, and only a complete system recognises the value of each of the three, and sets each in its place as a corner-stone in the pyramid of conduct.

Those who base Ethics on authority appeal to some revelation given by a divine Being, or to some teachings of highly developed men, sages of the past, whose knowledge was greater than that of their contemporaries or of subsequent generations, and who spoke with the authority derived from that knowledge. These teachers—prophets, rishis, magi, call them by what name we may—were men who knew the worlds beyond the physical, and laid down definite precepts out of their wide experience; these precepts were submissively accepted by the nations among whom they lived, they themselves being regarded either as directly inspired by God, or as sharing the divine nature. All the Scriptures of the world, the Bibles of our race, serve, each to the believers in it, as the foundation of morality, each laying down a certain code of ethics; this code is regarded as of direct and binding authority, not depending on reason but on the possession by the teacher of higher knowledge, whether that knowledge were due to his inspiration by some divine Being or to his own evolution into Deity.

The second great ethical school declines to submit itself to any external authority, and founds itself on the existence in man of an interior faculty akin to Deity—intuition. Intuition is variously defined; some identify it with conscience and declare that conscience is the voice of God speaking in the human soul; others, shrinking from so extreme a position, and admitting that conscience is liable to error, and varies with the evolution of the individual, regard intuition as a faculty belonging to the spiritual nature, thus as being inherently superior to the physical, emotional and intellectual natures, and therefore the proper guide of conduct.

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The third school of Ethics bases morality on utility, appealing to reason as the authority which judges the facts and tendencies of life, traces the results of actions, and deduces from them a moral code, seeking to found its precepts on the generalised experience of the race. This school has many divisions, but they all found themselves ultimately on experience, and regard conscience as the product of evolution, as the moral instinct.*

However various may be the ethical opinions found among men, they may all, in the final analysis, be reduced to these three: the authority appealed to is (*a*) divine, of the nature of a revelation; (*b*) spiritual-human, depending on intuition; (*c*) rational-human, based on the recording of experience and the logical deduction of rules of conduct therefrom.

In studying these three great ethical systems it is necessary to consider the attacks made on each of them by their opponents, as well as the principles relied on by those who accept them. We shall seek in each for an aspect of Truth, which will contribute to the elucidation of ethical problems, seeing in each a value which may not rightly be overlooked or discredited. Each affords a partial guide for conduct, and treating them theosophically we can unify them, antagonistic as they have been held to be, and as their supporters believe them to be.

(*a*) What is revelation? It is a teaching generally given in the early days of a race, in order to mark out a path for a humanity not yet sufficiently evolved and trained to rely safely for guidance on either its intuition or its reason. The object of this authoritative declaration is the rendering of progress more rapid than it would be were the race left to make experiments unaided in matters of right and wrong. Many blunders would be made, many blind alleys entered, in the vague gropings of primitive man, driven by the imperious instincts of his animal nature, without experience to guide or reason to restrain. We may put aside all the aspects of revelation which deal with the inner constitution of man, with the relation of Deity to the universe, and with other weighty matters—aspects found in the

* Instinct has been defined as accumulated racial experience, and this is a true definition, whether we consider it, with the materialists, as transmitted by the modification of the organism, or with the Theosophists, as stored in the group-soul, the over-soul of a group.

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great Scriptures of the world; we will confine ourselves to those parts of revelation which deal with morals, for it is against these that attacks are levelled by those who assail revelation as a foundation for an ethical system, and who refuse to the world's Scriptures any place in building up a sane morality. Every student is struck, when he considers any of the earlier codes of morality—nay, it is not necessary to be a student to be startled by it—by the presence of precepts which to him are immoral, not moral. Yet, if he accept occult teaching, he believes that the Scriptures containing these precepts were given by men who possessed very lofty and wide knowledge, men of the noblest morality, of very high spiritual development. Further, he comes across such precepts in books that contain hints as to God and man fragrant with pure and sublime spirituality, so that they give a painful jar to the mind intent on higher things. True, some of them might, nay would, be ejected by the analytic hand of critical scholarship, and would stand confessed as interpolations of later date. But however far historical criticism may go, that criticism, guided by occult knowledge and not merely by scholarship, must confess the salient fact that these ancient Scriptures contain teachings from men who were giants spiritually and morally, above the men of the present as they were far above the men of the past. Fragments at least of their teachings have come down to us in these Scriptures, no matter how much of alien matter may have crept into them in the efflux of time and by the ignorance of successive generations. And among these teachings are some of the precepts which jar on us as unsuitable to their noble surroundings and as unworthy of the great instructors from whose lips they fell.

To solve this problem aright we must grasp the necessary corollaries of evolution, and place clearly before the mind some of the conditions inevitably bound up with the growth of a race from moral nescience to moral perfection. In far-off antiquity we see an infant humanity strong in its passions, but weak in its reasoning powers, plunging wildly at the entrance to the path of morality. It begins in blind ignorance of all distinctions between right and wrong. The first training could be but in broad principles, and withal these very principles must not press too

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harshly on the hitherto uncurbed animal nature. Many an action that would be a step backwards for us now was a step forwards for it then. On the infinite ladder of progress each rung is trodden in its turn, and we call the rungs below us "evil" and the rungs above us "good." Evil and good are relative: they appertain to progress, to growth. Our good of yesterday is our evil of to-day, and our good of to-day will be our evil of to-morrow. In the world there is a steady purpose that may be seen in the light of the history of human evolution. Souls in their infancy, ignorant of right and wrong as we now recognise them, gradually learn by experience, and looking backwards over the growth of humanity, we see that saints and sages have trodden the path up which these souls in their turn are climbing. We perceive that men are living in the world and are treading this long ascent in order that the soul may evolve. This soul is to be a self-conscious and self-moving intelligence; it is to develope a will that is free, which shall learn to choose the highest. This will is never to be coerced into choosing the best, but is to be left free to take what it will, under the sole condition that having taken it shall keep, having chosen it shall abide by its choice. As we watch the evolution of this growing intelligence we find that it is learning to choose between that which makes for progress, and that which makes for retardation. We perceive that the very things which at one stage helped it on its way upwards at a later stage pull it backwards, and, persisted in, would hold it in a lower state of being. When a soul is at a very low stage of evolution there is many an action that is right for it because it carries it a step onwards that becomes wrong for it after that step has been taken. Lifting forces are right, down-dragging forces are wrong. This study leads us to the conclusion that what is "right" at any period of the world's history is that which aids in lifting the soul into a higher condition than that in which it is at the time, and thus works in harmony with the divine will for the growth of the soul, helping it to become nobler, purer, wiser, more rational. That which is "wrong," on the other hand, is anything which goes against the current of evolution, anything which keeps the soul stationary or drives it backward against the upward tendency of the whole.

