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ON THE WATCH-TOWER

THEOSOPHISTS all the world over, when they hear of the passing away from earth of our brother Tookeram Tatyā, will send forth a wish for his peace and joy on the other side
In Peace the veil. He was one of the earliest of Indian members and remained during the remainder of his physical life a most loyal and devoted worker in the Society. Not only was he one of the pillars of the Bombay Lodge, but his widespread charities and continual philanthropy made him loved and respected by the whole Bombay community; his free dispensary succoured thousands of the poor, and many a child blessed his helping hand in education, while by means of his publishing office he has made students in every part of the world his debtors. He has entered into a rest that is well deserved, and has left to us all an example of faithfulness and charity.

* * *
SIGNS are plentiful that public opinion is slowly changing in its attitude towards the older civilisations of the world. There is a tendency to study instead of to abuse them, and to recognise that what is different from our own ideas is not necessarily evil. The
“The heathen Chinese”
Pall Mall Gazette is publishing some articles on “Real China”

from the pen of Mr. Harold E. Gorst, and these sketches of life in the parts of China untouched by Western influences may yield much food for thought. Mr. Gorst remarks on "the superior bearing of the peasant when compared with the European labourer," and he proceeds: "Were a belated Chinaman to pass through a European village, would the first ploughman he met welcome him to his cottage, kill one of his fattest chickens in honour of his visitor, and flatly refuse to accept the slightest payment on parting?" We fear the Chinaman would meet with jeers rather than with hospitality. An interesting account is given of the jurisdiction exercised by each family over its individual members; the State deals with capital crimes, but the family council punishes all ordinary misdemeanours; by the State "as a rule, the culprit is given the choice between expulsion from the community and suicide. The former is considered so terrible a punishment, for the unity of the family is part of the Chinaman's religion, that the latter alternative is generally preferred." The family bond is described as follows:

When the father dies it is usual for the wife to take his place. Should she prefer to delegate this responsibility to the eldest son, who must in that case be of age, she will still retain an almost paramount voice in domestic matters. The veneration displayed by the Chinese for their mothers would appear almost ludicrous to the rising generation of children in this country. It is considered an ample excuse for absence from duty or retirement from a profession that the mother of the individual in question be taken ill. The same respect and affection are shown by the wife towards her mother-in-law. Williams gives the following anecdote, translated from the Chinese moralist Luhchau: "Loh Yang travelled seven years to improve himself, during which time his wife diligently served her mother-in-law and supported her son at school. The poultry from a neighbour's house once wandered into her garden, and her mother-in-law stole and killed them for eating. When the wife sat down to table and saw the fowls she would not dine, but burst into tears; at which the old lady was much surprised, and asked the reason. 'I am much distressed that I am so poor and cannot afford to supply you with all I could wish, and that I should have caused you to eat flesh belonging to another.' Her parent was affected by this, and threw away the dish." Could a reproof have been administered with greater delicacy or tact? Most English ladies would be indignant at the notion of waiting upon their mothers-in-law; but the latter may well regard with envy a civilisation that places their class on such a pinnacle. The relations between parent and child in China differ considerably from ours. While the most implicit

obedience is exacted from children, they are placed on terms of more real equality with their parents than is the case with us. Confucius prescribes that in the family assembly children shall warn their parents if they see them about to commit an act of injustice. By the laws of inheritance the children are more justly treated than in this country. Provision is made for them all. The eldest son takes his father's place as the head of the household, and has charge of the patrimonial land ; but his brothers (and sisters if unmarried) continue to live there with their wives and families, sharing the produce of their united labour.

If the community is dissolved and there is a division of the property, the sons take equal portions, the widow receiving a double share. But such a separation cannot take place except by the unanimous wish of all the members, and only in the event of the children being of full age. The women, it will be seen, possess no right of inheritance, although they receive a dowry on their marriage. But as long as they remain at home, the girls are treated exactly like the boys ; and when they marry these rights become theirs in the families of their husbands.

Mr. Gorst states that the evils so much dwelt on by travellers—and one may add by missionaries—are only found in the towns and ports subjected to “ the pernicious effects of European intercourse,” and with regard to the much denounced crime of infanticide he says : “ A late French consul has solemnly affirmed that he travelled from north to south, and east to west of China, without coming directly across, or hearing indirectly about, a single case of infanticide ; and in his opinion this crime is less prevalent there than in France.” This statement will be a serious shock to many enthusiasts in missionary enterprise who have shaken their heads over Chinese depravity, and have contributed many pennies to bring it under the purifying influences of Christian civilisation.

To this testimony may be added another along an entirely different line :

Cambridge University has just had a remarkable proof of the mathematical genius of the Chinese. Some time ago much surprise was caused among mathematicians generally by the discovery among the papers of the late Sir Thomas Wade, of Chinese fame, of evidence that in the time of Confucius the Chinese knew an equation which only became known in Europe during the last century, when it was discovered by Fermat, and has since been known as Fermat's equation. But the Chinese version recently discovered stated that the equation did not hold with regard to certain numbers. This puzzled the mathematicians, and all efforts to solve the

point have hitherto failed. Now, however, a young undergraduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, has demonstrated that the Chinese were right, and his solution is frankly admitted by the experts to be perfect. I understand the result is shortly to be published at Cambridge in an authoritative way.

* * *

OCCULT tradition and research assert that there was once sea where now are the Desert of Gobi and the Sahara. So also have many famous scientists averred.

Too Advanced
Science

But the latest science, through the pen of Mr. R. Lydekker, in *Knowledge*, would have us believe that this hypothesis, if not entirely erroneous, is, for the most part at any rate, a "popular superstition." Thus he writes :

There are several valuable books, published not many years ago, in which it is stated in so many words that the Sahara represents the bed of an ancient sea, which formerly separated Northern Africa from the regions to the southward of the tropic.

As a matter of fact, those opinions with regard to the origin and nature of deserts are scarcely, if at all, less erroneous than the deeply ingrained popular superstition as to the growth of flints and pudding-stones. And a little reflection will show that the idea of the loose sands of the desert being a marine deposit must necessarily be erroneous. Apart from the difficulty of accounting for the accumulation of such vast tracts of sand on the marine hypothesis, it will be noticed, in the first place, that desert sands are not stratified in the manner characteristic of aqueous formations; and, secondly, even supposing they had been so deposited, they would almost certainly have been washed away as the land rose from beneath the sea. Then, again, we do not meet with marine shells in the desert sands [!], of which indeed some traces ought to have been left had they been marine deposits of comparatively modern age.

Whether or no the subjacent strata have ever been beneath the ocean, it is absolutely certain that the sands of all the great deserts of the world have been formed *in situ* by the disintegration of the solid rocks on which they rest, and have been blown about and rearranged by the action of the wind alone.

This is a very good example of the "smartness" of the *fin de siècle* journalist in our modern scientific papers. It is as shallow as the deposit of surface sand on the face of the desert. What can we say of the depth of a writer who impugns the whole argument of writers of the highest scientific

reputation by exaggerating out of all proportion a minor detail which was in all probability as well known to them as to himself?

* * *

THE study of folk-lore is one of the forces at work for the justification of occult statements, Mr. Andrew Lang's late work, *The Making of Religion*, showing how far it Lemuria redivivus may carry the patient and candid mind in the direction of a primitive teaching imparted to men by their superiors. Attention is drawn in the *Globe* to a well-known Maori folk-tale, as a part of an "Eastern tradition of immense antiquity" respecting a continent joining Madagascar, Ceylon and Australia, and stretching where the Indian Ocean now rolls. Our readers know that one of our Australian members, Mr. Stirling, has gathered much evidence in support of the presence of such a continent in archaic days, being moved to this research by the confirmation in his geological explorations of H. P. Blavatsky's statements concerning it. The *Globe* remarks very accurately :

The Eastern tradition runs that before Atlantis was a continent, or even a name, a large continent stretched from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific, including all that part of the globe now occupied by Australia, New Zealand, and the islands of the Western Pacific, and this continent may well be called Lemuria, since it is the continent hypothecated under that name by men of science to account for the presence of peculiar species of the genus known to zoology as Lemuridæ, and entirely included in these limits. In due time, and in accordance with the universal law of alteration by fire and water, this continent was overwhelmed by fire in a huge volcanic cataclysm, just as the later Atlantis found its end in water and the present "world" will end in fire, if the traditional beliefs of our childhood prove correct.

* * *

WE have several times mentioned the strange fire-ceremonies which survive in various parts of the world, widely separated from each other. Yet it is worth while to place on record another pair of witnesses, Drs. Hocken and Colquhoun, who have recently visited Fiji, and were present at such a rite. The *Daily Chronicle* says :

Fire that does not
burn—certain
people

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The power [to walk through fire] is now confined to a single family living on an islet twenty miles from the Fijian metropolis, Suva. These people are able to walk, nude and with bare feet, across the white-hot stony pavement of a huge oven. An attempt was made on this occasion to register the heat, but when the thermometer had been placed for a few seconds about five feet from the oven, it had to be withdrawn, as the solder of the covering began to melt. The thermometer then registered 282 degrees, and Dr. Hocken estimates that the range was over 400 degrees. The fire-walkers then approached, seven in number, and in single file walked leisurely across and around the oven. Heaps of hibiscus leaves were then thrown into the oven, causing clouds of steam, and upon the leaves and within the steam the natives sat or stood. The men were carefully examined by the doctors both before and after the ceremony. The soles of their feet were not thick or leathery, and were not in the least blistered. The men showed no symptoms of distress and their pulse was unaffected. Preliminary tests failed to show that there had been any special preparation. Both doctors, while denying that there was anything miraculous about the experiment, expressed themselves as unable to give any scientific explanation.

* * *

A WIZARD, a *m'logo*, to give him his African title, was said to have roamed about the Nile country one night in the form of a jackal, and to have visited a place 550 miles away from his village, near which at the time Emin Pasha was camped, with Dr. Felkin, the narrator of the story (in the *Wide World Magazine*), in his company. He stated that he had seen two steamers, one bringing mails for Emin Pasha's party, and he described the white pasha commanding them. Emin Pasha questioned the *m'logo*, who said firmly that he had visited the place and seen the steamers, and that further an Englishman—recognised from the description as Lupton Bey—would arrive with the letters in about thirty days' time, travelling overland and bringing news from Khartoum. Sure enough in thirty-two days the man arrived, Lupton Bey himself, with his Khartoum letters. Dr. Felkin winds up the tale by saying that he was convinced that the wizard had never in his life been far from his village and could not have spoken by guessing, since the circumstances were exceptional and the travelling overland, instead of by the river, was most unusual.

Other "Superstitions"

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A "curious coincidence," according to the *Standard*, was the death of Sergeant Fish in Cuba, and his presentiment of the event; the presentiment was due to his "having lost a sacred image given to him by a Mexican woman, whose child's life he had saved"—another piece of superstition. These coincidences multiply with most inconvenient rapidity.

Again, we read in the *South Australian Register* of the wreck of the "Atacama," and the escape of the captain and crew in the ship's boats. The account concludes as follows:

A remarkable case of second sight occurred in connection with the loss of the vessel. Gertrude Spruitt, the daughter of Captain Spruitt, aged fourteen, on Thursday morning last, after rising, rushed into her mother's bedroom, exclaiming, "Mother, father's ship is wrecked. I saw them getting into the boats, but they are not drowned. Father had very little clothing on, only his shirt and trousers, and no hat." The girl required some little quieting, she was so agitated with the reality of her dream. The abandonment of the ship took place on Wednesday night, and it was on the morning that the captain's boat started on its adventurous cruise that the girl related her vision to her mother.

* * *

MUCH contempt has been poured out on the Hindus for their reverence for their sacred river Gangâ, the Ganges. Of late, however, many "Hindu superstitions" have been endorsed by science as based on sound views of natural law. Among other things Ganges water has been subjected to scientific analysis, and a remarkable peculiarity has been revealed—that poisonous germs perish when placed in it. Mark Twain, in his *Following the Equator*, gives the following interesting note on this matter:

When we went to Agra, by and by, we happened there just in time to be in at the birth of a marvel—a memorable scientific discovery—the discovery that in certain ways the foul and derided Ganges water *is* the most puissant purifier in the world! This curious fact, as I have said, had just been added to the treasures of modern science. It had long been noted as a strange thing that while Benares is often afflicted with the cholera, she does not spread it beyond her borders. This could not be accounted for. Mr. Hankin, the scientist in the employ of the Government of Agra, concluded to examine the water. He went to Benares and made his tests. He got water at the mouths of the sewers where they enter into the river at the bathing ghats; a cubic centimetre of it contained millions of germs; at the

end of six hours they were *all dead*. He caught a floating corpse, towed it to the shore, and from beside it he dipped up water that was swarming with cholera germs; at the end of six hours they were *all dead*. He added swarm after swarm of cholera germs to this water; within the six hours *they always died*, to the last sample. Repeatedly he took pure well water, which was barren of animal life, and put into it a few cholera germs; they always began to propagate at once, and always within six hours they swarmed—and were *numerable by millions upon millions*.

* * *

A NEW method of healing diseases, and of eradicating bad habits in children is being used in America, that fertile soil for new ideas. It has been discovered that when

Sleep-cure.

a person is asleep he is peculiarly receptive of any suggestion made to him. Dr. Sydney Flower states that several mothers had rendered idle and disobedient children industrious and tractable by suggesting to them, when asleep, that they should mend their ways. The mother tells the child ere it goes to bed that she is going to talk with it while it is sleeping, and in due course when the child is fast asleep she sits down by the bed and softly strokes the child's forehead. Then she speaks gently but distinctly, telling the child not to awaken but to listen and answer. If the child stirs or opens the eyes, it is to be soothed; otherwise, the mother goes on to say that the child does not wish to be idle, or untruthful, or cruel, as the case may be, and will not be so any more, drawing a promise from the child to that effect.

Other doctors state that they have found suggestions made in this way most useful aids in assisting recovery from illness, as well as for breaking off bad habits. The agreement of the waking consciousness, in the case of adults at least, is said to be necessary to the successful working of the consciousness appealed to during the sleep of the body: "a suggestion which is objectionable to the waking man will be objectionable to the sleeping man, and will not be accepted." It is thought that a drunkard, willing to yield to the suggestion of abstention, might be cured by this method.

THE SIBYL AND HER ORACLES

WHO has not heard the story of Tarquin and the Sibyl? How the wise woman came with books of prophecy to sell to him for gold; how the king refused the offer; how she again returned with a diminished number to meet with a like refusal; how the Sibyl woman once more came back with a still smaller number; and how they were finally bought and became Rome's most sacred treasure? But who knows more than this? Certainly not the general reader, except that, perhaps, he may remember the verse of the famous "Dies Iræ":—

Dies iræ, dies illa
Solvat sæcla in favilla,
Teste David cum Sibylla.

and remember how he has puzzled over it and wondered what on earth the Sibyl had to do in David's company; far more what has she still to do in a Christian hymn as witness to "that day of wrath, that dreadful day" when the world is to be destroyed with fire?