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" Evil " is the setting of the will of a part against the will of the whole, the separating oneself from the purpose of the world and going against it instead of helping it on. The kosmos is evolving from the inorganic to the organic, from nescience to omniscience, and any part of it which dislocates itself from its connections, which puts itself into antagonism to that movement, which for its separate purposes strives to delay the coming of that

> Far off divine event
> To which the whole creation moves,

commits sin, embraces evil, weds itself to death.

Let us take a few cases in which commands were given which jar on modern thought. We may imagine a race given to cannibalism, commanded to take the flesh of animals as food; assuredly a step forward would be taken by the substitution of animal for human flesh. As soon as the nation had entirely outgrown the eating of men and slaughtered animals only for food, the teacher would try to gradually lead it away from that barbarous custom by allowing the use of flesh only in connection with religious services, permitting to be used as food only the flesh of animals offered as sacrifices, and encompassing these sacrifices with burdensome conditions so as to restrict their number. To put together the slaughter of animals in sacrifice respectively to certain deities and to man's palate may strike many as a strange and incongruous juxtaposition. Yet some, not all, of the commands with respect to animal sacrifices were given for this very purpose. Among people who slaughtered all kinds of living things for food, it was an advance to restrain their killing to certain times and seasons, to surround it with rigidly enforced ceremonies. If, as in some cases, a man was not allowed to kill an animal without a year of preparation during which no flesh might be taken, if he might only eat flesh which had been offered in sacrifice, it is easy to see that such a man was being weaned from flesh-eating, and was learning to break off an evil habit. During his year of preparation the habit of living on flesh would be conquered, and the very restrictions surrounding the final ceremony would tend to make him reverence sentient life and regard its sacrifice as a solemn act,

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not lightly to be performed. Although to the modern mind the sacrifice of animals as a religious act appears to be brutal and degrading, one cannot but ask oneself whether it marks a lower stage of national morality to slay animals only for sacrifice than to slay them wholesale for the gratification of the palate; whether the rare holocausts in Solomon's temple, for instance, were more degrading to the public conscience than the daily slaughterings in Chicago. The restrictions which in some civilisations of the past surrounded the slaying of the brute would press heavily on our modern western civilisations, and those ancient nations were at least learning that recklessness of animal life was a sin. People who disfigure their streets with the bleeding carcases of animals hung up to attract buyers should not look down too contemptuously on the ancient temple.

So with other points of conduct, which, rightly condemned to-day, were yet in the past sanctioned, even commanded by ethical teachers. Polygamy, for instance, introduced relations between the sexes far better than the promiscuity which preceded it. Among people at the lowest stage of sexual relations polygamy was a step upwards and therefore was right, not wrong. When the soul evolves, polygamy gives place to monogamy. As a rising from promiscuity polygamy was an advance; as a sinking from monogamy polygamy would be a degradation.

Such cases show us in what sense morality is, and must be, relative for evolving souls, and we see that any teacher who understands human nature, and who is more anxious to help his younger brothers than to express his own full thought, may rightly, in training a people, give ethical precepts that would now be degrading in practice. Looking at ancient ethical codes in this way, we can solve many of the difficulties that press on believers in their own Scriptures; the recognition of the principle of relativity in morals makes the way clear, and we understand that ethics is an advancing science, evolving with the evolution of the soul. We see that we must not swathe the limbs of the present with many of the bands useful in the past; that while the sublime spiritual truths contained in them give the world's Scriptures an eternal value, many of their precepts belong to a stage now outgrown. We must not dwarf the con-

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science and drug the moral sense by defending as perfect, because within the limits of a "revelation," precepts which were good for their own age but would be mischievous in ours. We make the Bibles of our race clogs instead of wings if we treat past commands as now binding, or if we explain them in a non-natural sense because they shock the more highly developed moral instinct which is the very result of that moral training through which our souls have passed. Enough if such precepts were ahead of the moral practice of their time, if they struck notes higher than the people could themselves utter, if they put before them an ideal not so lofty as to be impossible to strive after, though sufficiently lofty to exercise over them an elevating power. Unless we can thus throw ourselves backward in thought into those times of ignorance, we shall fail to grasp the meaning and the wisdom of the teachers, and may cast aside other teachings of inestimable value because they are mingled with instructions suitable for their own age, though not for ours. For let it never be forgotten that the very books which contain passages that now jar on us contain also ethical precepts of a character so sublime that while we are now able to recognise their exalted beauty we stumble feebly along the lower stages of the road of which they are the goal. The use of a revelation is to set before a race knowledge it is as yet unable to compass for itself, knowledge of dangers from which it warns, of possibilities which it holds out as encouragement. A revelation is the knowledge of the elder brothers placed at the service of the younger, one of the most effective means of lifting the world, of hastening the evolution of the soul.

ANNIE BESANT.

(TO BE CONCLUDED)

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TOGETHER IN THE DEATH HOUR

A True Tale

The little anecdote given below will be of interest to Theosophists, as adding another crumb of testimony to the possibility of over-riding the barriers of time and space. The tale came to me as follows:

Some years ago it was my privilege to meet a lady who had during a long life gained a great and varied experience, and who had always been possessed of a very vigorous and practical mind. She had during many years embraced the religious life, passing her time in hard work and active philanthropy, as well as in religious exercises. She was a strong, broad-minded woman, and was well-known to a wide circle, embracing all classes of society, from the highest to the lowest. Though I was by no means worthy of being admitted to the friendship of one much older, more experienced, and better than myself, she yet treated me with great kindness; for which I here place my gratitude on record. She knew that I could not wholly embrace all the tenets of her form of faith, and her liberality of mind is sufficiently indicated by the fact that beneath the convent roof-tree she has handed me, without a protest, letters bearing upon their envelopes the seal of the T.S.

Very many years before the day when she and I sat together in the convent guest-room, she had been placed as superintendent at the head of a large boys' school. While there she received a letter from a distant country, telling her that a child was on his way to England to be placed in her care, partly because the parents feared that the lack of boyish companions would be bad for him. He had a twin sister, to whom he was greatly attached. He had also formed a sort of friendship with a man, in whose society he spent some time. This man was a servant, but, although this was before the date of

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Board Schools in England, he was possibly not wholly uneducated; the home of the parents of the boy was near a penal settlement, and this man was a convict who, as was the custom, was permitted to take service as a reward for good conduct. There seems to have been no reason for supposing that this man was exceedingly bad; nevertheless his standard of probity was very probably not specially high, so that he was not an altogether desirable associate for a child. When the Sister received this letter, it was evening. (I may mention that at this period she had not taken the veil.) She read it, and put it aside.