But before we have finished we hope to show that the Sibyl has a great deal to do with Christian tradition, is in fact by no means the least important contemporary source for tracing the history of the evolution of the origins and of the development of that great body of religious ideas which formed the complex seed of Christendom.

Our subject will thus divide itself into two parts: first, we shall treat of "The Sibyl and her Oracles," and then in a subsequent essay say something about "The Sibyllists and Sibyllines." With regard to the Sibyl among the Gentiles then.

To the Greek or Roman in the five centuries before our era the Sibyl was little better than a "voice crying in the wilderness" of mystic antiquity. Her voice was said to have been

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heard in different places, and thus legend would have it that she wandered from place to place.*

In course of time the name became a general term for a prophetess, † prophets being sometimes called Bacids. ‡

As to the meaning of the name "Sibyl," no really satisfactory derivation has yet been suggested and it will perhaps ever remain obscure. Until a better one is brought forward, however, we may as well repeat the well-known explanation of Varro, § "the most learned of the Romans":

"All female prophets were called Sibyls by the ancients, either from the name of the one at Delphi, or from announcing the counsels of the Gods; for in the Æolic dialect they called the 'Gods' *Sious* (σιούς) not *Theous* (θεούς), and 'counsel' *bylén* (βυλήν) not *boulén* (βουλήν). So she was called *Sibylla* for *Theoboulé*." ||

In tracing the legend of the Sibyl, two chronological moments are especially to be borne in mind: (i) 1500 B.C.; (ii) 600-500 B.C. The former marks the beginnings of common Greek tradition, the second the epoch of a great religious revival in Greece, when many of the ancient traditions and writings were collected and re-edited.

The first historic reference to the Sibyl which has been preserved for us is found in a passage of Heracleitus ¶ who lived towards the end of the sixth century before our era. Already the traditions concerning the Sibyl were considered as of hoar antiquity, for the famous philosopher of Ephesus asserts that the

* Cf. Pausanias, *Descr. Græc.*, x. 12.

† "Every girl whose bosom has received the deity is called a Sibyl"—Servius, *Æn.*, iii. 445. "All women sooth-sayers are generally called Sibyls"—Isidorus, *Orig.*, viii. 8. "Women-prophets were called by the single term Sibyls"—Suidas, s. v.

‡ Aristotle, *Problemata*, § xxx., Prob. 1.

§ M. Terentius Varro was born 116 B.C., and died 28 B.C. The passage is taken from his *Antiq. Rerum Divin.*, vi., and was still quoted in the fourth century by the Church Father Lactantius (*Div. Inst.*, I. vi.) as the most authoritative pronouncement on the subject.

|| For modern speculations on the etymology of "Sibylla," see Bouché-Leclercq (A.), *Histoire de la Divination dans l'Antiquité* (4 vols.; Paris, 1879-1882), ii. 139 n., to whose useful work we shall frequently refer as the highest authority on the Græco-Roman side of the subject, a side almost totally neglected by the numerous authorities on the Judæo-Christian Oracles.

¶ Quoted by Plutarch, *Pyth. Orac.*, 6: "The Sibyl, according to Heracleitus, with inspired lips, uttering words of solemn import, unadorned, unbeautified, reaches us with the voice of a thousand years, for God inspired her voice [lit., through God]."

voice of the Sibyl had pierced the length of a thousand years before it fell upon his ears. This pronouncement takes us back to the 1500 years epoch, and the date of Heracleitus himself borders on the period when adherents of the secret wisdom were reviving the reminiscence of teachers of a thousand years before, such as Orpheus and Musæus, to whom they said the Greeks of their own time owed their first education in things religious. It was the time of Pythagoras and of Onomacritus, the editor of the Orphic Hymns and introducer of the Dionysiac rites, as some say, and of many others who laboured to put later Greece in contact with the past and revive her memory.

Thus we find a certain antagonism existing between the sacerdotal corporations of the time (such as the Pythian at Delphi) and the mystic tradition of an origin and antiquity whose authority could not be gainsaid, and which gradually found a home in all the more famous fanes of Greece. But so vague and unreal was that past to the popular mind, so little was that mind able to understand the matter in any real historical sense, that it fell away into the shadowy region of "nymphs" and other things primitive, in precisely the same way as even the trained mind of to-day falls back into the arms of the shadowy "primitive man" when it comes to the end of its short record of history.

Interpreting these popular fancies into some semblance of fact, some scholars have adopted the "nymph-theory" of the Sibyl. Thus Klausen would trace the origin of the Sibyl's oracles to the "natural revelation" which came to those who, dissatisfied with the established oracles of the sacerdotal castes, betook themselves to the forests, and, in the solitudes of nature, amid the murmuring rills and rustling leaves, heard the "divine voice" of some invisible being whom they called the Sibyl. These independent spirits, the protestants of the period, thus gradually formed a collection of Sibylline oracles which were free of all connection with the established centres of priestly divination. This took place, according to Klausen, towards the end of the sixth century, at the same time when Onomacritus was collecting a cresmological literature.*

* Klausen (H.), *Æneas und die Penaten*, pp. 224-241; cf. also Bouché-Leclercq *op. cit.*, p. 142.

Fascinating as the theory of Klausen is for those who would narrow the antiquity of the Sibyl to the Procrustean bed of some few hundred years B.C., there is no reason to interpret the "nymph" idea of the popular mind in so realistic and so immediate a fashion. Had this been the origin of the Sibylline oracles, Heracleitus would hardly have given an antiquity of a thousand years to a "Sibyl" which, *ex hypothesi*, was being manufactured in his own day.

Nor can we be content with the stingy estimate of Bouché-Leclercq who, though he rejects Klausen's theory, yet, because he finds no mention of the Sibyl in Homer, would have her origin discovered in the narrow margin of years from Homer to Heracleitus!

Leaving, however, the question of antiquity aside for the moment, we know that, from the time of Heracleitus onward, collections of Sibylline oracles were in circulation in ever-increasing numbers, and that there existed a great rivalry among the more famous fanes of Greece, and an industrious circulation of legends in support of their several claims to be the direct heirs of the Sibyl's wisdom.

The shrines of Greece were generally famous for one or more gifts—"charismata," as Paul calls them in his Letters—and the gift of prophecy was one of the most frequent. Such pronouncements as dealt with the fates of cities, states and nations, or of rulers and important individuals, were written down and the more famous obtained a wide circulation, though most were originally circulated privately.

As Greece rose to her zenith with Alexander and the Diadochi, she came in touch with a wider life, with Egypt, Syria, Babylonia, Persia and beyond; and with her expansion so did the Sibylline circle expand, till with the supremacy of Rome, the heir to the "world-empire," it included all the nations westward from India. Just as the Greeks of 600-500 B.C. were struck with the antiquity of Egypt and the immediate past and bowed before it, so did the Græco-Roman world bow before the venerable "*vetustas*" of the East.

Thus we find the Sibyl evolved from one to as many as twelve Sibyls. These are referred to by scholars as the various

“canons” of the Sibyl. Until the time of Alexander, that is to say the second half of the fourth century B.C., we hear of only one Sibyl, and this primitive tradition survived even to the time of Varro, by which time they had increased to ten.*

The reason of this evolution has been already noticed, but, as the most important moments in it will be referred to incidentally later on, we need not weary the reader with details, except to quote the table of the “Geographical Distribution of the Sibyls” as given by Bouché-Leclercq,† who has so far made the most exhaustive study of the subject. The table of the Professor of Ancient History at the Sorbonne‡ is as follows :

The Hellenic Group.

- i. The Sibyl of Erythæ.
- ii. The Sibyl of Marpessos (Gergithic, Hellespontian, Phrygian).
- iii. The Paleo-Trojan Sibyl.
- iv. The Neo-Phrygian Sibyl of Ancyra.
- v. The Sibyl of Colophon.
- vi. The Sibyl of Samos.
- vii. The Sibyl of Sardes (Ephesian, Rhodian).
- viii. The Sibyl of Delphi (Delian, Thessalian, Lamian).
- ix. The Thesprotian Sibyl (Epirotic, Macedonian).

The Greco-Italic Group.

- x. The Sibyl of Cumæ (Cimmerian, Lucanian, Italic, Sicilian, Tiburtine).

The Afro-Asiatic Group.

- xi. The Libyan Sibyl (Egyptian).
- xii. The Persian Sibyl (Chaldæan, Hebraic).

The table is of course geographical, and not chronological. It gives us a bird's-eye view of the distribution of Sibylline

* The fullest discussions of the classical references are in Bouché-Leclercq, *loc. cit.*, pp. 136, 137, 166, n. 2, and on the “Varronian Canon,” p. 166, n. 1; see also Maass (E. W. T.), *De Sibyllarum Indicibus*, Berlin, 1879.

† *Loc. cit.*, pp. 164-198.

‡ Formerly Professeur à la Faculté de Lettres de Montpellier.

activity as it presents itself to the mind of an acute observer of our own times, and is an attempt to sketch a chart of the past from the blurred and faint outlines of tradition and legend which have survived to us in the literature of antiquity.

But before we attempt to trace out a few definite connections in this apparently chance net-work of prophecy, threaded over the surface of the Græco-Roman world, let us take a very brief glance at the Greece of 1500 B.C. According to all "history," this was in the full mythical age of the heroes, 300 years before the Fall of Troy. How then could the Sibyl's voice have leaped the chasm of 1000 years to Heracleitus from the very "dawn of Greek civilisation"? Perhaps we might answer: Just as the bardic lays of the Trojan War cycle were handed on from singer to singer till they reached "Homer," so were the oracles handed down. But Schliemann* has long rescued Ilios and her civilisation from the region of myth, and acquired it for history and archæology. Now writing was known then, and indeed long before. Seeing, then, that oracular pronouncements would naturally assume far greater importance in the eyes of the priestly penman of the time than even the happenings woven into the epic songs, of which the Tale of Troy was but one cycle—indeed we can hardly imagine anything of more importance to them than such prophetic utterances—it would seem that Delaunay,† following the authority of the Sibyl, is on the right track, when writing as follows concerning the Pagan deposit of our present collection of the Oracles:

"[This deposit] comprises the oracles which were current in the Greek colonies of Asia Minor, probably from as early a date as the tenth century before our era. They were one of the sources of the Homeric poems, and formed the earliest Greek literature after the heroic period. The burning of the Capitol, in the year 671 of Rome, during the Social War, destroyed the collection of oracles which had come from Cumæ and Magna Græcia in the time of the kings. Consequently the Sibylline

* See especially his *Troja* (London, 1884).

† Delaunay (H. F.) was a pupil of Alexandre, whose critical text and commentaries (1841, 1856, 1869) established him as the leading authority on the subject, and whose work has not yet been superseded.

verses which were incorporated into the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in great numbers, if tradition can be relied on, are the only *débris* of these ancient oracles which have come down to us. Unfortunately it is impossible for us to distinguish them from the rest of the verses."*

Whether or not there be any truth in this tradition—which is generally regarded as an empty boast of the later Sibyllists†—it all points to a great antiquity and to Asia Minor as a centre. Archæology already pushes back the date of the foundation of even the *second* "prehistoric" city on the site of Troy, which city is supposed by Schliemann to be the Ilios of Homer, to 1400 B.C., and it is with such colonies of mixed and pure Greek stock that we are concerned. Whence came they and what was the state of their civilisation? We are here at once plunged into a chaos of speculations, for our scholars with singular unanimity reject the tradition which Solon brought back from the priests of Saïs in Egypt, and which Plato has preserved for us in his *Timæus* and *Critias*; I refer of course to the Atlantic story.

After establishing his famous code of laws, Solon,‡ the Athenian legislator, left his native country for ten years. At Saïs, in the Nile delta, he was honourably received by the priests of Neïth,§ for both Athens and Saïs were under the protection of the same goddess. In conversing with the learned guardians of the temple on the antiquities of their respective countries, Solon discovered that there were records in the sacred edifice of events which had happened nine thousand years previously, and in which the then inhabitants of his own country had played a conspicuous part. The Greek legislator had spoken of the flood-myth of Deucalion and Pyrrha, giving the orthodox Greek chronology of the time; on which an aged priest exclaimed: "O Solon, Solon, you Greeks are always children, and aged

* Delaunay, *Moines et Sibylles dans l'Antiquité Judéo-Grecque* (Paris, 1874), p. 123.

† A name sneeringly given by Celsus in the middle of the second century to Christian writers who believed in "the Sibyl." Celsus calls them $\Sigma\iota\beta\upsilon\lambda\lambda\iota\sigma\tau\alpha\iota$ or "Sibyl-mongers." Cf. Orig., *Cont. Celsum*, v. 61.

‡ *Cir.* 638-558 B.C.

§ Neïth = Athena, the Wisdom-goddess, in comparative "theology."

Greek there is none!" And then he proceeded to explain to the astonished Athenian the astronomical meaning of the myth of Phaëthon, and how that there are successive cataclysms of fire and water, destroying whole nations, and that a noble race had once inhabited the land of Attica, whose deeds and institutions were said to have been the most excellent of all, and how they conquered the inhabitants of the Atlantean Island, and both themselves and their enemies were destroyed by terrible earthquakes and deluges. On his return to Athens, Solon composed an epic poem embodying the information he had gleaned from the Saitic records, but political troubles prevented the entire accomplishment of his undertaking.

Now, Dropides, his kinsman, was Solon's most intimate friend and fully acquainted with the whole story; this Dropides was father of Critias the elder, who had many times delighted his young grandson, the Critias of the dialogue and afterwards the most notorious of the thirty tyrants, with a recital of these wonderful chronicles. And this is how the story came to the ears of Plato.

According to the chronicles of Saïs, then, among the many glorious deeds of the noble "autochthones" of Attica, was their victory over a mighty hostile power from the Atlantic Ocean, which had pushed its conquests over Europe and Asia. Facing the Pillars of Hercules* was an Island larger than Africa and Asia† put together. Besides this main island, there were many other smaller ones, so that it was easy to cross from one to another as far as the *further continent*.‡ And this continent was indeed a continent, and the sea, the real sea, in comparison to which "The Sea"§ of the Greeks was but a bay with a narrow mouth.

In the Atlantic Island a powerful confederation of kings was formed, who subdued the island itself and many of the smaller islands, and also part of the further continent. They also re-

* The Straits of Gibraltar.

† As then known to the Greeks; that is to say, Northern Africa as far as Egypt and Asia Minor.

‡ The American mainland without doubt.

§ The Mediterranean.

duced Africa within the Straits as far as Egypt, and Europe as far as Tyrrhenia.*

Further aggression, however, was stopped by the heroic action of the then inhabitants of Attica who, taking the lead of the oppressed states, finally secured liberty for all who dwelt within the Pillars of Hercules. Subsequently both races were destroyed by mighty cataclysms, the natural features of the then Attic land were entirely changed and the Atlantis Island sank bodily beneath the waves.

Such is a general sketch of this terrible episode in archaic history related by Critias in Plato's *Timæus*, further details of which are added in the *Critias* dialogue. But the main point of interest for us is the picture of the civilisation of the ancient race from which the historic Greeks were descended, as sketched by the priests of Saïs, for this will give us a background for the traditional figure of the Sibyl.

The nation was divided into castes; the priests were set apart, and so also the warriors, while the industrial class was further subdivided into sub-castes, such as artisans, shepherds, and agriculturists. These ancient Greeks were the first to use armour and spears (of metal presumably), and they were invented for them by the goddess of wisdom, that is by the priests of Athena. And then the Egyptian narrator, as reported by Critias, adds significantly: "As to wisdom, observe what care the law took from the very first, searching out and comprehending the whole order of things, *including prophecy* and medicine (the latter with a view to health); and out of the *divine elements* of these drawing what was needful for human life, and adding every sort of knowledge which was connected with them. All this order and arrangement the goddess first imparted to you when establishing your city; and she chose the spot of earth in which you were born, because she saw that the happy temperament of the seasons in that land would produce the wisest of men. Wherefore the goddess, who was *a lover both of war and of wisdom*, selected and first of all settled that spot which was the most likely to produce men likest herself. And there you dwelt, having such laws as these and still better ones, and excelled all

* Subsequently the centre of the Etruscan civilisation.

mankind in all virtue as became the *children and disciples of the gods.*"*

From this we see that prophecy was one of the special arts cultivated in the temples of the goddess of wisdom, and that even 9,000 years before Heracleitus—for Plato, by the mouth of Socrates, solemnly assures us a few paragraphs further on that this story "is not a cunningly devised fable, but a *true history*"—† prophecy was an organised art, and not the sporadic mania of nymph-possessed solitaries. Pallas Athena, or rather her prototype, was the guardian goddess of the race whose cult was the worship of wisdom, and whose restless energy ever since they left their far-distant Asiatic homes had condemned them to a life of active warfare. Their leaders who taught them wisdom and the arts of metal-working (Athena and Hephæstus) were so far their superiors, so much greater than themselves, that fond posterity called them gods, and even the initiated priests of Saïs could only describe the state of affairs to Solon by calling these far-off ancestors of his "the children and disciples of the gods."

So much for the picture of this ancient Aryan civilisation which we can trace in the short sketch preserved in the *Timæus*. Let us now turn to the longer account in the *Critias*, and as we translate the words of Plato,‡ intersperse them with a few comments for the benefit of the general reader. Critias then is represented in the Dialogue as repeating as much of the story of the priests of Saïs as he can recollect.

"In days of old the whole earth in its several regions was apportioned among the gods, and that too without any strife. For it would be an erroneous idea to imagine that the gods were ignorant of what was suitable to each of their number, or that any of them in spite of knowing what was the more suitable for

* Plato, *Timæus*, 24, c and d. For this passage I have used Jowett's translation (*The Dialogues of Plato*, Oxford, 1875; 2nd ed., 5 vols.), but the italics are mine. Jowett's Introductions, where they deal with the *Atlantidism*, present the most ridiculous view of Plato that can be found in the pages of scholarship. The burden of them is that "no one knows better than Plato how to invent 'a noble lie'" (iv. 684).

† *Ibid.*, 26 E; *μη πλασθέντα μῦθον ἀλλ' ἀληθινὸν λόγον*—"a fact and not a fiction," translates Jowett.

‡ *Critias*, §§ iii.-vi.; 109 B-112 E. I use Hermann's text (Leipzig, 1852) in the *Bibliotheca Teubneriana*.

the rest should endeavour with strife to lay hands on it for themselves. It was then by a fair and just apportioning that each received his right and proper lot, and so they proceeded to people their several lands. And having peopled them, just as shepherds tend their flocks, they reared us men as their own possessions and nurslings of themselves; except that they did not bring force to bear upon our bodies by means of their own, as herdsmen drive their herds with blows, but, as being exceedingly sensitive animals, they steered us, as it were, with a rudder from the poop, influencing our soul with persuasion according to their own intention; thus led they all mortal kind and governed them."

This is a very beautiful description of the taking in hand of undeveloped races by the wise ones of the earth, and the gradual development of such peoples through long ages under their fostering care. The "gods" indeed, do not strive with one another, each does his own appointed work in the great task; it is the animal in man, and those forces of strife and savagery who live through the animal, who war against the gods. The "gods" people their lots mostly by leading out a group from amid an existing race, in order that the group may be specialised, and gradually developed into a new type, the seed of a new and more highly evolved race. We should never forget that the hope of all the great initiated philosophers of Greece was that, after the death of the body, they should go to the "gods," among whom were to be found all the great men of the past—the great philosophers, law-givers and leaders. All these, going to the gods, became gods.* This is the grain of truth in the other-

* Compare, for example, the Delphic oracle on the death of Plotinus, which is considered by some to have been one of the last pronouncements of this famous centre of prophecy. At the least it expresses the hopes of the initiated, while in all probability it was a fact of their occult knowledge. The portion of the oracle I refer to runs as follows: "But now, since thou hast struck thy tent, and left the tomb of thy angelic soul, thou hast already joined the band of angel men, inbreathing zephyrs sweet, where friendship reigns, and love so fair to see, full of pure bliss, and fed with streams divine that flow from God; whence came the bonds of love, and gentle breeze, and quiet sky; where dwell *the brethren of the golden race* of mighty Zeus, Minos and Rhadamanthus; where Æacus the just, where Plato power divine, where too, Pythagoras, most virtuous soul, and *all who form the choir of deathless love*, and share their birth with the most blest of powers; where heart for aye is glad with joyful bliss. O happy man, unnumbered labours hast thou borne, and now 'mid powers chaste thou tak'st thy place, with crown of mighty lives upon thy brow." (Porphyry, *Plotini Vita*, xxii; ed. Creuzer, Oxford, 1835.)

wise fantastic theory of the old sceptic Euhemerus, that the gods were nothing but men who had once lived upon the earth. But of course there were also not only other gods or intelligences on another line of evolution entirely from our own, but also gods with their subordinate hierarchies of nature-powers ruling the elements. The theosophical student of comparative "theology," however, will not, it is to be hoped, confuse so clearly distinguishable categories with one another.

Critias then goes on to narrate how that the gods who had the Greek root-stock in hand were Athena and Hephæstus, that is to say the archaic Hellenes were devoted to the cult of wisdom and skilled in metal work, and reached a high degree of excellence in each. But, he adds, only the names of these men had been preserved, while the memory of their deeds had disappeared owing to the destruction of those who had the tradition and the lapse of time.

"For whatever survivors there were [from the great catastrophe], were people who dwelt in the mountains, an unlettered class, who had simply heard the names of the ruling caste in the country and but little of their deeds. Being fond of the names, they gave them to their children, but as for the virtues and laws of their predecessors they knew nothing but a few vague rumours. Moreover, seeing that both they and their children for many a generation were in want of the bare necessities of existence, they had to give the whole of their attention to their immediate needs, and devote all their conversation to them, to the neglect of matters which had taken place among their rulers in ancient times. . . . And this is why the names of the ancients have been preserved without their deeds. I conjecture that they were such names as those of Cecrops, and Erechtheus, and Erichthonius, and Erysichthon, and most of the others as far as any memory of the names of individuals—of course prior to Theseus—has come down to us. Solon [simply] said that the priests mentioned many of them by name when they told the story of that war of old, and women's names as well.*

* The names are a mere supposition on the part of Critias. Moreover we learn further on that in giving the names of the Atlantean gods and leaders, Solon, having some knowledge of the power of names, turned them from Egyptian into Greek. The names of the Greek contemporaries of the Atlanteans were probably far more archaic than the Cecrops cycle.

“Moreover, as to the figure and image of the goddess [Athena], seeing that both men and women followed the same pursuits, war included, it was because of this law of theirs that the people of that day set up the statue of their goddess armed, a witness to the fact that all creatures who consort together, both female as well as male, are naturally capable of practising in common the virtue which belongs to either sex.

“Now the rest of the castes of citizens who inhabited this country were engaged in the crafts and the culture of the soil, but the warrior caste which had been from the very first set apart by divine men* lived by themselves, having everything that was necessary for their sustenance and training. No one of them, however, had anything of his or her own, but they considered all things as common property, nor would they accept anything from the rest of the citizens except a sufficiency of food, but spent their time in practising all these pursuits which we yesterday described as those of the guardians we supposed [for our ideal state].”†

Critias then proceeds to give some idea of the natural features of the Attica of that time. The soil was enormously fertile, for even what remained of it in historic times had ever been renowned for its richness, while in those days there was far more of it, and what were now mountains were then but moderate hills in the midst of rolling plains. For the many great deluges which had taken place during the nine thousand years that had elapsed had washed away most of the soil and left the land but the skeleton, as it were, of its former self. What were stony districts to-day were then rich plains, the mountains which in the present day were only able to bear wild flowers were then covered with giant timber. In brief, it was a natural paradise, an ideal spot for the habitation of a virtuous race. The city was of wide extent and situated on high ground, of which the present Acropolis was but a remnant, the rest having been washed away by the great deluge and the succeed-

* These were either the priests, concerning whom the *Timæus* relates the very same fact of their being kept apart from the rest (πρώτων μὲν τὸ τῶν ἱερέων γένος ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων χωρὶς ἀφορισμένον—*Op. cit.*, 24 A), or the “divine rulers” and leaders of the race.

† *Sci.*, in *The Republic*.

ing earthquakes, and this deluge was the third great cataclysm before the flood of Deucalion.*

On the outside, on the slopes of the then Acropolis plateau, dwelt the craftsmen and such of the agriculturists as had their holdings near by.

The warrior caste occupied the higher ground exclusively, settled round the temple of Athena and Hephæstus. They had surrounded it with a wall and made it as it were into the garden of a single dwelling. The north side was occupied by the houses which they inhabited in common, and the common mess-halls which they used in the cold weather, and everything else that was necessary for the general welfare of themselves and the priests.† In their public buildings and temple however, they used no gold or silver, like the Atlanteans, but employed a style midway between extravagance and frugality. The south side they used in summer.‡

These men were the guardians of their own citizens and the leaders of the rest of the Hellenes, who gave them a willing obedience. "Such then were they and in such a fashion did they ever righteously rule their own state and the rest of Greece, and throughout all Europe and Asia they were the most famous and held in highest repute of all the nations of that time, both for the beauty of their bodies and the manifold virtue of their souls."

G. R. S. MEAD.

(TO BE CONCLUDED)

* Σεισῶν ἅμα καὶ πρὸ τῆς ἐπὶ Δευκαλίωνος φθορᾶς τρίτου πρότερον ὕδατος ἐξαισίου γενομένου.—*Ibid.*, 112 A.

† It is curious to note that Critias, though he gives details of the warriors, rarely mentions the priests; doubtless the priests of Saïs had hesitated to say much on the subject to Solon.

‡ It was presumably left an open space where they camped out, but the Greek text is exceedingly obscure.

SATURN AS A SYMBOL

IN volume iii. of *The Secret Doctrine* we find the planet Saturn chosen as the representative or planetary correspondence of the lower Manas. Now in spite of the reminder that we must not materialise spiritual hierarchies, and imagine that the physical planets are always referred to when planets are mentioned, it still remains true that if there is to be any science of astrology at all on this plane it must be built up according to esoteric correspondences. The spiritual forces must have their vâhans and representatives on the material plane if they are not to be altogether impotent there; and the material vehicle must stand as the representative of its spiritual prototype, that is, so far as anything on a lower plane can ever adequately represent something on a higher one.

As an astrologer I have found a difficulty in understanding why the lower Manas should be represented by Saturn. The lower Manas comprises a considerable amount of intellectual action within its scope; indeed, the lower Ego is often contrasted with the higher as intellectuality *v.* spirituality. Now to an astrologer, the planet Saturn is not a good representative of intellectuality. It is true that Saturn gives an ability for deep and profound thinking, when well-placed in a horoscope; but an astrologer, if asked what were the mental abilities predicted in a figure of birth, would not turn to Saturn for an answer.

It is, of course, quite possible that ordinary astrology may be in the wrong here, and that much greater importance should be given to Saturn as a representative of intellect than is usually the case. But on the other hand, we are, so far as I am aware, nowhere told *why* the planets are associated with the various principles in the order we find in *The Secret Doctrine*. We are left to work that problem out for ourselves; and it is quite

possible that the association of the lower Manas with Saturn may be for some other reason than that of intellectuality.

From a careful review of the functions and powers attributed to this planet, I am inclined to think he represents the tendency towards limitation and separation in man and cosmos. This seems to sum up most of Saturn's characteristics. He stands for cold as opposed to heat; and cold is a constricting and limiting power, while heat expands and unifies. He, therefore, governs all things that are bound, limited and separate; whether expressed in terms of matter or of consciousness. For instance, Saturn is always said to govern the element matter or the earthy element, the lowest, most bound, and differentiated of the seven. In the body he rules the bones, which are more fixed and less liable to change than any of the organs of flesh. In the periods of life he is said to signify old age and death, when he acts as Shiva, the destroyer, transmuter, regenerator or differentiator. Saturnian occupations are those connected with the earth and with death, farmers, miners, sextons, landowners, and those who work on land, etc.

In terms of consciousness Saturn governs prudence, secrecy, reserve, shyness or cowardice, and melancholy. The Saturnian man is of the serious side of life, capable of deep and subtle thought, perseverance and concentration of mind. He inclines to religion, where he is often either gloomy and morbid, or mystical; but he always takes it very seriously.

These, and the various other characteristics, good and bad, attributed to the planet, are all obviously the result of the binding, limiting and differentiating power he exercises.

When badly placed in a figure, there is hardly any vice to which he may not incline the native, and very few misfortunes that he cannot bring about; his deficiencies in this respect being filled in by his polar opposite, Mars. It is worth noticing that in astrology the conjunction of Saturn and Mars is looked upon as the worst of all the conjunctions. But his vices and misfortunes are alike governed by the principles to which I have referred. For instance, he is said to cause accidents by falling, the result of his connection with the earthy element; and he brings about death from cold, or diseases resulting from cold,

and from deficiency of vitality. And in his vices, secrecy, cunning, selfishness, cowardice, and want of candour are always prominent traits.

The author of *Geomancy* says that Saturn represents the element of matter: "Not the visible tangible earth, but the primordial substance out of which all things are made." That is to say, in the highest cosmos Saturn stands for primordial substance, because Saturn is that tendency which brings about limitation, separation and differentiation of primal root-matter from its source; and this relation is carried down through all the planes of cosmos, Saturn everywhere representing substance separating and differentiating, whether on the highest plane or the lowest.