Later, she was in her little sitting-room, it being then eleven o'clock at night. Looking up from her book, she saw a child standing in the doorway. For the moment she did not notice that the boy was dressed, though it was night, and as the school was a very large one she did not immediately recognise the fact that the child's face was unknown to her.

She said, rather severely, "What are you doing out of your dormitory at this hour? Are you ill?"

The child vanished. The Sister was strong-minded; she took a light and went the round of the dormitories. Every boy was undressed, in bed, and asleep.

In due course of time, the child from abroad arrived, and directly the Sister saw him she recognised her nocturnal visitor. Like a sensible woman, she said nothing, either to the little boy or to his friends. The child turned out to be a somewhat exceptional one. He was loveable, docile, affectionate, ultra-sensitive, and very devotional. English boys are not a very religious race, taking them as a whole, but the Sister assured me that in a wide experience of both boys and girls she had rarely met one with so genuine a tendency towards religion as appeared in this little lad. None the less, he would occasionally be guilty of actions which were apparently quite motiveless, and which were greatly at variance with his naturally excellent disposition. If one could have conceived that the thoughts of the servant for whom he had an affection did, unconsciously to both parties, play upon and affect the actions of the little boy, one might possibly prefer that theory to the belief in the existence of a pronounced streak of ill in one so gentle and religious. There was no question of

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punishing the child for his faults when they arose; the wise and kindly woman who told me the story said that the only course to be adopted, in simple humanity, was to comfort him; for the agony of the child, when he believed himself to have done wrong, was terrible to witness.

The Sister often wondered what would be the poor little fellow's fate in after life. But there was a gentler destiny in store for the child than a long struggle with ultra-sensitive nerves and an over-impressionable disposition. He caught scarlet fever, and died after a short illness.

Before his death, he talked with his sister, whose body was on the other side of the world. To quote my friend's words as nearly as I can remember them: "He was not delirious; it was an hour or so before the end. He talked as a child might talk to one he had not seen for some time; paused for her replies, and answered them in his turn. If the thing were not incredible, I should have believed that the other child was in the room."

The boy died, and the Sister wrote to break the news to his friends. At about the same time that her letter reached the mother, she herself received one, begging her to break very gently to the boy the news of his sister's death. She had died of measles at about the same time as her brother died of fever, the two illnesses being contemporaneous. The point of the story lies in the fact that the letter received by my friend stated that before the girl's death she had talked to her brother, not in delirium, but in an apparently rational sequence of question and answer—"as though he were in the room."

Such is the story as it was told to me, vouched for by a woman of practical mind and undoubted probity.

IVY HOOPER.

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IN THE TWILIGHT

THE talk turned on suicide when a small circle of friends gathered for their twilight chat. They were wont thus to gather once a month, when the sinking sun invited all to share the quietness that falls on nature, when she has drawn the cloud-curtains across the door through which her lord has disappeared—the hush of the gloaming that men lose in the hurrying town, where nature's fairy bells are not heard as they ring for matins and vespers day by day. Our little circle would discuss any point of interest that had arisen within the ken of any of its members, in the worlds physical, astral and mental; and the number of suicides that had been recorded in the daily papers had turned the conversation to that gruesome topic on the present occasion.*

"If one could only make these folk understand that they *can't* kill themselves," remarked the Shepherd meditatively; "that they can only get rid of their bodies and are decidedly at a disadvantage by the riddance, maybe they would not be so ready to make holes in their bodies or in the water."

"There lies the difficulty," quoth the Scholar. "The grim tales our seers tell us of the results of suicide in the astral world are not widely known among the public, and even when known are not believed."

"They picture a very real hell, it seems to me," commented the Marchesa. "One of our seers told me a story the other day that was as ghastly in its horror as anything that Dante depicted in his *Inferno*."

"Tell it again, O astral Vagrant," commanded the youngest of our party, whose appetite for stories was insatiable. "Tell it again, and tell it now."

"Well, it *was* rather a ghastly story," began the Vagrant meekly

* The stories given in these monthly records will be authentic, unless the contrary be definitely stated in any particular case; that is, they will be real experiences.—A. B.

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and apologetically, "creepy, decidedly. There were two friends, some hundreds of years ago, half merchants, half soldiers of fortune, who for some years had travelled together through fair luck and foul. The elder, Hassan, had saved Ibrahim, the younger, from death by starvation and thirst in the desert, having found him lying senseless beside his dead camel, which he had stabbed to obtain a last drink. Hassan, passing alone over the sands to rejoin his caravan, came across man and beast, both apparently dead. The man's heart, however, was still faintly beating, and he revived sufficiently to be lifted on to Hassan's camel and carried to safety. Ibrahim, wild, reckless, passionate, became madly devoted to the man who had saved him, and they lived for some years as brothers. It chanced that they fell in with a band of Arabs and dwelt with them awhile, and here, as ill fate would have it, the fair face of the chief's daughter attracted the eyes of both, and the two men fell desperately in love with the same maid. Hassan's steadier and kindlier character won trust and love where Ibrahim's fiery passion terrified, and as the truth dawned upon him the tiger in the savage nature of the young man awoke. Wildly jealous, sullenly resolved to have his will at all costs, Ibrahim slew Hassan treacherously while both were engaged in a skirmish with an enemy: he then rode to the encampment, rifled the tent of the chief, and, seizing the girl, flung her across his swift camel and fled. For a brief space they lived together, a stormy time of feverish passion and jealous suspicion on his side, of sullen submission and scheming watchfulness on hers. One day, returning from a short excursion, he found the cage empty, the bird flown, and his house despoiled of its treasures. Furious with baffled love and hatred, he hunted madly for her for some days, and, finally, in a tempest of jealousy and despair, he flung himself on the sand, cut his throat, and, gurgling out a curse, expired. A shock as of electric force, a searing flash of lurid fire, a concentrated agony of rending tissues, of tearing part from part, and the quivering etheric form was violently wrenched from its dense counterpart, and the blinded bewildered man found himself yet living while his corpse lay prone upon the sand. A confused whirl of sensations, of struggling agony as of a strong swimmer when the waves close over him, and Ibrahim was in the astral world, in drear and heavy darkness, foul to every sense, despairful, horror-weighted. Jealousy, rage, the fury of baffled passion and of love betrayed, still tore his heart-strings, and their force, no longer spent in moving the heavy mass of the physical body, inflicted an