But Saturn is more than this. For inasmuch as he represents the tendency to separation and differentiation, to the creation of separate centres (speaking in terms of matter and force), or of separate selves (speaking in terms of consciousness), his influence is to be detected along both lines of the pair of opposites, and is not confined to that of substance only. In Spencer's famous definition of evolution, he makes it quite clear that it is not substance only which differentiates—"the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation." Saturn represents not only that which separates off substance from its Root; he is also that which transforms and limits Brahman into Brahmâ. And so on down through all the planes of the cosmos; he limits and transforms substance, he limits and transforms consciousness. Brahman becomes Brahmâ, and from Brahmâ consciousness is limited by successive steps and gradations, most of which we do not understand, through hierarchies, through subdivisions of hierarchies, to the higher Ego which informs each of us, and last of all to the lower Ego of each higher Ego, further than which self-consciousness cannot go. At every step in the descent it is Saturn that limits and differentiates.

Saturn, therefore, in respect of the elements, signifies earth; and in respect of self-consciousness signifies the lower Manas; each of these is the lowest, most limited and most differentiated of its kind.

To differentiate substance, and to limit or individualise con-

sciousness into separate units, or centres, or selves, is the task of Saturn during the progress of evolution along the downward arc, the outbreathing of the Great Breath. He therefore stands as a symbol for everything that is limited and conditioned, that is relative and not absolute. This is why he stands for Brahmâ, for Jehovah, Moloch, Baal, Ilda-baath, Abraham, etc.,* and for every other personal God or tribal originator. He is of course identical with Shiva, the destroyer, differentiator, or transmuter,† and with Tamas, the third of the Trigūnas.

On the upward arc of involution everything is reversed, and Saturn changes his mode of operation. During evolution, Saturn establishes separate centres and selves; during involution these have to be unified into one Self, one Centre, merging in the Supreme. That power which, in its outward motion, creates separate units, has, during its inward motion, to unify all these units, to individualise all these collected individualities; so that one great Centre, one great Unit, one great cosmic Individuality, may represent the final result of the whole manvantara, the Fruit of the Mundane Tree.

This unifying power on the upward arc is certainly Saturnian in its nature, but it is a kind of exalted spiritualised Saturn, and therefore would perhaps better be described as Venus.

Saturn separates and limits. But that which is separated and limited must itself be composed of separate constituents, and if Saturn holds the whole together, for a time, as one unit, his power in this respect is comparable with that power which unites separate egos into one family, separate families into one race or nation, and ultimately all men into one brotherhood.

In this final resolution, however, Saturn becomes one with, and indistinguishable from, Venus; the lower Manas and the higher become one Ego. On this account, and for the sake of clearness, it is perhaps best to distinguish Saturn as that power which separates and limits into selves, and Venus as that power which unifies these selves into one Self, one brotherhood. These associations fit in with the exoteric characteristics of the two: Saturn is the planet of selfishness, Venus that of love. Saturn

* *Secret Doctrine*, i. 576, 577, and *Isis Unveiled*, ii. 235.

† *Isis Unveiled*, ii. 235 and 577.

is the planet of the personalities of the Ego, in each of which the idea of the personal self as a unit, separate and distinct from the rest, is prominent. Venus is the planet of the individual Ego, because he gathers up, synthesises and unifies the experiences of all the personalities. Saturn analyses, Venus synthesises. Saturn's purpose during evolution is to build up separate Egos, to individualise. The function of Venus is to preserve these individualities, and yet at the same time to strive to merge them into one unity. Saturn contracts or limits consciousness into self-consciousness; Venus takes up this self-consciousness and expands it, until presently cosmos is not large enough to hold it.

In the crude classical myth, Saturn was the son of Uranus, and mutilated his father, preventing him from generating more offspring; Saturn being the power that controls, limits and sets bounds to everything. Saturn himself is subsequently imprisoned by Jupiter, his son, the differentiating process passing on through lower and lower planes. Saturn devours his offspring, as the higher Saturn unifies the separate selves he had himself created. The Gods feed upon men as the higher Ego feeds upon its personalities.

Because Saturn limits and sets bounds, therefore he is the planet of law and order, "the magistrate of the justice of God; he beareth the balance and the sword," and "to him are committed weight and measure and number."* He "beareth all the Gods on his shoulders" because he "is the minister of God," as Brahmâ is the minister, servant or representative of Brahman, and Brahmâ is the synthesis of the seven Gods; "Lord of the seven mansions of Hades," *i.e.*, the seven planes of cosmos, "the angel of the manifest worlds." "And God hath put a girdle about his loins," his own limiting or binding power; "and the name of the girdle is Death," limitation, transmutation.

The transformation of Saturn into Venus is signified, in astrology, by the "exaltation" of Saturn in Libra, which is the house of Venus. His influence is said to be at its best there.

* The whole of this "Secret of Satan" should be read in connection with the problem of the esoteric meaning of Saturn; it is to be found in the late Mrs. Kingsford's *The Perfect Way*, and *Clothed with the Sun*,

His "day house" is Capricorn,* evidently signifying the higher Ego; and his "night house" is Aquarius, which seems to indicate a still higher stage.

The symbol of Saturn ♄, the cross above the crescent (generally ♃) indicates his nature. The mind, working through the planes of form or matter, is signified by the cross +. In Venus ♀ the circle is over the cross. When Saturn is spiritualised or exalted, his symbol is reversed, and becomes ♃ and then ♀, and he is converted into Venus.

In Saturn extremes meet, as perhaps they do everywhere else. He is the God of birth as well as death. As the higher Saturn (Venus) he radiates forth himself, which is limited and bound into a body. As Venus-Isis, the mother, he builds together and organises the separate units of which that body is composed, and joins them into one centre, one body. As the destroyer, he differentiates the homogeneous ovum into the many parts and organs of the viable child. Venus-Isis, the fruitful mother, holds the body together until old age, when Saturn again begins his work of differentiation, rends apart the separate centres, destroys the prevailing unity, makes the one life many lives, and so kills, devours, his own child.

H. S. GREEN.

* "Makara," *Secret Doctrine*, ii., 576 et seq.

THE hour draws near, howe'er delayed or late,
When at the Eternal gate
We leave the words and works we call our own,
And lift void hands alone

For love to fill. Our nakedness of soul
Brings to that gate no toll:
Giftless we come to Him who all things gives,
And live because He lives.

WHITTIER,

PROBLEMS OF SOCIOLOGY

(CONTINUED FROM p. 304.)

IN the early systems of sociology, imposed by authority on infant races by their Initiate Rulers, all that modern Socialism aims at for the benefit of the masses—and far more—was definitely secured. Provision was made for the abundant production of all the necessaries of life, for the training of varied types of mind to the best advantage, for the full evolution of all the faculties brought by each with him into the world, and for the direction of the energies of each into the channel best fitted for their utilisation and development. The conception of the social scheme was due to the divinely illuminated wisdom of perfected men, and its administration was confided to the most advanced souls of our own humanity, working in graduated order under the immediate direction of the King-Initiate. The basic principles of this scheme may be thus stated: government is a task demanding the highest human qualities, spiritual and intellectual, and to be rightly carried on must be undertaken in the spirit of entire self-abnegation and of devotion to the common weal, the highest being most completely the servant of all; the more highly developed the man the more highly placed should he be in the social order, and the heavier therefore his responsibilities; further, the smaller will be his personal demand on material resources, his nature expanding itself chiefly in the mental and spiritual worlds, and being related to the material for service rather than for enjoyment; the governing class should therefore consist of the wisest, the purest, the most self-denying of the nation, those who can see the farthest and who ask for themselves the least, who have their hearts set on the common good, who count no labour heavy that promotes the general growth and happiness, who seek nothing but give everything, who are wise by ages of experience, and who having learned the

lessons of the world are able to apply them to the circumstances of the day. The first duty of the government is to maintain in comfort, prosperity and suitable conditions for progress, the less developed types, needing for their happiness abundance of material goods; these things are requisite alike for their evolution and their contentment, and the smaller their resources within themselves the larger are necessarily their demands on the outer world. Abundance can only be provided by labour, and to avoid waste of energy the labour must be carefully organised, directed into the most fruitful channels and guided to the most efficient co-operation. This can only be done by those who have the whole field under their eyes, and can thus dispose of the available energies to the best advantage. The undeveloped must yield labour and obedience in exchange for comfort and absence of material care; by this labour and obedience their mental and moral qualities are evolved and trained, fitting them in later births to take a higher position in the State.

Avoiding details, which varied at different times and places the general scheme placed the responsibility for the organisation and direction of labour within a given area on the officials administering the area; each governmental unit formed part of a larger unit, and training in the smaller units prepared for the administration of the larger; famine or any scarcity of the comforts of life, discontent, uneasiness, crime, ignorance—these things being regarded as due to the fault of the administrators, each ruler was called to account by his immediate superior for the prevalence in his district of any of these evils, rightly regarded as evitable. The ruler was there to direct labour, to ensure education, to equalise distribution, to repress violence, to decide disputes, to keep order, to promote happiness; if he could not do these things he was unfit to rule and must give place to a better man. He might be the ruler of a village, of a town, of villages and towns aggregated into a province, of provinces grouped into a viceroyalty, but whatever the size of his district, he was responsible for its good government; and all were thus held responsible, from the petty village official up to the highest governors holding directly from the monarch, the monarch answering to the occult hierarchy only. He appointed some as

his viceroys over grouped provinces, these in turn appointed the rulers of provinces, and these again the subordinate officials, and so on to the end of the ladder; thus was ensured a graduated and orderly administration, which served at once as a government machinery and a training ground for the evolving souls who constituted it, its highest and most responsible members being Initiates. It will be observed that this whole system made the lower and less evolved subordinate to the higher and more evolved throughout; each rendered obedience to his superiors and received it from his inferiors, and the responsibility of each was to those above him, never to those below. Hence "rights" had no place, "duties" only were recognised, but these duties imposed on the more evolved the obligation to provide for the less evolved everything that could conduce to their growth, their happiness, and their improvement. All was given, nothing was snatched, and consequently there was order and contentment instead of struggle.

The land belonged to the monarch, but was divided as to control into definite portions, assigned to the different classes. One half was set aside for the producers engaged in active work and for their families; the second half was again divided, one portion of it going to the monarch, and supporting the whole governing class, and such imperial charges as the defence of the nation, the keeping up of internal communications, and similar necessities for the people as a whole; the administration of justice, like the rest of the work of this governing class, entailed no direct charges, all the officials being supported from this land. The second portion of the half of the land went to the priesthood, who formed a class apart, side by side with the governing class, and were charged with the public education; the whole of this education, again, for children and youths, entailed no direct charges, the priests being the teaching class of the nation; this land further supported all sick and incapable persons, and all—outside the governing class—who had passed middle age, generally fixed at about forty-five. The period of labour extended over only about twenty-five years; before it, the youth was educated, and after it his time was given to the leisurely development of whatever faculties he had evolved.

The admirable organisation of labour rendered it so productive that this ample leisure could be secured to all the producing class, thus ensuring their definite evolution in each life-period. The half of the land used for the governing and priestly classes was cultivated by the manual workers, this labour being their contribution to the State. Among the institutions maintained by the land of the priesthood in each province were central agricultural colleges and experimental farms, where professors and students were constantly engaged in the scientific study of agriculture ; it was their duty to improve the methods of cultivation, to make experiments in cross-breeding plants and animals, to search for new ways of utilising natural forces, of enriching the soil, etc. Any discovery was tested on these government farms, and all the information gathered was circulated among the cultivators by popular teachers ; improved breeds of cattle, grains and seeds were distributed through the province, and all that science and trained intelligence could devise was placed at the general service, being freely imparted to the workers. Agricultural work was further assisted by the publication throughout the year of the best times for the various field and garden operations, astronomy and astrology being utilised for the prediction of the changes of the weather, early and late seasons, favourable and unfavourable magnetic conditions, etc. All this work was demanded from the official class as their contribution to the State, even more rigidly than labour was exacted from the manual workers, for the pressure of opinion and the accepted code of honour prevented dereliction of public duty. One principle of administration was significant of the spirit in which the business of the nation was carried on : in times of scarcity of grain, the land of the priests was first sown, then that of the people, lastly that of the king and officials ; if irrigation failed, the water was supplied in the same order. The children, sick, aged, and superannuated, considered as the weakest members of the national household, were those whose needs were the first to be supplied ; burdens must fall on the elder and the stronger, not on the feeblest

The products of a district were gathered into central granaries and storehouses for distribution as needed, the

methods of distribution varying much with time and place. In good seasons the surplus products were stored for use in times of scarcity—a custom we find surviving in Egypt in historical times. This centralising of the products of a district and their careful distribution enabled the results of improved cultivation and of mineral discoveries to be shared among all, the whole family, as it were, profiting by any advance. Further, a competence was assured to each and harassing anxiety as to the means of subsistence was unknown—that anxiety which breeds desperation in the undeveloped soul, and renders impossible the evolution of higher qualities.

Education was universal, but was adapted to the life that was to be led; reading and writing were not, as now, considered indispensable, but all who showed capacity for study were instructed in these instruments of learning and were then sent on from the primary to the secondary schools; thus children born into any class could rise out of it if they brought with them into the world capacities fitting them to rise, *but not otherwise*. The bulk of the population were trained in technical schools for agriculture or handicrafts, according to their tendencies, the capacities of the child deciding his walk in life, but a sound knowledge of his work was always imparted to him, so that he might perform his duties intelligently and with pleasure. The children of the governing and priestly classes, together with the pick of the working population, boys and girls, received a careful educational training, specialised to meet individual tendencies after the broad and deep foundation had been laid. Religious, moral and physical education was universal, varying in character according to the capacities and future work of the pupil, and no pains were spared to develop to the utmost the intellectual, moral and spiritual faculties of those destined to guide and rule the community; above all were they trained to regard duty as all-compelling, and self-abnegation and hard work as the inevitable accompaniments of high station; this austere training and this rigorous exaction of duty from the young who were to be highly placed may be found recounted both in fourth and fifth race literature, and those who fancy that ancient rulers were mere luxurious idlers might well correct their ideas from the extant accounts.

The hours of work for the labourer were short, his life was free from anxiety, and he was discharged from hard work ere old age overtook him ; but the ruler must work as long as any needed him, all the responsibility of the welfare of the community weighed on him, and death alone lifted from his shoulders the burden of duty to his people.

Looking back to that ancient time and comparing it with the present, we naturally ask why so noble a system faded away, and why man passed into a state of struggle. As souls less highly evolved succeeded to the post originally held by the Divine Kings and the Initiates of various grades, the powers wielded by the rulers were prostituted to selfish purposes instead of being devoted to the common good. Rulers failing in their duties, discontent took birth among the peoples, tyranny bred hatred and oppression begot rebellion. Was this a necessary stage in human evolution ? It would seem so. Man in his early days was child, not man ; he was in the nursery and the school, and the troubles of his manhood lay in the future. Between the stage when humanity was an infant, guided, taught and trained by divine Teachers and their immediate pupils, and the stage of divine Manhood when each shall have the law within him instead of without him, there stretches a long and weary struggle, a time of hopes disappointed, of efforts continually frustrated, of attempts breaking down, of experiments and failures. This is a time of transition, like that of early manhood, and humanity is like the young man or woman who thinks that he can set everything right in a moment, that the wisdom of the ages is as nothing beside his keen insight, that only the sloth and stupidity of his elders stand in the way of the abolition of every abuse and the righting of every wrong. Everybody else has failed, but he will succeed ; he will solve in a moment the problems of ages, and in a few years the world will be happy. So the surging democracies of modern days are very young ; one moment all will be right if we get rid of a king ; next moment all is saved if an Established Church be crushed ; yet again, happiness is secured if capitalists be destroyed. All superficial enough truly, as we see as experience ripens and we recognise that our difficulties are rooted in the lack of development in our own natures. Yet may it not be that through these

very struggles, these shiftings of power, these experiments in government, these failures of the ignorant, the experience may be gained which shall again place the hand of the wisest on the helm of the state, and make virtue, self-sacrifice and high intelligence indispensable conditions for rule? Passengers do not take turns on the bridge of the ship to navigate the ocean; the skilled workman does not entrust his delicate machine to the loafer; the crossing-sweeper is not called in to perform a delicate surgical operation. And it may be that by failure and by social revolutions, if by no other way, we may learn that the guiding of a nation, politically and economically, is not best done by the ignorant or even by amateurs, but demands the highest qualities of head and heart.

In economics also it is probable that this stage of competition and misery was necessary for the evolution of individuality, and that man needed to grow first by combat of bodies and then by combat of brains, by the constant claim of the individual to plunder according to his powers and his opportunities. None the less it is true that this stage shall be outgrown, and we shall learn to substitute co-operation for competition, brotherhood for strife. But we can only outgrow it by cultivating unselfishness, trust, high character, and sense of duty, for we must improve ourselves ere the body politic of which we are constituent parts can be healthy.

But how to find a motor power to bring about such changes? While steadily disciplining and training ourselves, we can place before our fellows ideals which shall be so wise, so well considered, that they shall win the allegiance of the intellect as well as satisfy the cravings of the heart. We must change our estimate of the relative value of things, and substitute intellectual and spiritual wealth for material riches as a standard of social consideration. May it not be possible to influence public opinion to value men and women for greatness in intellect and virtue, in self-surrender and devotion, and not for wealth or luxury?—making the multiplicity of material wants the recognised mark of inferior development, and simple and pure living hand in hand with richness of the higher nature the title to honour. May not the wealthy learn that it is an essentially infantile view of man

to value him by his show instead of by his worth, by the number of his material wants rather than by the grandeur of his spiritual aspirations? Wherever the ideal is the possession of material goods combat must be the social condition, since material goods perish in the using, and possession by one excludes possession by another. Intellectual, artistic, spiritual wealth increase in the sharing, each who shares adding to the store. This is the fundamental reason why progress towards peace and contentment must be towards intellectuality, artistic development and spiritual life, and not towards material splendour and the vulgarity of outer ostentation. These are for the undeveloped, the others for the developed. And inasmuch as the ignorant will copy the more advanced and the lowly the highly placed, the example must be set by those who lead the social and intellectual world. Moreover they would themselves gain by the change in so far as they lead luxurious lives, for the pampering of the body is even more fatal to the growth of the higher nature than is the stern discipline of poverty. Man need demand from the outer world no more than absence of harassing anxiety; sufficiency, not luxury; beauty and harmony, not ostentation; leisure, not exhausting toil; time and opportunity to develop the God in him, not the over-feeding of the animal.

Further, we must have faith in humanity and appeal to what is best in man, not to what is worst. It is not true that it is necessary to build society on selfishness and to rely on selfish instincts. That which is deepest in man is not the animal, and to mould society for the brute that man is outgrowing is to build on a sinking foundation. It is a curious illustration of this that even with men of poor moral development honour is more compelling than law, and social opinion than legislation. A man will ruin himself to pay a "debt of honour" while he seeks to evade a debt enforceable by law—a perverted sense of duty, truly, but still eloquent of the important truth that more can be done by appealing to a sense of obligation imposed by the social opinion surrounding a man than by compulsion of an impersonal law. If the sense of honour, of duty to a class can be expanded to include the nation, we shall have at work in our midst the most binding form of obligation. Duty will become the keynote of

life, each asking "What do I owe?" instead of "What can I successfully demand?"

It seems possible that in the future we may arrive, even by the slow method of failure, at some scheme of government in which the wisest shall hold the reins of power, and obedience shall be gladly rendered to recognised superiors; and at some economic system in which wealth shall be distributed according to needs. Then the maxim will be acted upon—noblest of all maxims when given by love, not grasped by hate—"From every man according to his capacities; to every man according to his needs." That which has been the battle-cry of men maddened by suffering shall become the axiom of distribution in the rational human family.

Most certainly the putting forward of such ideas as are here suggested will not change social conditions in a moment, but no permanent improvement can be wrought in sudden fashion. Yet are they on the line of progress, of the upward evolution of man. The majority of men on the earth to-day are men of the fourth race, but the fifth race—the keynote of which is individualism—is leading human development. The dawn of the sixth race is yet afar in the future, and of that the keynote will be unity not individualism, brotherhood not combat, service not oppression, spirit not intellect. And the birthmark of the spirit is the longing to pour itself out in sacrifice, never asking what it can take but only what it can give. The fundamental unity of mankind is the central truth of the coming race, and the nation which first grasps and practises that great conception will lead the future, humanity falling into line behind it. Those who see it, who teach it, may fail for the moment, but in their failure is the seed of inevitable success.

It is for us who are Theosophists, who hold as truth the spiritual unity of mankind, to put our belief into practice by teaching peace, brotherhood, the drawing together of classes, the removing of antipathies, the recognition of mutual duty; let the strongest do the best service, the wisest the loftiest teaching; let us all be willing to learn and ready to share; so shall we hasten the dawn of a better day, and prepare the earth to receive the coming race.

ANNIE BESANT,

THE HYMN OF THE BIRDS TO THE SEEMURGH

SEEMURGH ANKA, the Sacred Bird of the Persians, is as large as thirty eagles, and sits on the heights of Mount Alberz, or Mount Kaf, watching the changes of the world. Seven times she has seen the world replenished with beings different from men, and as often depopulated, and she knows not how many more of these cycles she will still have to witness. The famous hero, Zal, the father of Rustem, was reared in her nest. Some Persian mystics make the Seemurgh the Sovereign of the Birds, and an emblem of God ; but I think that Madame Blavatsky in one of her books identifies the Seemurgh with the Holy Spirit, the Feminine Principle of Nature, the Wisdom of the Old Testament, and the Holy Spirit of the New, the mystical Mary : as little to be identified with the historical Mary as the historical Jesus is to be identified with the Logos.

The "Dove" (symbolic of the Holy Spirit in the West, while the Persian Seemurgh seem rather to be regarded as a huge eagle) is a feminine emblem and at once stamps the Holy Spirit as feminine ; and in the Gospel to the Hebrews, Jesus is represented as speaking of "My Mother, the Holy Spirit." Hence the futility from this point of view of the clause in the Roman and Protestant Creed, "The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son," which, as I understand it, means "the *Mother* proceeds from the Father and the Son." The Greek Church, on the contrary, has always maintained that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father only, which of course she must, if she be identified with the Higher Wisdom (not with Sophia Achamoth), and thus with Pallas Athene. I am aware, however, that Mr. Leadbeater and others give a different interpretation of the symbolism of the Holy Spirit ; but no doubt there is room for more than one interpretation.

Wide spread the wings of the Anka,
Glancing o'er mountain and plain,
As she sweeps like the wind from the heights of Alberz,
Or soars to her eyry again.

The Seemurgh, the Bird of the Ages,
The Spirit of God from above ;
The Wisdom of Him, the Most Holy,
Descends in the form of a Dove.

Whence comes She, oldest and wisest,
She to whom all things are known ?
She, who for ages on ages,
Firm has exalted her throne ?

Eight times hath Earth been repeopled,
Since she ascended her throne ;
Eight times may yet be repeopled—
Still she abideth alone.

Nor only as bird have we seen her,
In plumage of whiteness arrayed,
But throned as the Queen of the Æons,
A holy and wonderful maid.

The Franks call the Anka Maria ;
In Egypt is Isis her name ;
The Greeks call her Pallas Athene,
And yet she is ever the same.

May she dwell on these mountains for ever,
Whose summit no mortal hath trod ;
Sophia, the first Emanation,
The mystical Wisdom of God !

W. F. KIRBY.

OUR MORE IMMEDIATE THEOSOPHIC ANCESTRY

“IT is only by bringing before the reader an abundance of proofs all tending to show that in every age, under every condition of civilisation and knowledge, the educated classes of every nation make themselves the more or less faithful echoes of one identical system and its fundamental traditions, that he can be made to see that so many streams of the same water must have had a common source from which they started.”—*The Secret Doctrine*, ii. 839.

LAST and youngest scion of a long line of noble ancestors, disowned by some, courted by others, none, however, can disinherit the mystic child, for a spiritual heritage must stand without dispute when once the nature and claims of the inheritor are identical with those of his ancestors.

The Theosophical Society of the nineteenth century is but the latest link in a wondrous chain of mystic teaching which stretches far back into the night of time. It is but one small branch of that great Wisdom Religion which includes in its embrace all religions and all philosophies.

This Ancient Wisdom Religion is the “thread-soul” on which are strung all the various incarnations and encasements of the religious life, adapted to the changing conditions and developments of humanity in its growth from childhood to manhood.

Begotten by that Spiritual Hierarchy in whose guardianship is the evolution of the human race, brought forth from them, they, the guardians of the mystic tradition, give to those children of men who are strong enough for the burden, a portion of the real teaching of the Divine Science concerning God and man and the wonderful relationship that exists between the two.

With the passing of time the old orders changed, old

forms perished, and the sunbeams that danced on the ever-changing screen of time took to themselves new forms and gathered into new groupings, each century which rolled by presenting a new phase of the ancient mystic tradition.

In the olden days men fought for their faiths, for they identified form with that which lies at the back of all forms, and the changing of an outward veil shook their belief in the Divine Power which it did but shroud.

Religious parties, secret societies, sects of every description, such is the shifting panorama of the religious life of Europe during the last eighteen hundred years, and as we glance back from our present standpoint, it is difficult at times to discern the mystic traditions, so loud is the clamour of contending sects for their formal doctrines, the outward expressions of their inner faith.

A word may here be said to guard against one error that might arise with regard to the Spiritual Hierarchy before mentioned, the guardians of the world's religions. It is from this Great Lodge that the World-Saviours have from time to time come forth, and from this centre have sprung all the "Sons of God."

The inception of all religions is from them, but lesser men build up the body; like wise teachers they do not force form on a child humanity. A limited freedom of choice is from experience found to be the wisest method of education. Thus we see mankind prolific in building forms for their faiths, heaping dogma upon dogma; but in tracing back all the great religions to their Founders, it may be seen that at the beginning these forms were simple, the spirit only being insisted on, and the outward observances ever subordinated to the inner life.

The building of form—even religious form—is materialising in its tendency, and thus we find that in all the centuries subsequent to the inception of Christianity, the tendency of every "reformation" has been to throw back, if possible, to the original purity of the Founder. On careful investigation the Christ appears responsible only for certain high and pure ideals, insistence being made on a holy life, leading to a Divine goal. The vagaries and changes which were introduced later arose in

every case from the followers, who brought in their more worldly aims, and transformed thereby the purity and simplicity of the early ideal into an ornate body, with worldly passions and strivings for mundane power.

Hence we find at the end of the nineteenth century, on one side, the Catholic Church, on the other, the Protestant, and between the extremes of these doctrinal communities, a fluctuating, ever-increasing body of thinkers, formed by the mystics and idealists of both parties, who from century to century have been at variance with their "orthodox" brethren, seeking a higher Truth, a purer ideal, than those offered by the dogmatists.

The doctrines hidden in the secret fraternities have been handed down in regular succession from first to last. We can see that the esoteric teachings—which in Egypt, in Persia and in Greece, were kept from the ears of an illiterate multitude, passing with slight modifications into the possession of those grand early Christians, the Gnostics, the so-called heretics; then straight from the Gnostic schools of Syria and Egypt to their successors the Manichæans, and from these through the Paulicians, Albigenses and Templars and other secret bodies—have been bequeathed to the mystic bodies of our own times. Persecuted by Protestants on one side and by Catholics on the other, the history of mysticism is the history of martyrdom.

It is sometimes said that Theosophy is of sporadic growth and can count no sure foundation, no line of religious or spiritual ancestry. But very little research proves the contrary, proves indeed that in spite of the many forms—religious bodies, secret societies, occult groups, Protestant reforms and Catholic heresies—there is distinct evidence that there are certain points on which all of the various orders meet in accord, and that when these points are brought together, there appear self-revealed the same underlying teachings which form the basis of the great Wisdom Religion, parent and children standing out in unmistakable relation.

Such research indeed reveals a new phase, for out of the dim obscurity which shrouds the early centuries, undoubted historic evidence can be found of a wide-spread occult fraternity, which under various names has introduced into many societies the hidden aspect of spiritual truths, striving to avert the mate-

rialising tendency by turning the eyes of men to the inner instead of the outer life.

Three streams of religious thought can be distinctly traced, which may not inappropriately be termed the Petrine, Pauline and Johannine doctrines, the last being the fountain-head of all the later Christian mystical heresies. The Johannine doctrine caused great excitement in the fourteenth century, the details of which will be given when we come to that period. It must be borne in mind that the true occultism, the real mysticism, is essentially religious in its nature; therefore students of Theosophy must not be surprised to find that some of the historic religious sects have had their foundation in occultism and Theosophy.

This view will necessarily arouse some criticism, for the standard orthodox works on all the sects and heresies studiously omit every reference to occultism, and in some cases the real tradition can scarcely be found, so carefully is every reference to it extirpated from ordinary history.

It is only by searching into the records themselves that the real evidence is discovered. And it is in truth somewhat startling to find so much, when at the same time the outside public is in total ignorance of the very existence of a mystic tradition or a secret doctrine, or a Spiritual Hierarchy. On this point a well-known writer on mysticism says:

“The publication of the life and times of Reuchlin, who exercised so marked an influence over Erasmus, Luther, Melancthon, will I trust afford a key to many passages of the German Reformation which have not yet been understood in this country. They will reveal many of the secret causes, the hidden springs, which were moving the external machinery of several ecclesiastical reforms, which were themselves valuable rather as symbols of a spiritual undercurrent than as actual institutions and establishments. *Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas!* Fortunate is it for the student of truth when he can thus discover the causes of effects, when he is allowed to examine the origin of those changes and revolutions, which but for this intelligible process would look like monstrous and unaccountable abortions, obeying no law and owning no reason. Fortunate is he who is thus allowed

to step behind the scenes of the world's drama and hear the plans proposed and the pros and cons of the councillors which give rise to lines of action."*

Truly one could almost think a Theosophist was writing the paragraph just quoted. The whole of Reuchlin's period will, we hope, be dealt with in due course.