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agony keener than he had ever dreamed as possible on earth. The subtle form responded to every thrill of feeling, and every pain was multiplied a hundredfold, as the keen senses answered to each wave of anguish, the bulwark of the body no longer breaking the force of every billow that dashed against the soul. Ah! even in this hell a blacker hell! What is this shapeless horror that drifts slowly near as though borne on some invisible current, eyeless, senseless, with ghastly suggestions of gaping wounds, clotted with fœtid blood? The air grows heavier yet and fouler as it drifts onwards, and is it the wind which as it passes moans out "Hassan . . . Hassan . . . Hassan"? With a scream strangled into a choking sob, Ibrahim leaps forward, rushes headlong, anywhere to escape this floating terror, this loathsome corpse of a friend betrayed. Surely he has escaped—he had fled with speed of hunted antelope; as he stops gasping, something surges against his shoulder; he glances fearfully round—it is there! And now begins a chase, if that may be called a chase where the hunter is unconscious and hangs blindly on the hunted, ever seeming to be drifting slowly, without purpose, yet ever close behind, run the other swiftly as he may. Down, down into depths fathomless of murky vapours—a pause, and the dull touch of the swaying shapelessness with the overpowering horror that hangs round it as a cloud. Away, away, into the foulest dens of vice, where earth-bound souls gloat over vilest orgies, and the crowding throngs will surely give protection against this dread intruder; but no! it drifts straight on as though no crowd were there, and, as though aimlessly, sways up against his shoulder. If it would speak, curse, see, strike a deliberate forceful blow, a man might deal with it; but this blind silent drifting shapeless mass, with its dull persistence of gray presence, is maddening, intolerable, yet may not be escaped. Oh! to be back in the glowing desert, with the limitless sky above, starving, robbed, betrayed, forsaken, but in a world of men, away from swaying senseless horrors in airless murky viscous depths"—

The quiet tones of the Pandit broke into the silence into which the Vagrant's voice had faded: "That seems to make the pictures of Nâraka more real. They are not old wives' fables, after all, if the astral world contains such results of crime committed here."

"But Ibrahim will not always be hunted like this," said our Youngest, pitifully, as ripples of loveliest rose-colour played through his aura.

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"Surely not," answered the Vagrant, smiling at the boy. "Eternal hell is but a frightful dream of ignorance, following on the loss of the glorious doctrine of reincarnation, which shows us that all suffering but teaches a necessary lesson. Nor need every suicide learn his lesson under such sad conditions as surrounded poor Ibrahim. Tell us about that suicide, Shepherd, whom you and our Youngest helped the other night."

"Oh! that's nothing of a story," quoth the Shepherd, lazily. "It is a mere description. But such as it is you are welcome to it. There was a man who had got into a number of troubles, over which he had worried himself to an inadmissible extent, worried himself to the verge of brain-fever, in fact. He was a very good young fellow in his healthy, normal state, but had reduced himself to a pitiable wreck of shattered nerves. In this condition he walked over a field where, some sixty years ago, a *roué* had committed suicide, and this elementary, attracted by his morbid gloom, attached himself to him, and began to instil thoughts of suicide into his mind. This *roué* had squandered a fortune in gambling and wild living, and, blaming the world for his own faults, had died by his own hand, swearing to revenge on others his fancied wrongs. This he had done inconsequently by impelling into suicide people whose frame of mind laid them open to his influence, and our poor friend became his prey. After struggling through a few days filled with his diabolical promptings, the overstrained nerves gave way, and he committed suicide, shooting himself in this very same field. Needless to say that he found himself on the other side on the lowest subplane of kâmaloka, amid the dreary conditions with which we are familiar. There he remained, very gloomy and miserable, weighed down with remorse, and subjected to the gibes and taunts of his successful tempter, until at last he began to believe that hell was a reality, and that he would never be able to escape from his unhappy state. He had been thus for some eight years when our Youngest found him," went on the Shepherd, drawing the boy closer to him, "and, being young in such scenes, broke into such a passion of pity and sympathy that he flung himself back into his physical body, and awoke sobbing bitterly. I had, after comforting him, to point out that sympathy of that kind was a little ineffective, and then we went back together and found our unhappy friend. We explained matters to him, cheered him, encouraged him, making him understand that he was only held captive by his own conviction that he could not rise, and in a few

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days' time we had the happiness of seeing him free from this lowest region. He has been progressing since, and before long, probably within a year or so, he will pass on into Devachan. Nothing of a story, as I told you."

"A very good story," corrected the Doctor, "and quite necessary to take the flavour of the Vagrant's horrors out of our psychic mouths."

"To start another subject," said the Archivarius; "here is a very interesting account from Sweden of an apparition at the time of death, seen by sixteen persons. It is sent by one of our members."

"Keep it for next time," suggested the Scholar, "for it groweth late, and we are wanted elsewhere."

THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITIES

THE anticipation of last month as to the success of the tour of the President-Founder and Miss Edger is being fully realised. Miss Edger had lectured at Calcutta, Midnapur, Mozufferpur, Bankipur, Benares, Allahabad, Carnpur, and Barabanki, according to our latest news, and the tour is to include Rawal-Pindi. Miss Edger is winning hearts everywhere, and we may prophesy for her a rich harvest in the future.

India

THE North of England Federation held a successful quarterly meeting at Harrogate on February 12th. The General Secretary presided, and afterwards gave an address on "The Therapeuts," his researches throwing another valuable side-light on the condition of society when Christianity was started. Mrs. Corbett read a paper on "Competition as a Stimulus to Progress," at the evening meeting, and Mr. Hodgson-Smith afterwards opened a debate on "Does Interest in Theosophy tend to diminish our Interest in Family, Social and Political Life?" Mr. Mead also lectured at Middlesbrough, Bradford, Hornsea, Sheffield, Manchester, and Birmingham, and did good work.

Europe

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On February 19th, Mrs. Besant started with Miss Cooper for the North, and next day lectured twice in Glasgow, drawing large audiences. Edinburgh was then visited, and some interesting meetings held, after which they passed on to Nottingham, where Mrs. Besant held a drawing-room meeting and lecture, Miss Cooper remaining for the next day to hold another drawing-room meeting.

The Blavatsky Lodge has had its full share of most instructive lectures, the platform being occupied during the month by Mrs. Besant, Mr. Chatterji and Mr. Keightley.