The occult doctrines of the Gnostics were heirlooms and sacred traditions from a very distant past, and when the early Christian era dawned the human race had long been plunged in the darkening and materialising tendencies of the Black Age. Soon indeed, the Gnosis was rejected and the sacred and secret teachings of the great Master Jesus became materialised; they have, however, never been lost and traces of them can be discerned from epoch to epoch.

In order that our readers may follow this line of study more clearly, it will be well to group the evidences of each century together. We must bear in mind that many of these societies stretch back through several centuries, and are not limited to one date or confined to one period. The consequent overlapping makes one of the difficulties of following these evidences of the secret tradition. Sometimes a body will remain the same, changing only its name, but keeping the same tenets. Then again, we find that the same terms are sometimes used for the highest spiritual sciences and at others debased by the usage of charlatans. Theurgy, alchemy, mysticism, occultism, theosophy, yoga, all these names have been alternately used to indicate the purest and highest ideal of development for man, and then adopted by those who sought in them but their own selfish ends. To discriminate between these extremes, to find the true and leave the false mysticism, is then the aim in view. It is perhaps simplest to begin with the present era and trace the way back through the darkness of the middle ages to the period when the Gnostic schools still preserved to a great extent the sacred Eastern traditions. The details of that period must be left to hands more skilled to treat the subject.

Let us then take a survey of the last nine centuries of the

* *The Life and Times of John Reuchlin or Capnion*, by Francis Barham (editor of the Hebrew and English Bible. London, 1843), p. 18.

Christian era, and in a series of sketches substantiate with historical facts the proposition here but briefly outlined : that the Ancient Wisdom Religion, or Theosophia, has had throughout these periods its votaries, teachers, messengers and followers, that the Great Lodge has never been without its representatives, and in truth that the guidance of the spiritual evolution of the world by it can be discerned by those who search the testimonies.

The wave of gross materialism which swept over the Western world had its origin in eighteenth century causes, submerged the early part of this period, and is now but slowly rolling away. The deplorable scepticism of our own day is but the result, and the natural result, of the methods adopted by the Catholic and Protestant Churches. It has already been pointed out as one of the basic teachings of Theosophy that part of the process of evolutionary progress is the breaking up of forms in order that the spiritual nature of man may find wider conditions. In both of these Churches the extremes of dogmatic limitation were reached.

The Protestants believed in the verbal inspiration of an inaccurately translated Bible, claiming that their God gave his fiat in books whose historical basis is now shown to be unreliable. All who refused the letter of the law and sought the spirit which lay behind were cast out. We have but to search the records of the Puritans and some other Protestant bodies to see how rigid were their dealings with those who rejected verbal inspiration.

The Catholic Church permitted no education, no freedom of religious thought, and, knowing the unstable basis on which she stood, the Dominicans in the early middle ages took up the very simple position of forbidding entirely the reading of the Bible, except in such scamped versions as were authorised ; and all who did not obey were removed by the Church. Indeed, the bloodiest and blackest records that history can show us are the attacks of the Catholic Church on the mystics of all these centuries.

“We do condemn to perpetual infamy the Cathari, the Patarines, the Leonists, the Speronists, and the Arnoldists cir-

cumcised, and all other heretics of both sexes by what name soever they are called. . . . And in case any man by a presumptuous attempt, being instigated thereto by the enemy of mankind, shall in any way endeavour the infraction of them [*i.e.*, the laws against the heretics] let him be assured, that by so doing, he will incur the indignation of Almighty God, and of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul” !*

Thus thundered Pope Honorius III. in the fourteenth century.

Indeed it is hardly credible, even with the records open before us, that such inhuman tortures as were perpetrated on some of the mystic sects above enumerated could have been devised in the name of a Saviour of mercy and love. Such fiendish barbarity, however, brought its own karma, a rich reward of hatred, scepticism and unbelief. The education and knowledge that the Church discountenanced and withheld were reached by natural evolution ; and the priests who should have been the spiritual leaders were overthrown and cast down.

During the dark days of the revolution in France, it was the mystics who most bitterly deplored the growing scepticism. The materialists were the enemies of mystics, occultists and religionists of every kind, Catholic and Protestant. The Catholic party tried to father the outbreak of the revolution on the mystics. The Abbé Barruel in his book on Jacobinism† has taken every pains to do this, as also have the Abbé Migne and many others. But the appalling corruption of the Catholic Church, conjoined with her insistence on the ignorance of the people, was one of the great factors in that terrible outbreak.

In a very interesting correspondence between the Baron Kirschberger de Liebesdorf and Louis Claude de St. Martin, the situation is most clearly described, and the following important extract shows the insidious method of work adopted by the German materialistic school, the enemy alike of mystics and Churches.

* *History of the Christian Church*, by the Rev. Henry Stebbing, A.M. (London, 1834), ii., 332.

† *Mémoires sur l'Histoire du Jacobinisme*, 4 vols., Paris, 1797-8.

The Baron writes :

“MORAT, *June*, 1795.

“. . . . Unbelief has actually formed a well-organised club ; it is a great tree which overshadows a considerable portion of Germany, bearing very bad fruit, and pushing its roots even into Switzerland. The enemies of the Christian religion have their affiliations, their lookers-out, and a well-established correspondence; they have a provincial for each department, who directs the subaltern agents ; they control the principal German newspapers ; these newspapers are the favourite reading of the clergy who do not like to study ; in them they puff the writings which support their views, and abuse all besides ; if a writer ventures to rise against this despotism, he can hardly find a publisher who will take charge of his manuscript. This is what they can do in the literary way ; but they have much more in their power than this. If there is a place vacant in the public instruction department . . . they have three or four candidates all ready, whom they get presented through different channels ; . . . in this way is constituted the University of Göttingen. . . . Another grand means which they employ is that of . . . calumny. This is all the easier for them, that most of the Protestant ecclesiastics are, unhappily, their zealous agents ; and as this class has a thousand ways of mixing everywhere, they can at pleasure circulate reports which are sure to hit their mark, before one knows anything about it, or is able to defend oneself. This monstrous coalition has cost its chief, an old man of letters at Berlin and at the same time one of the most celebrated publishers of Germany, thirty years' labour. He has edited the first journal of the country ever since 1765 ; his name is Frederick Nicolai. This *Bibliothèque Germanique* has, by its agents, taken hold also of the spirit of the *Literary Gazette* of Jéna, which is very well got up, and circulates wherever the German language is known. Besides this, Nicolai influences the *Berlin Journal*, and the *Museum*, two works of repute. Political organisation and affiliated societies were established, when these journals had sufficiently disseminated their venom. Nothing can equal the constancy with which these people have followed their plan. They have moved slowly, but surely ; and, at the

present hour, their progress has been so enormous, and their influence become so frightful, that no effort can now avail against them ; Providence alone can deliver us from this plague.

“ At first, the march of the Nicolaïtes was very circumspect ; they associated the best heads of Germany in their *Bibliothèque Universelle*, their scientific articles were admirable, and the reviews of theological works occupied a considerable portion of every volume. These reviews were composed with so much wisdom that our professors in Switzerland recommended them in their public discourses to our young Churchmen. But they let in the poison [of materialism] a little at a time and very carefully.”*

This organised conspiracy was the result of the methods adopted by the Catholic Church. Men demanded knowledge, sought knowledge, and attained knowledge, but only of the material side of life. Shocked by the barbaric superstitions and illogical dogmas insisted on by the Church, the revolt of reason threw men back into a dogmatism which was no less rigid than the one they had left. The study of history, the knowledge of science, all tended to show the superficiality of that basis on which the Catholic Church had reared herself, and the leaders of thought who led this revolt, the Encyclopædists in France and the Nicolaïtes in Germany, were the bitter fruit of Catholic karma. They banded themselves together, and it was this body of sceptics and their organised conspiracy for which the Abbé Barruel and others tried to make the mystics responsible. The Church blamed others for the results of her own work, and the poison of unbelief and deadly materialism was meantime being slowly spread in Europe by the Nicolaïtes.

They tried to crush out all belief in or investigations into the unseen life and its forces. Hence their bitter and criminal attacks upon the Comte de St. Germain, Cagliostro, Saint Martin, and also upon the various mystical secret societies and Freemasonry in general. Keeping this powerful and malignant organisation in view, we shall better understand the charges

* *Theosophic Correspondence between Louis Claude de St. Martin and the Baron Kirschberger de Liebesdorf* (1792-97), pp. 219-222.

brought against the various mystics above mentioned. It is only in the course of research that it is possible to realise the vindictiveness and argus-eyed watchfulness with which these Nicolaïtes pursued mysticism and Freemasonry. Article after article, book upon book, is produced, one and all from the same source, each teeming with the same poisonous intent, the destruction of mysticism and the crushing out of the spiritual life.

The eighteenth century is perhaps the most difficult in which to separate the true tradition from the spurious; mushroom-like, semi-mystical societies sprang up on all sides, claiming occult knowledge and mystic teaching; but when these claims are sifted for verification they lack the stamp of high morality and purity which is the ineffaceable mark, the *sine quâ non*, of all that emanates from the Great Lodge; hence in selecting the societies and bodies which will be dealt with and studied in detail, only those have been taken in which outer and inner investigation prove their unmistakable origin.

Spurious societies of many kinds abounded, with high sounding titles and claims to various authorities, but the inner life lacked the moral purity which is the essential basis of all true development.

That there was definite connection between the various sects, societies, and heresies, is evident; they had moreover a common language of signs, by which they could make themselves known to each other. Says Rossetti, speaking of the fourteenth century: "There are some events in history, whether literary, or political, or ecclesiastical, which at first sight appear to us quite enigmatical; but when once aware of the existence of the marked language of the Anti-papal Sects (especially of the Society of the Templars, and the Patarini, or Albigenses or Cathari, with whom the learned in Italy were then so strictly connected), we find them very intelligible and clear." *

So that Rossetti speaks in the same manner as Barham in the passage already cited about a secret force permeating the outer society. Again he says: "Why were the Templars who were

* *Disquisitions on the Anti-papal Spirit which produced the Reformation*, by Gabriele Rossetti, Prof. of Italian Literature at King's College; (London, 1834), ii. 156.

members of the most illustrious families in Europe sacrificed by hundreds in different countries? Why were the Patarini burned alive in almost every city? History tells us they belonged to secret societies, and professed doctrines inimical to Rome. What those doctrines were is well known, as far as regards the Patarini.”*

Rossetti also mentions the Albigenses as an emanation from the Templars, who themselves held Eastern doctrines, a fact not found in the ordinary standard dictionaries of Heresies.

Speaking again of the spiritual training given in these societies, he says: “Every Sectarian was called an outward and an inward man: one, all flesh among the profane; the other all spirit, among the elect in the so-called kingdom of God. And to pass from the flesh to the spirit signified to conform *outwardly* with the prevailing opinions; while *inwardly* all was at war with them . . . this was the ancient art which the Templars brought from Egypt into the West ages before.” †

The rough enumeration which now follows of the mystical societies and so-called heresies as far back as the ninth century is only a guide to where the evidence can be found. They are, moreover, selected from many other bodies simply because in their inception they fulfil the before-mentioned conditions of purity and morality combined with occult knowledge. Some few societies, or groups rather, have been omitted simply because they are so occult that very little outer historical evidence is forthcoming. Facts are known about them by a limited number of people; but they stand more as the inspirers of the bodies here enumerated than in their ranks. A few names of leading mystics are also given, so that students may be able to trace the groups to which they are related.

Eighteenth century: The Fratres Lucis, or The Knights of Light; The Rosicrucians; The Knights and Brothers Initiate of St. John the Evangelist from Asia, or the Asiatische Brüder; The Martinists; The Theosophical Society; The Quietists; The Knights-Templars; Some Masonic Bodies.

Seventeenth century: The Rosicrucians; The Templars;

* *Op. cit.*, i. 148.

† *Op. cit.*, ii. 30.

The Asiatische Brüder ; The Quietists, founded by Michael de Molinos ; and the whole group of Spanish mystics.

Sixteenth century : The Rosicrucians became widely known ; The Order of Christ, derived from the Templars ; Cornelius Agrippa, of Nettesheim, in connection with a secret association ; Saint Teresa ; St. John of the Cross ; Philippe Paracelsus ; The Fire Philosophers ; Militia Crucifera Evangelica, under Simon Studion ; The Mysteries of the Hermetic Masters.

Fifteenth century : The Fratres Lucis at Florence, also the Platonic Academy ; The Alchemical Society ; Rex Physicorum ; The Templars ; The Bohemian Brothers, or Unitas Fratrum ; The Rosicrucians.

Fourteenth century : The Hesychasts, or the precursors of the Quietists ; The Friends of God ; German Mysticism, led by Nicholas of Basle ; Johann Tauler ; Christian Rosencreutz ; The great Templar persecution ; The Fraticelli.

Thirteenth century : The Brotherhood of the Winkelers ; The Apostolikers ; The Beghards and the Beguinen ; The Brothers and Sisters of the Free Spirit ; The Lollards ; The Albigenses, crushed out by the Catholic Church ; The Troubadours.

Twelfth century : The Albigenses appear, probably derived from Manichæans, who settled in Albi ; The Knights Templars publicly known ; The Cathari, widely spread in Italy ; The Hermetists.

Eleventh century : The Cathari and Patarini, condemned by the Roman Church, both derived from Manichæans ; The Paulicians with the same tradition, also persecuted : The Knights of Rhodes and of Malta ; Scholastic Mystics.

Tenth century : Paulicians ; Bogomiles ; Euchites.

The various sects and schools here detailed should be, of course, understood as not belonging exclusively to the century under which they appear in the above classification. All that this list is intended to convey is that such sects were more markedly prominent during the century in which they are placed.

ISABEL COOPER-OAKLEY.

THE CHRISTIAN THEOSOPHIST

THE variety of nature in her manifestations is one of her most marvellous traits. In the lowest contents of the inorganic world, rocks and stones are of similar diversity, so that Geology and Inorganic Chemistry find vast occupation in analysing and tabulating this humble sub-structure of the great whole. Each successive step upward in organisation increases the variety and the complexity. The moment we touch Botany there is an enormous expansion of subjects to be investigated and classified, for palpable life is now exhibiting itself in diversified form, and entire departments in law and process and method come into view. The Animal Kingdom opens up still further and vaster fields, for to life has been added intelligence, and this has its actions and inter-actions and mysterious subtleties. And when we have reached Man, the area of study becomes co-extensive with the universe, for he is the epitome, the crown, the forecast of its contents and its anticipations. For to life and intelligence have been added the moral sense and the spiritual principle, and these give to life its meaning and to intelligence its guide.

Thus every step on to higher plateaux of being widens the prospect and complicates the study. It illustrates that onward process in evolution by which the simple becomes the complex and the homogeneous heterogeneous. Differentiation increasingly multiplies, genera and species and individuals growing in number and varied form. On the plateau of humanity the separations are astonishing, and upon its higher levels no two men are alike in feature, in character, or in attainment.

Of course all this is because new elements are added to the mass, and because new forces come into play upon each. Every fresh increment increases the material for variety, and every fresh power ensures that variety shall follow. When you give to the

stationary life of plants the moveable life of animals, and confer intelligence to direct the motion ; and when to the active life of animals you give the reason of man and thus expand his area and enrich its contents ; and when to the roaming human energy you add the moral and spiritual senses which require still other realms for their functioning ; you have raised the simple movements of an elementary vitality to the limitless complexity of an elaborate organism. Laws which are few and defined and superficial have become many and broad and deep. They have lost some rigidity of outline, though they have gained in number and significance.

So it is that sciences ramify as human nature is neared. When we enter the sphere of ethnology they rapidly differentiate ; when we investigate mind, the process accelerates ; when we push into the domain of religion, all the other sciences furnish a basis whereon are to rest the additional facts and laws of the spiritual nature. Religion treated apart from the constitution of the being who is the subject of it would be a meaningless abstraction, not a science but a fancy. Comparative Religion is as necessary a study as Comparative Anatomy or Comparative Physiology.

Into the formation of any religion two factors must enter. Of course the spiritual principle, that which senses the existence of the Divine and presses upwards to reach it, is the initial motor. But in itself it is only a force. The moment it seeks expression, whether in language or ritual, it necessarily combines with ideas, and these are furnished by the mind. One cannot address Deity without some conception of the nature of Deity, and prayer therefore presupposes the outlines of a creed. Creeds, however, are intellectual propositions, conclusions reached through mental process, and though they are applied to the highest of all topics they cannot escape the limitations which restrict the individual in any other of his mental works. So we find in any religion the universal spirit of aspiration combined with the beliefs as to religion which are the outgrowth of the age, the civilisation, and the locality. From the spiritual principle comes the vitality, but this vitality enlivens a form which is constructed, shaped, moulded from material given by the mental principle. Thus it is that a religion, when crystallised in dogma and ritual, expresses

not merely the vigour of the devoutness possessed by its adherents, but their intellectual status. What they think of God shows how far they have learned to think at all; their theology is the measure of their philosophy. If without capacity for abstract thought, if occupied with carnal, material, concrete ideas, if unpercipient of the distinction between the seen and temporal and the unseen and eternal, their conception of divinity can never rise above the higher planes of social experience, and all their representations of divine purposes and acts must be merely human, and thus unworthy and belittling. Jealousy, envy, spite, injustice, partiality, favouritism, vanity, are transferred up from earth to heaven, God being only the enlarged ideal of His worshipper. Even in the beautiful classic days of Greece, Olympus was but Athens on a pinnacle.

So it is with individuals to-day. Each has a different God, for each has a different degree of intellectual development, and his conception of God measures his capacity for abstracting the God-thought from the human-thought, and his perception of what is fitting on celestial levels. Intelligence and the moral sense unite in forming for him a Divinity and in shaping the principles on which his Divinity must act. The Church creeds provide a frame-work presumptively correct as being authoritative, but the acceptance of creeds upon that ground is itself a gauge of mental status, and we all know how the growth of mind and heart immediately proves itself by a straining of dogmatic bonds, perhaps a bursting of the ecclesiastical shell. The present era is peculiarly one of discontent at a fettering of the free spirit by definitions and pronouncements by doctors of a past and unwholesome age, and devout men are not at ease in the scholastic garments which suited a time as unlike this as were its occupations and its ways. So the old formularies are twisted right and left to give more play to thought, and, when they are too inelastic for ingenuity to bend, they are ruthlessly snapped and tossed aside as mere antiquated impediments. Much of modern freedom is permeating minds still holding fossilised beliefs. Its fine and large ideas of law and justice and evolution dwarf hereditary dogmas as to man, and destiny, and God, and then there comes suspicion that the little cannot be as true as are

the grand. Gradually the uprising mind finds itself above the level where stand its inherited beliefs; it looks down on them, perceives them creations congruous with an earlier stage of evolving thought but out of place in maturer times, impatiently clears them away and substitutes others of fitting dignity. When once it is seen that the voice of a Church is the voice of an aggregation of Church members, that infallibility is not produced by multiplying the number of fallibles, that truth is not a donation vouchsafed for unchanging custody but an acquisition gained by perpetual search, that the notions of dead men cannot be permanently squared with the fresh attainments of men living and at work, the glamour of ecclesiastical tradition vanishes and the healthy beams of day light up both the problem and its solution.

As the man changes, his God changes. As he gains perception of principles in justice and order and right administration, his mind ennobling, strengthening, widening, an unfair God becomes an impossibility. The thought revolts and disgusts. What would be intolerable on earth cannot be revered in heaven. He dismisses the caricature as unworthy of a longer harbouring. And so with the system under which men were supposed to be treated by this ungodlike Deity. The whole apparatus of favouritism and artificial methods of placating and atoning is seen to be worse than visionary—impossible. It disappears like snow beneath the sunbeam. A nobler scheme arises, one congruous with the quickened intellect and the awakened moral sense. Rigorous justice displaces the old variable code, and a combination of evolutionary prompting with stern personal responsibility meets all the demands of the new attitude of the soul.

We see this everywhere around us. Not in vain have science and sociology and moral philosophy hurled themselves on antiquated formularies, and exposed the fallacies on their surface and the dry rot in their interior, and made havoc of their facts and their assertions and their logic. The very defenders of the faith have dropped piece by piece not a few of the treasures which were once supposed indispensable, and, as they felt comfort in their new relief, have thought it not impossible that more

might safely go. And more are going. Every year there is modification in quarters which in time past seemed changeless ; sermons and lectures and editorials voice the conviction that the spirit of this age is stronger than the memory of its predecessor ; the notion that religion is to learn nothing is veering towards a belief that it has some of its richest attainments still before it. Areas of investigation formerly scouted are now receiving attention, and there is a spreading impression that morality and devotion and philanthropy might have a new impetus if some potent conceptions, long hidden from sight, were now unearthed and revived. The influence of these upon other lands and nationalities is under inspection, not in hostile or contemptuous mood, but rather with desire to sense their merit and ascertain their support. The vague suspicion that all fine religions are of one origin, with the family traits patent to any man who thoughtfully observes, is strengthening into a belief, and with it ripens a sympathy which delights in the family relationship and the common tie. When long hostile faiths can meet in one Parliament of Religions, there is evidence that religious men are more interested in others because religious than separated from them because their religion is different.

Now Theosophy expresses that one fundamental fact in religion which underlies and supports every distinct system of religion—the emanation of man from God. You may have any theory you please as to the nature of God, and any as to the nature of man, and any as to the nature of the emanation : but the triple fact of God, of man, and of man's source in God *must* be the ground-work of your religion, or it is no religion at all. All the world's great faiths have taken this primary conception, and built upon it their varying superstructure as their intellectual and spiritual condition dictated. Very strange, uncouth perhaps, are some of these erections ; very incongruous with what of truth and consistency the clearer sight of to-day beholds. Sometimes a heavy framework of interlocked dogmas has shut out the free light of heaven and made religion oppressive and obscure. Sometimes perverse conceptions have so falsified the whole aspect of creation that God has become a moral demon and His service a degrading superstition. Sometimes a mis-

taken ingenuity has elaborated a minute ritual, and supposed that by outward machinery the inward nature was to be restored to health. And sometimes a grand reformer has arisen, keen with spiritual insight and vigorous of hand to clear away ecclesiastical or dogmatic encumbrances that the foundation truth should be once more seen, iconoclastic towards man-made obligations but tenderly reverent to the divine voice. Then kindred spirits united in the same work, and for a while the revived devotion kept clear from rubbish the sacred territory, yet only till once more the tendency to dogma and to form overcame, and piled up fresh imaginations as if truths. Perhaps the name of such reformer was impressed upon his system, little as its later evolution might accord with his genius or his teaching.

One such case, of course, is the Christian. Speaking broadly, we know that the religion of the foremost nations and the most advanced civilisations bears that name. As we scrutinise more closely and make distinctions, it becomes evident that among those in the rear the name connotes little of its origination. In Russia the Russo-Greek Church, and in Italy and Spain the Roman Catholic, certainly present an elaborate ecclesiastical organisation which in voluminous doctrine and intricate ceremony seems an utter antithesis to all which is recorded of Jesus himself. In France the Roman Church has lost the allegiance of its more intelligent children. Germany, England, and the United States represent another form of Christianity, one repudiating the grosser absurdities and puerilities of Romanism, and retaining the adhesion of millions of educated, intelligent men. But through all these countries the advance of thought has disconnected thousands from ties to stationary doctrines, and they have left behind them beliefs which they perceived to be both superannuated and false. Just as sweetness and light have permeated the spirit, just as deeper reflection and fuller fact have enriched the mind, just as conceptions of law and reason and morals have become influential, has the ideal of God, man and religion been uplifted to a higher level, and a new reformation been produced. Scores of millions of so-called Christians adhere to-day to doctrines which have nothing in them Christian but the name, and which in their

crudeness and absurdity express the small mental development of the holders. Millions have advanced in knowledge and so have repudiated such gross conceptions, and yet are still so backward that their creed as to God and duty reflects their but partial enfranchisement. Thousands are far ahead in mind and thought, and their better evolution has set them free from dogmas impossible to their status, and has transformed their ancestral beliefs into a refined system of Christ-like ethics. And so we see the Christian world differentiating, as might be expected, into zones of various dogmatic quality, doctrines lessening and rarefying as intelligence is stronger, artificiality and authority vanishing as mind clears and the moral sense grows firm.

But has this happy reformation, through increasing intelligence, impaired devotion to true Christianity? I do not so think. Why should it? Undoubtedly it sweeps away much that has for long time borne the Christian name; but that is the very content least entitled to that name, and which would be most indignantly repudiated by Christ himself, even as it was when he personally spoke and taught on earth. Undoubtedly it holds up a vastly different ideal of God as Father and of man as child, but that is the very ideal which Christ himself held up and for all time. Undoubtedly it condemns the selfishness and aggression which Christian nations cherish as national policies, and Christian citizens as individual duties, but selfishness and aggression are the very things which Christ condemned and scorned and anathematised. Undoubtedly it subordinates profession to reality, and belief to practice, but this was exactly what he never wearied in enjoining. And when we turn to the more positive side, is not the reformation spoken of an adherence to real Christianity? It studies afresh the words of Jesus with purpose of ascertaining their actual meaning, long covered by ecclesiastical gloss. It seeks all light upon his era and his personality as explanatory of who and what he was and meant. It affiliates him with other messengers as a means to detect his genius and mission. It inspects Church history to learn how and why misconceptions of him arose, and when and wherefore the simple facts of his life received the twist given to them by doctors and theologians. It analyses legend, myth, tradition;

probes the character and reliability of those who wrote of him ; searches for all contemporary or early record ; seizes upon every freshly-discovered manuscript with eagerness. What it asks is fact, truth ; fact as to his life, truth as to his words. It does not want fiction, it wants reality ; its desire is to see Jesus as his contemporaries saw him, as he saw himself, as he wished to be seen and heard and understood. This is not the attitude of hostile critics ; rather is it the attitude of sympathetic friends. And the genuineness of the feeling is shown in the delight with which his spirit is emphasised and his mission approved. The best passages of his most authentic discourses are the ones most quoted ; the profoundest of his moral maxims and the tenderest of his benignant words receive enthusiastic honour. It is not a homage to titles, but to character ; not interest in a personality, but in his message.

And so I should say that the effect of advancing intelligence is to produce in a devout mind a strong desire to purge its existing beliefs of all that is unworthy or belittling, and to sense the real Christ rather than the conventional mis-portrait of him, getting at his actuality, his spirit, his purpose, his words, his mission. Perceiving the inherent beauty of his character, it is not content to have that beauty marred by error. The true Christian must know the true Jesus.

But what, you will ask, has Theosophy to do with this matter ? Much, I should say, in many ways. In historic evolution it has come to pass that the most progressive, the most influential, the most cultivated nations of the world call themselves Christian. All through their literature, their social framework, their religious outfit is the impress of the thought which, however little it may resemble that of Christ himself, bears his name. A very large proportion of the most intelligent, sincere, excellent of citizens have been subjected from childhood to this influence, and by inheritance and association, perhaps by personal conviction, are identified with Christianity. They are not much conversant with the contents of other religions, the general outlines of their conventional faith are satisfactory to them, any wholesale repudiation of it—certainly any formal adoption of another—would be revolting if not sacrilegious.

But their old ideas have been greatly modified by the spirit of the age and by individual reading, and there are inadequacies, mistakes, imperfections which they desire to have rectified. In certain respects the existing faith does not meet their needs, in others it contradicts their acquired convictions, and so, without being ripe for a change, they are ripe for a modification. What if a mode of thought exists which shall fully recognise all of truth Christianity contains, and yet supplement it with the remaining truth that can give it completeness and harmony and satisfaction !

Precisely this is what Theosophy can do and should do. For remember that, being not a separate system of belief, distinct from others and therefore competing with them, it has no proselytising or "converting" mission ; but, being really the basis upon which all are built, no need exists for it to induce men to desert one form of expression of it for another form of expression. What it desires is that each form of expression should be reasonably accurate, measurably just. None can be absolutely perfect, since every religion is a combination of spiritual instinct with thought furnished by the mind, and as the human mind is not inerrant and its consequent thought not exact, the combination cannot do more than approximate to truth. Yet conscientious care, coupled with unprejudiced anxiety for truth alone, may reduce the error to a minimum, and fraternal sympathy with other manifestations of truth will assuredly expand the capacity of each system, and enable it to assimilate whatever of like excellence it sees around. Thus any religion can uphold its own special exhibit of spiritual value, while glad to appreciate other exhibits in other quarters, and eager to learn from them their distinctive merits and to incorporate them into itself.

Moreover, Theosophy, in its Catholic-mindedness and regard for fact, sees that these different presentations are a necessity for human nature. Racial peculiarities, solidifying through generations the influence of climate and locality and national pursuits, inherited mental traits and long-established beliefs, all give tendency to certain views of truth. Religious verities cannot present themselves in exactly the same light to

the imaginative, reflective Oriental as to the sternly practical, business-like son of the West; nor is the man of no beliefs predisposed to particular lines of thought as is he of personal convictions impressed on him from infancy. So Theosophy, as it impinges on races and nations and individuals, must differentiate them into groups, all holding an ultimate truth, but each expressing it as temperament and education supply a mental component. And when Theosophy encounters a race or a nation or an individual with a doctrinal capital already formed, it by no means expects to eject that from possession, but to purge it, mould it, colour it, enrich it, elevate it in rationality and fullness. Thus we have a Brâhmanical Theosophy, a Buddhist Theosophy, a Mohammedan Theosophy, a Pârsî Theosophy. Each is Theosophy clothed in the thought-garments of different races and cults.