On March 14th Mrs. Besant leaves England for a short visit to India, returning in time for our European Convention early in July. On her way to Brindisi, Mrs. Besant will lecture in Rome on the 18th, and we are glad that the young Rome Lodge, with its earnest workers, should have the advantage of her presence and public lectures.

America

THE Countess Wachtmeister has been lecturing in Philadelphia, and goes to Washington this month. Her friends everywhere will be glad to hear that, thanks to Dr. Norman, who follows the methods of Indian medicine, she is recovering the full use of her eyes, and can read and write without spectacles, after using them for twenty years.

Australia

THIS being now the hottest season of the year, when even those born and brought up in these colonies prefer to spend their leisure evenings in the open air, our activities are rather less than usual. Most of the Branches, however, have continued their ordinary work, such as classes and weekly public lectures, even though the audiences have been smaller than usual. During the month of December, Mr. J. Scott, M.A. General Secretary of the Section, spent his vacation in Hobart, and delivered a series of four public lectures, besides attending meetings for enquirers and social receptions.

Our Fourth Annual Convention is to take place on Good Friday, April 8th, when it is hoped some new ground may be broken, and some suggestions as to the better carrying out of the work we have to do may be put forward. A new departure has been made in the calling for papers to be sent in for consideration by the Executive Committee, the best and most original of which will be read at the Convention.

H. A. W.

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New Zealand

THE Second Annual Convention of the New Zealand Section met in Auckland on January 3rd and 4th. Mr. S. Stuart, President of the Auckland Branch, was elected chairman, and there were delegates present from Christchurch, Auckland, Waitemata and Woodville Branches, while Dunedin, Wellington, and Pahiatua were represented by proxy. Wanganui did not send a delegate, but unofficial members were present from there and from Dunedin, so the Convention was fairly representative. The General Secretary reported an increase of thirty-eight in the membership during the year, a very fair addition to the total number in New Zealand. His report dealt with the visit of Colonel Olcott and the increase of interest that attended it, and the departure of Miss Edger for India—both making it an eventful year for the Section. The practical work done was satisfactory, and several schemes recommended by the last Convention had been put into operation. The questions of correspondence among members, the establishment of a lending library, of various systems of propaganda, and of increasing the income of the Section, were considered, and resolutions were passed dealing with each. The Convention also discussed the alteration of Rules dealing with the voting power of Branches, and with the admittance of new members, and after a lengthy debate, proposals were finally carried giving Branches the same voting power when their votes were taken by correspondence as at a Convention, and, with regard to the admission of new members, giving Presidents of Branches the power to admit members, thus bringing the New Zealand Section into line with other Sections of the Society and also with the general constitution. All the proposals were carried unanimously. The chairman, in his address, spoke on the desirability of each Branch having a direct representative at future Conventions, as a help in extending the spirit of unity and harmony that such meetings foster. Two public meetings were held in connection with the Convention, and addresses were given by the General Secretary, and various delegates, on leading Theosophical subjects. Several "At Homes," and other social meetings, and two picnics were given in honour of the visiting delegates during the Convention week, and added greatly to the pleasure of the proceedings. Altogether, the Convention was most harmonious and has undoubtedly strengthened the feelings of unity and brotherhood among the members, thus adding to the effectiveness of the Society generally throughout New Zealand. C. W. S.

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REVIEWS AND NOTICES

The Cabala and the Arts

The Canon: An exposition of the Pagan Mystery perpetuated in the Cabala as the Rule of all the Arts. (London: Elkin Mathews. 1897.)

It is a misfortune that the author of this book has not put his name to it, for he deserves personal congratulation on his perseverance, his erudition, and his ingenuity; but we fear that his readers will consider that, like many other authors of works on symbols and numbers, he has often allowed his imagination to run away with him, and that his use of numbers tends to show that in mystic researches after a Canon of Proportion, as well as in political statistics, numbers can be made to prove anything.

This is not a book for the general public; it is too abstruse and too mathematical, and even the Theosophist may find it difficult to study. In order to master the subject from our author's point of view, one needs a basis of Astronomy, and a good memory for cosmic distances; then a smattering of Greek and Hebrew; an intimate acquaintance with the general principles of Greek and Roman architecture, as summarised by Vitruvius; a familiarity with many biblical details usually neglected as unimportant; and lastly, a fair grasp of the philosophy of the Kabalah. In addition, for the clear understanding of chapter ix., an intimate acquaintance with the ritual and symbolism of the Masonic speculative Fraternity will be required.

Our author carries his canon, or law of proportion, through art and science, fact and fiction, through the human form and the kosmos, with equal ease and with infinite variety.

The reviewer shrinks from the attempt to write a logical account of this work, and supplies only some general observations and quotations: he makes no pretence to offer a criticism of the astronomical numerical data, which are very numerous; some are numbers given

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by mediæval authorities, quoted by name; the planetary distances, length of radii, etc., of modern computation are used by our author, without any statement as to whose calculations are relied upon. This is an important omission, because the whole existence of our author's theories of a canon law, derived from cosmic distances, and reproduced in man primarily, and secondarily in human work and literature, depends upon his manipulation of fractional parts of planetary numbers.

The Introduction is the most readable chapter in the book, and should interest every Theosophist and Hermetic student; the succeeding chapters are largely composed of number conjuring, and remind one of previous efforts to combine numbers with mystic science, of such works as Ralston Skinner's *Source of Measures*, and Piazzi Smythe on the Great Pyramid.

The text by which our author is inspired might well be the dogma of Hermes: "That which is below is like that which is above"; and his contention seems to be, that as the kosmos consists of a series of worlds of various sizes, set at fixed distances, all designed by, and existing at, the will of a supreme being, whose vesture they form, and as this kosmos may be named Macrocosm—so man, made in the image of the Macrocosm, shows a similarity in proportions, but is fractional in size, and is properly considered the Microcosm. By parity of reasoning, the works of man, his theology, his temples, his language, must also be a reflection from the supernal, and after their limited possibilities must illustrate the guiding principles of the same great canon of proportion. The demonstration of this theory he finds in the works of Moses, Ezekiel, Plato, Pythagoras, in the Kabalah, in the writings of the earliest teachers of architecture, and in masonic rituals. Further, he points out, by the proportions of existing temples and cities, that the canon was not only a theory, but has at all periods of history been actually made use of in buildings, pictures, and sculpture.

The author contends that although there is no common knowledge among educated persons that any such universal canon exists, yet the essential points of this canon have been the cardinal secret of all true priesthoods. He confesses that the clergy of the Christian Church have in some way lost these secrets; but alleges that the heads of the Church are well aware that their vessel is empty, and that their constant hostility to Freemasonry is due to their suspicion that speculative Freemasonry, lineal descendant of the operative masonry

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of the church builders, may yet retain this canon, the key of all the creeds.

Writing of our present day Christian status, this passage occurs: "Theology has dropped her secrets, her symbols have become meaningless ornaments, and her parables are no longer understood. The artist in the service of the Church no longer represents her mysteries in metaphorical shapes, and the priests have as little skill in the old art of myth-making, as they have of interpreting the Scriptures." And again: "The deplorable fact which we now have to regret is that the priests who ought to be able to tell us the meaning of the Scriptures, which they undertake to expound, know nothing whatever of their real significance. It is probable that there is not a single Christian priest who knows what the Canon of the Church is, or why a certain office or literary arrangement is canonical, or what makes it so. He would deny that the Old Testament and the Gospel are allegorical books, but has no explanation to offer for the absurdities which occur in these works, if taken literally. In fact the modern priest is the very last person from whom we are likely to get any information."

The demonstrations of the canon are based upon the diameters of the earth, the sun, and the planets as known to the ancients; next upon the relative distances of the heavenly bodies, generally expressed in terms of the earth's distance from the sun, the earth's diameter, the diameter of the sun, or by the Tone, a unit referred to by Pliny as the distance between the earth and the moon.

A special point is made of the mathematical qualities of the figure called Vesica Piscis, which is formed by the intersection of two circles, when the centre of one is on the circumference of the other, the two circles being equal in size. The long and short diameters of such a figure are in the proportion of 26 to 15. A rhombus can be inscribed in this figure, and will have the same diameters. To this figure of the Vesica Piscis, which is common in mediæval art as a frame for figures of the Virgin, our author adds a reference to the so-called Tree of Life of the Kabalah, which is a diagram of the kabalistic Emanations of Divinity; this diagram forms an irregular hexagon and is comparable to a double cube, often referred to by Hermetists in their Rituals, and also by Rosicrucians and Freemasons. This Tree of Life of the Kabalah shows Ten Emanations and Twenty-two Paths of Influence. Now, 26 is the number of the word IHVH which we know as Jehovah or Yahveh; Yod being 10, Heh 5, Vau

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6, and Heh final 5, total 26. The number 15 is IH or Jah, and both names were of immense importance in Hebrew theology. On this matter our author writes: "The names of the Three Great Persons of the Hebrew Cabala, Macroprosopus, 1101; Microprosopus, 1110; and Malchuth (the Bride, the Kingdom, the World), 496, yield the number 2707, which is the perimeter of a rhombus whose sides are 676, the square of 26, the length of the Vesica, and the equivalent of the unspeakable name of God, IHVH."

Curious notes on numbers abound, such as that 888, the number of the name IESOVS, is the length of a rhombus having a perimeter of 2048, the diameter of the orbit of Saturn; the number of the Hebrew name Messiah is 358, which is the width of a Vesica 620 long, and 620 is the value of Kether, the first of the Divine Emanations of the Kabalah; 666 is the length of a Vesica whose width is 384, or the Sun's radius measured by the Tone. Here we touch on the great mystery of the Beast, 666, the number of a Man, Anti-Christ, the Pope, Napoleon or the Devil, according to personal taste; but in another place we read that if 666 be the diameter of a circle, its circumference is 2093, which is the diagonal of a square whose sides are 1480, the numerical equivalent of Christos, the name of God.

"The astronomical science of the Hebrews seems to be mystically concealed under the figures of Noah's Ark, the Tabernacle, the Temple of Solomon, and the Holy Oblation of Ezekiel; while the Christians added to those the mystical city of the New Jerusalem, described in the two last chapters of the Revelation. Each of these mystical structures appears to exhibit a particular aspect of the heavens, and constitutes a scientific record of certain known facts of astronomy, which formed the true basis of the ancient theology."

The Holy Oblation mentioned in Ezekiel, chapter xlviii., is largely dealt with in this book. This Holy Oblation is a square figure, measuring 25,000 reeds on every side, considered as surrounding the city of the mystical Jerusalem. "The suburbs of the city are enclosed by a square whose sides are 5000 reeds, and the city in the middle measures 4,500 reeds on every side. Beyond the suburbs on the north and south a space of 25,000 by 10,000 reeds was allotted to the priests and Levites. Now, if the sides of the three squares be divided by 12—the number of the tribes—$\frac{25000}{12}$ is 2,083⅓; $\frac{5000}{12}$ is 416⅔; $\frac{4500}{12}$ is 375; it will be found that the city exactly contains the sun's orbit, together with the orbit of Venus, shown in the four

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quarters according to the Egyptian system, and probably represents the wheels of the four living creatures seen in the first vision of Ezekiel. The orbit of Saturn, being about 2046 diameters of the sun, is contained within the outer square, whose sides are 2,083⅓. The square surrounding the suburbs of the city has no direct affinity with the orbits of the planets, but a circle whose area is equal to this square has a circumference of 1,480. For various reasons it would seem that the measure 2,083⅓ is a mean between the numbers 2,093 and 2,073. Let it therefore be taken for granted that the Holy Oblation is a square enclosed by two lines, which are represented by the mean dimension 2,083⅓. The outer line which measures 2,093 is the side of a square having an area double that, which has a side of 1,480. That is to say, a circle inscribed within the square 2,093 exactly contains a square whose sides are 1,480; and this circle will be assumed to be the sphere of the zodiac or firmament. The side of the inner square, again measuring 2,073, is $\frac{1}{1^2}$ of the earth's circumference measured in miles. The numerical value of the name Christos is 1,480, and the mystery of this number appears to be that it supplies the measure of God's body extending crosswise throughout the whole universe. The wisdom of the number 666 conveys the same theological secret, for 666 is the diameter of a circle having a circumference of 2,093."

The chapter on Noah's Ark is of interest, and contains curious ideas derived from Philo and Montanus; the mystery of the Ark is compared to the ship Argo, and Deucalion is contrasted with Noah. It is contended that the proportions of the Ark refer to those of a man's form; an old work of 1593 contains a drawing of Adam, or, as some say, Christ in the Ark. Another interesting note is the comparison of the Ark, measuring 300 by 50, with a diagram of the equator, crossed twice by the ecliptic marking the sun's course (see page 75).

The Music of the Spheres is treated in a chapter in which Robert Fludd, Kepler, and Cornelius Agrippa are laid under contribution to illustrate the theories of Pythagoras, as quoted by Pliny.

The chapter on Geography is the wildest; in this our author seeks for cosmic numerical analogies in the size and shape of Palestine, of Greece, of the city of Rome, and of Jerusalem. Even England, it appears, shows by the positions of Lichfield, York, and Stonehenge, that its notable places have been founded in accordance with planetary relations, and the name London has the value of 924, the square root of the Sun's diameter in miles.

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In concluding his work, the anonymous author introduces the twenty-two Keys of the Tarot Trumps, quoting from Papus, whose attribution of these several cards to the Hebrew letters is not correct, however; at least, it is incorrect according to old Rosicrucian MSS. still extant, and is affirmed to be incorrect by some who claim an intuitive clairvoyance of such symbols.

The saying of Plato is finally quoted: "Let none ignorant of Geometry enter here," and the question is raised whether the invention of written letters by the Thoth of Egypt was of entire advantage to knowledge: "For learning many things through their means—*without instruction*—men will appear to know a great deal, although they are for the most part ignorant, and will become troublesome associates, through thinking themselves wise, instead of being so."

There is no other modern book which has so many examples of the Gematria of Hebrew words after the kabalistic manner, and of Notaricon and Gematria applied to Greek words after a pseudo-kabalistic manner; as a store of curious ancient ideas and numerical conceits, this volume may be suitably added to the library of a student of the occult sciences.

SAPERE AUDE.

CONCERNING THE HIGHER CRITICISM

A Primer of the Bible. By W. H. Bennett, M.A. (London: Methuen & Co.; 1897).

WE have been long looking for a book which would give the results of the Higher Criticism in the two fields of Biblical research, both Old and New Testament, in such a form that the general reader who has not been trained in elaborate technicalities may grasp their extent and tendency. Professor Bennett's work, which has just appeared, though far from satisfactory to one prepared to face all the facts, advances at any rate half way towards them, and the ignorant religionists who form the vast majority of Christendom, if they can be induced to read it, will no doubt regard it as a most dangerous production. With this majority we have at present no hope of dealing, all that we can expect to achieve is that no member of the Theosophical Society should share in this deplorable ignorance of the majority in the elements of the history of the documents of the great faith of Christendom. Those of our members who are unacquainted with the subject, should at once procure the summary of the Professor of Biblical

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Literature and Languages at Hackney College and of Old Testament Exegesis at New College. For it cannot be too often insisted upon that the Theosophical student begins far beyond where the Higher Criticism leaves off. The Higher Criticism, with great labour and industry, is slowly approaching towards a knowledge of the external facts, and has already reached half-way, the Theosophical student deals with the facts themselves from within.

Professor Bennett no doubt tries to be impartial and endeavours merely to strike an average of opinion in the results already achieved, and indeed with regard to the Old Testament he seems to have succeeded as well as may be reasonably expected in so theologically conservative a country as England; but in the domain of the New Testament his average is out of all balance, and his judgment sinks the scale of reaction until the beam is kicked. Our scholars are gradually getting a little backbone when facing O. T. problems, but their courage oozes from them when confronted with N. T. documents.

Nevertheless these are considerations which as yet do not appear on the narrow horizon of one who is entirely ignorant of the Higher Criticism. The book we were seeking for was one suitable to clear away the dense fog which obscures the whole country in the mind of the ignorant; when the fog is dispersed, we may then discuss the further problems as to whether we are in this place or that dealing with mountain chains, or hills, or mere mounds. It is the bounden duty of every Theosophical student in the West, interested in our second object, to have some idea of the subject. Professor Bennett's book is the best to hand for the beginner, and the price is, if we are rightly informed, exceedingly moderate, being but half-a-crown for some 228 pages of close summary.

G. R. S. M.

A Digest of Later Platonism

The Philosophy of Plotinos. (Philadelphia: Dunlap Printing Company, 1306, Filbert Street; 1897.)

Anonymous works, as a rule, are little worthy of notice, and we must confess that our hope was not high when we first took up the sixty-four page pamphlet which is the subject of these few paragraphs. A careful perusal of its contents, however, has completely dissipated any prejudice on this point, and it may be stated, on the basis of a fairly

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wide knowledge of the literature of the subject, that the summary of our anonymous author is the clearest and most intelligent which has as yet appeared. The study of Plotinus is exceedingly difficult owing to the obscurity of his language, and that, too, in spite of the careful editing of his MSS. by his devoted friend and disciple Porphyry. Plotinus was an Egyptian and his Greek is never pure at its best, added to which his style is of the most aphoristic. Consequently all of the existing translations leave much to be desired; Ficinus' (Latin) is scholastic and diffuse, Bouillet's (French) is brilliant and paraphrastic, Müller's (German) is painstaking and heavy, and all are of little help in the majority of difficult passages. Taylor's English translation of some of the books labours under the same disabilities, and in addition is written in a most crabbed and inelegant style, which makes his version quite un-English in many places, especially owing to the introduction of innumerable anglicised Greek technical terms.

The writer of our pamphlet bases himself upon the original text, and his happy phrasing of Platonic terms and his deep sympathy with Platonic thought proclaim the presence of a capable translator of Plotinus among us, and encourage us to hope that some day he may be induced to expand his labours outside the narrow confines of a digest, into the wider field of a complete English translation of the magnificent monument of thought which the Corypheus of Later Platonism has left us in his Enneads.

To make so lucid and capable a compendium of the works of so great a giant of philosophy as Plotinus, the author must have spent much time in analysing the text and satisfying himself as to the meaning of many obscure passages; to test his absolute accuracy would require the verification of every reference among the hundreds given in the tables at the end of the pamphlet, and we have only had time to verify one or two of the more striking. These are as accurate as anything in a digest can rightly be expected to be. In addition to detailed chapters on the seven realms of the Plotinian philosophy, on reincarnation, ethics and æsthetics, we have introductory chapters on Platonism, Aristotelianism, Stoicism and Emanationism, and also chapters on the relationship of Plotinus to Christianity and Paganism.

Those who desire to enter into the Plotinian precincts of the temple of Greek philosophy by the most expeditious path cannot do better than take this little pamphlet for their guide; it is of course

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not perfect, but it is undeniably the best which has yet appeared. One fault we must find; the print and paper and mean form are totally unworthy of such excellent contents. But this is characteristic of the general topsy-turvydom of the times. The price is not stated, but it must be inconsiderable. We have recommended the T.P.S. to procure a supply of this pamphlet, for to our Platonic friends and colleagues we say not only "you should," but "you must" read it.

G. R. S. M.

Magazines and Pamphlets

Colonel Olcott occupies the whole of the chapter of his historical sketch in *The Theosophist* for February with a full account of his work in connection with the attack made by a mob upon a Buddhist procession in Colombo. Colonel Olcott came to England to lay the matter before the authorities, and succeeded in getting certain much-coveted privileges for the Buddhists. Mr. Mackenzie contributes a paper on the immortality of the soul, and argues his case from the evidence of psychic phenomena. His treatment of spiritualism is not very satisfactory, as, if we accept the facts, the theory of the sundering of the consciousness of the Ego will certainly not cover everything. The remarks about Christianity and the mourning for the dead are also a little unfair, as the editor points out in a footnote, referring to the lamentations of the Sinhalese. Mr. Stuart concludes his article on reincarnation, and advances some very curious and interesting speculations as to the relations between the lengths of lives, intervals between lives, and other periods. A long letter from a Siamese prince, now a Buddhist monk, on the work of the Theosophical Society, is published. *The Prashnottara* is largely occupied with a dispute on the subject of Karma, aroused by an answer in *The Vâhan* a few months ago. The points raised are interesting, but the settlement of the question does not appear to approach with very rapid strides. Tidal friction and the lengthening of the day are subjects one hardly expects to find in a Theosophical question column. The enquiry evokes a fairly accurate reply, but the statement that if, as has been surmised, the axial rotations of Venus and Mercury occupy the same periods as their years, they must be older than the earth, is not correct, from a scientific point of view at least. *The Light of Truth, or Siddhanta*

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Deepika is a very creditable production, but its value would not be lessened by the removal of the strong anti-Buddhist prejudice shown so frequently in its pages. The Buddhist system is constantly contrasted with the Hindu philosophies, to its disadvantage. An excellent object-lesson on the proper use of punctuation is given in one of the articles: "To raise a building an architect is required to make a watch; a watchmaker is necessary to construct any engine, any concern or contrivance whatever, a designing mind is absolutely needed." *The Dawn* sends with its December number a lithographed portrait of Swâmi Bhâskarânanda, a sketch of whose life is appearing at rather long intervals. We have also to acknowledge the receipt from India of *The Ârya Bâla Bodhinî*, *The Journal of the Mahâ Bodhi Society*, *The Ârya Patrika*, and *Arjuna*, and from Ceylon *The Ethics of Buddha*, by H. Dharmapâla, and *Rays of Light*.

The Vâhan is quite up to its usual level of interest. For students, perhaps the most curious and useful answer in the "Enquirer" is one on the derivation of the word "devachan." This word has long been a puzzle, and no satisfactory explanation has hitherto been forthcoming. It has nothing to do with "deva," as is popularly supposed, but is a Tibetan literal translation of the Sanskrit "sukhâvatî," and should really be pronounced "debachan," with the "ch" soft. Theosophical philology and theosophical pronunciation have not as yet been models of perfection, and the advantage of using English, a language more or less understood among us, becomes every day more obvious. Among other interesting subjects dealt with, are the appearance of the higher bodies, mental images, astral driftings, Buddhism, and the states of the disembodied.

"L'Art et l'Homme" finishes in the February number of *Le Lotus Bleu*, and in its concluding portion gives some further analogies between various arts and the "principles" of man. We are afraid that there would be much disagreement among students as to the analogies drawn. Dr. Pascal writes on psychic sensitiveness with his usual clearness, and with the knowledge due to a wide medical experience. Mons. Courmes contributes a short preface to some extracts from a publication of the French Cremation Society.

The main part of *Theosophy in Australasia* for January is occupied by the report of a lecture on reincarnation, delivered by Miss Edger in Sydney. The theosophical view of life and death is explained in a simple and comprehensible manner. "I. H." contributes some brief notes on magic mirrors.

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By a curious error in *Sophia* for February, Mr. Leadbeater is made responsible for the "Letters to a Catholic Priest," the translation of which from LUCIFER has just been concluded. Other translations are made from this Review, Mrs. Besant's articles on reincarnation being continued, and the "Incidents in the Life of Comte de St. Germain" begun. Señor Soria sums up part of his geometrical theory in a long list of Pythagorean units, arranged in succession of complexity.

Theosophia, from Holland, opens with a review of the condition of the Theosophical Society, based on the reports contained in the account of the general meeting at Adyar. The translations from the English are continued, and the recent visit of Mrs. Besant to Holland is chronicled.

Our new Norwegian magazine very sensibly devotes itself mainly to translating the best of our recent theosophical literature. The January issue begins with Mrs. Besant's "Ceasing of Sorrow," and continues with a selection from *The Ancient Wisdom*. Following this is a poem, a *Vâhan* answer on the personality of Jesus, and an original article. The *Teosofisk Tidskrift* for February contains full reports of two of Mrs. Besant's lectures in Sweden, and also a translation of "Occult Chemistry" from LUCIFER, besides some useful original matter.

The second number of the Italian *Teosofia* gives its readers a clear exposition, by Signor Aureli, of individuality and personality, and the distinctions made between them by theosophical writers. The translation of Dr. Marques' *Scientific Corroborations of Theosophy*, is continued, and the Countess Wachtmeister's interesting lecture on Spiritualism is begun.

The Literary Guide begins its March number with an article on "Rationalism and Sentiment," by J. McCabe, an admirably clear exposition of the strict Rationalist's attitude. Rationalism might certainly serve as an excellent antidote to unbalanced mysticism, but it leaves unexplored mental realms as wide and as fruitful as the "reason" in which it claims to dwell. It will be interesting in the future to note the effect of the recognition of psychic facts (which recognition must grow as time passes) upon the present views.

The Eagle and the Serpent is a new and daring publication, fated, we suspect, to a premature decease. It is founded to oppose altruism, and to substitute egoism in its place, as a remedy for all evils. We have most of us yet to learn that the world is suffering from a lack of egoism.

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We have also to acknowledge the receipt of *The Review of Reviews*, both for England and Australasia; *Notes and Queries*, with some really useful, as well as much fantastic, information; *L'Hyperchimie; The Zoophilist*, the organ of the National Anti-Vivisection Society; *Light*, containing in one issue a full report of an address by Mrs. Besant, and an excellent portrait; *The Agnostic Journal; The Woman's Signal; Modern Astrology*, with a quotation from *The Vâhan*, and an astrological criticism of the quotation and its writer; *The Outlook*, the first number of a critical and gossipy journal of literature, arts, etc.; *Universal Brotherhood; The Internationalist; The Temple; Humanity; The Herald of the Golden Age;* and *Theosophia*, from Sweden.

Erratum.—On p. 50, line 15, George III. should be George II. The page was pulled before the mistake was noticed.

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