And why not a Christian Theosophy? Is Christianity the only religion which is to repudiate the common ground of all religions, the only one which has no share in universal truth, no fraternal interest in truth-seekers, no hope for fuller light and larger life? Surely that would be a misconception of it which supposed it isolated and solitary, apart from the bed-rock of all human faith, incapable of growth because palsied with conceit. I prefer to think otherwise, and to see in some of its endowments most admirable fitness for such a union with theosophic facts as to constitute a religion peculiarly elevated in both its doctrinal structure and its spiritual vigour. Any man worthily illustrating it would be a Christian Theosophist.

ALEX. FULLERTON.

(TO BE CONCLUDED)

ALCHEMY AND THE GREAT WORK

As an alchemist, whose gold
Flows inexhaustless, or whose pearly draught
The notable perpetuity of life
Vouched to its proud possessor.

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY.

I asked Philosophy how I should
Have of her the thing I would.
She answered me : When I was able
To make the Water malleable,
Or else the way if I could finde
To measure out a yard of Winde ;
“ Then shalt thou have thyne own desire
When thou canst weigh an ounce of Fire ;
Unless that thou canst doe these three
Content thy selfe, thou get'st not me.”

ELIAS ASHMOLE.

WILLIAM GODWIN has given us the outline of the earlier history of Alchemy as it is now very generally apprehended. He remarks that “among the different pursuits which engaged the curiosity of active minds in those [ancient] unenlightened ages was that of the transmutation of the ordinary metals into gold and silver. This art,” he further explains, “though not properly of necromantic nature, was, however, elevated by its professors, by means of an imaginary connection between it and astrology, and even between it and an intercourse with invisible spirits. They believed that their investigations could not be successfully prosecuted but under favourable aspects of the planets, and that it was even indispensable to them to obtain supernatural aid.”

Mr. Godwin further states : “The first authentic record upon this subject is an edict of Diocletian, about 300 years after Christ, ordering a diligent search to be made in Egypt for all the ancient books which treated of the art of making gold and silver, that they might, without distinction, be consigned to the flames. This edict, however, *necessarily presumes a certain*

antiquity to the pursuit, and fabulous history has recorded Solomon, Pythagoras and Hermes [Trismegistus] among its distinguished votaries.

“From this period, the study seems to have slept till it was revived among the Arabians, after a lapse of five or six hundred years. It is well known, however, how eagerly it was cultivated in various countries of the world, after it was divulged by Geber. Men of the most wonderful talents devoted their lives to the investigation; and in multiplied instances, the discovery was said to have been accomplished.”

Mr. Godwin has told too much to warrant a dismissing of the subject with only a sneer. The fact is too significant that transmutation has been from an early period in history a favourite study of intelligent men. It is further qualified by the circumstance of having been all the time auxiliary to the occult sciences of magic and astrology. It gains, likewise, additional importance from the more suggestive fact that those who have been regarded as adepts always considered it as an art vitally dependent upon spiritual aid and guidance. These peculiarities unveil to persons of discernment that there was an aim contemplated in the supposed art much higher than the mere transmutation of metal from one form to another. Bearing this in mind, we may be able to speak more understandingly.

Nevertheless, the view has been entertained by chemists of the profoundest thinking, like Davy and Faraday, that the eighty simple bodies, which are now conjecturally styled elementary, are really compound; and it is inferred accordingly from the analogies of the world of Nature that they all have a common base or point of beginning, capable of being developed into one form or another, according to the conditions that may be prevalent. The notion, then, that metals may be reduced to a primary form, or to their proximate condition before they became part of the solid material of the crust of the earth as it now exists, is not to be regarded as utterly chimerical. The relationship which often appears between them is sometimes so close as to indicate original identity. If, then, the means be ascertained by which to reduce them to conditions which are either elementary or suitably modified, it seems to be by no means im-

practicable to go further and to construct them anew in other forms that are more desirable.

I. ACTUAL MAKING OF GOLD AND SILVER

We have read of experiments that were conducted by Dr. James Price at Guildford, England, in May, 1782, in which gold was evidently made by artificial means. Dr. Price was a member of the Royal Society, and the experiments were conducted in the presence of several noblemen, clergymen and other persons of distinction.

Dr. Stephen H. Emmens, writing for *Science*, in 1897, states also that he had received a letter from a very eminent Fellow of the Royal Society, informing him of the result of a crucial experiment performed by him as suggested by a letter of Dr. Emmens to Sir William Crookes. The correspondent affirmed that the gold contained in a Mexican dollar, after forty hours of intense cold and continued hammering, was found to be 20.9 per centum more than the quantity of gold contained in the same dollar before the test.*

This matter was discussed in a late number of *L'Hyperchimie*, the organ of the Société Alchimique de France, and it was announced that the American savant had been anticipated half a century ago by a Frenchman named Tiffereau. It appears, however, that the two had been in friendly correspondence, like true lovers of knowledge, over the subject. Tiffereau had experimented in Mexico in 1847, and received abundant obloquy in acknowledgment of his efforts. A test was conducted by officials of the French Mint in accordance with his methods, and the result was declared by them to be unsatisfactory.†

It may be permitted to subjoin a formula given by a resident of Chicago, whose name we do not know: "Take of antimony, chemically pure, five parts; sulphur, ten parts; iron, one part;

* "In order to make gold we must have gold."—*Alchemic Maxim*.

† "One point of difference between his method and mine," says Dr. Emmens, "is, that he combines his silver with nitric acid, first having reduced the metals to fine grains with a file; while I rely chiefly upon tremendous pressure to effect the conversion. Tiffereau also placed his stuff out in the sunshine, and he is now inclined to believe that this is an essential phase of the process. He says that he consumed about fourteen days in the operation. I have tried his method recently, but thus far without definite results."

caustic soda, four parts. Place these ingredients in a graphite crucible and expose to a white heat, or five thousand degrees Fahrenheit, from eight to forty-eight hours. Powder the resulting mass and mix it well with the slag. Combine this with charcoal, one part; oxide of lead, five parts; and caustic soda, four parts. Fuse the whole till a metallic button is obtained. Scorify and cupel this metallic mass, and the resulting head will be gold and silver."

The declaration of Robert Boyle, the father of Modern Chemistry, seems to be abundantly justified: "We ought not to be so forward as many men otherwise of great parts are wont to be in prescribing limits to the power of Nature and Art, and in condemning and deriding all those that pretend to, or believe uncommon things in Chymistry, as either cheats or credulous."

Unfortunately, there has been an infusion of Pyrrhonic scepticism into much of modern thinking, till it has become fashionable to treat old opinion with derision and to cast opprobrium upon newer discovery, when it seems to threaten the dilettanteism of accepted beliefs. It is likewise accounted almost as disreputable to acknowledge any novelty as possessing merit, except it has been tested by the crucible, or demonstrated by reasoning from phenomena which have been already accepted. Every fact which may not be homogeneous with favourite courses of thinking and speculation is often set aside as not worthy of attention. The endeavour seems to be to fix current opinions in immobility in order that they may be received in future without question. Innovation in scientific and religious methods is strenuously discountenanced, and a like oblivion is demanded by many for the wisdom and learning of former ages. The person needs courage even to temerity who would venture the suggestion on behalf of alchemy, that it is entitled to candid consideration as a department of science and philosophy; and the demand in its behalf would be regarded as romantic and visionary. Yet we may bear in mind that its teachers were formerly illustrious for learning, and that during the Middle Ages they often held high rank as schoolmen, instructors in the universities, and sometimes even as dignitaries in the Church.

It must be esteemed by intelligent men as sciolism and arrogance to bestow contempt upon the memory of such men as Roger Bacon, Basil Valentin, Kepler, the Van Helmonts, and De la Boë. They are known among scholars as noble and worthy, possessing mental attainments far in advance of their time, and actually as pioneers in what is now accepted in orthodox circles as scientific learning. Yet these men and many like them were students in alchemy and Hermetic philosophy, believing that these comprised all that was most valuable in knowledge. We may presume with good reason that they were pursuing substantial objects, and not the meteors of a marsh. We may, indeed, feel very sure that a candid examination of the matter will convince the enquirer that they knew what they were doing, and that they may have won the objects for which they were seeking. Let us not, then, like the cock that scratched up the gem, cast it flippantly aside, because we do not appreciate its value.

2. PERSECUTIONS

We learn from Suidas, that the Egyptians having revolted against the Roman Emperor Diocletian, carried on the conflict for more than nine years, and seemed never in want of money for the purposes of this war. The Emperor was deeply impressed by this fact, and after he had completely subjugated them he ordered a careful search to be made through Egypt for all writings on alchemy, an art which the Egyptians studied together with magic and astrology. These books he commanded to be burned, under a belief that they were the great sources of the wealth by which his own power had been resisted.

Nevertheless, the burning of the books did not put an end to the study. Olympiodorus of Alexandria, the Aristotelian,* wrote a treatise on the *Sacred Technique of Alchemy*, which is in manuscript in the library at Paris.

Under the title of magic, as anciently understood, were in-

* There were several philosophers bearing this name. The one here mentioned flourished about the year 430. He attempted to set up a Peripatetic School in opposition to the Neo-Platonists, but without success; Proklos was his pupil. A second one lived in the sixth century, and obtained great celebrity. He wrote a *Life of Plato*, and *Commentaries on four of the Dialogues*. The third lived also at Alexandria, in the sixth century, and wrote a *Commentary on the Meteorology of Aristotle*.

cluded both religious worship and every department of knowledge that was cultivated. The members of the learned and sacerdotal class were accordingly designated in the East *magi*, or magicians. Astral learning was a part of the sacred knowledge, and the Magus was of course an astrologist. Such wisdom was regarded by the illiterate as endowing its possessors with occult powers in the spiritual world; and hence magic or religious rites were supposed to be effective in the propitiating of divinities and spiritual beings, and sometimes even in compelling their obedience. Foreign conquest, or alteration in religious worship, however, made changes in many respects that were more or less revolutionary. Divinities were thus transformed into wicked demons, and their rites were proscribed as malefic. In this way the occult observances of the Medo-Persian God, Mithras, were prohibited, and magic was thenceforth denounced as an unlawful commerce with the Powers of Darkness.*

Egypt, with her schools at the temples, Hermetic learning, Alexandrian library and Platonic philosophy, was first to come under the ban of the Roman Empire. Scientific works and philosophic treatises, especially the numerous writings of Porphyry, were ruthlessly destroyed. This policy was maintained at intermittent periods from the time of Diocletian to that of Amru, the Muslim conqueror. When books are burned it is easy to belie their contents.

It was no great stretch of imagination, however, to include all these works in the same category. Afterwards, during the Middle Ages, the mystics of all shades, magicians so-called, astrologists and alchemists, appear to have cherished opinions closely analogous to those of the later Platonic philosophers, the chief distinction consisting in forms of speech and terminology.

3. ALCHEMIC STUDY IN CHINA

The province of alchemic research has been generally defined as embracing the secret of the transmutation of metals, the dis-

* In the Northern countries of Europe a corresponding revolution of sentiment took place. The knowledge of runes, or letters, and the art of healing were regarded as "Wisdom," and were principally in the hands of women and priests. With the religious change this wisdom-craft, or witchcraft, was declared a "black art," and so made into a crime for which many thousands of unfortunate persons, chiefly women, were burned alive.

covering of the alkahest, or universal solvent, and the infallible medicine which will be capable of restoring everyone to health and of prolonging life indefinitely. There has been much apparent comparing of language in the descriptions given by different writers, the "philosopher's stone" or transmuting agent being generally supposed to be identical with the "elixir" or tincture for prolonging life. Later readers also disagree in interpretation, disputing whether the directions and statements of alchemic writers should be understood literally or as metaphoric.

Similar confusion and disagreements appear to have existed in different regions where alchemic works have been written. At a meeting of the Oriental Society at New Haven in Connecticut, in October, 1868, the Rev. William P. Martin, of Peking, read a paper entitled "The Study of Alchemy in China." He quoted Chinese and other writers in order to show that the famous science had been cultivated with much enthusiasm in the "Celestial Empire" for at least six hundred years before its appearance in the West. The writer then makes the remarkable statement that it was first noticed at Alexandria and Byzantium in the fourth century, and after being suppressed by Imperial authority, was revived again by the Arabians of the Khalifate. Their most famous school of Alchemy was at Baghdad, but the science was taught in all their universities from Bokhara to Andalusia. The objects were the same: immortality and the producing of gold. In both schools, the Chinese and the Western, there were two elixirs, the greater and the less; and the properties ascribed to each closely correspond. The principles underlying both systems are identical, namely, the composite nature of the metals and their vegetating from a similar germ. The characters *tsin* for the germ and *t'ai* for the matrix, occur constantly in the writings of the Chinese alchemists. They might be taken for translations of alchemic terms in the vocabulary of the Western school, if their superior antiquity did not forbid such a hypothesis.

The purposes being the same, the means by which they were pursued were likewise nearly identical. "Mercury and lead" were as conspicuous in the laboratories and terminology

of the East as "mercury and sulphur" in the West. Many other "*substances*" were common to both schools. There is, however, a more remarkable coincidence, and to our apprehension it is the most significant fact of all. In Chinese alchemy, as in European alchemy, *the names of the two principal reagents are used in a mystic sense.*

Individuals of both schools held to the doctrine of a cycle of changes in which the precious metals revert to their baser elements. Both schools are closely interwoven with astrology, and both were employed by pretenders as authority for magic and charlatanism. Both made use of language equally extravagant; and, indeed, the style of the European alchemists is so unlike the sobriety of expression common in Western countries, that if it should be considered alone it would be regarded as unmistakable evidence of its origin in the fervid fancy of the Orient.

4. PHASES AND ASPECTS OF ALCHEMY

We forbear all discussion and speculation relating to the primitive origin of these two schools, but recognise them in all important respects as substantially the same. The description seems to show conclusively that in China and in the West alike there were several phases, or aspects, of alchemic doctrine. This is a fact to be always kept in view. There was a mystic, or spiritual, alchemy, and another that was chiefly materialistic in its purview. Thus there was afforded to every person an opportunity to interpret the teachings according to his own mental quality. "To them that are without," says Jesus, "all things are in parables," or external symbols. This fact is markedly conspicuous in those who find in the alchemic writings only an unmeaning or unintelligible jargon, or at most, only vague anticipations of the science and manipulations of modern chemistry. It was, doubtless, all these; but it was also much more.

There were several classes of alchemists. There were those who were conversant with the letter and spirit of the Hermetic doctrines, those who esteemed principally the esoteric features, and those who had their eyes open for the physical explorations. We may read the utterances of them all discriminatingly, prizing them by the results.

From the first there appears to have been a purpose of concealing the profounder knowledge from the uninitiated. Its possessors regard it as too exalted and holy to be disseminated everywhere broadcast. This was by no means unusual or extraordinary. There was danger on all sides to be avoided as well as apprehended profaning of the pure knowledge.* Every ancient society, and even now some religious bodies, among which we include the Roman clergy, have their signs of recognition. The reasons for this are set forth by Geber or Jaffer, the accredited teacher of alchemy among the Arabians.

“If we have concealed anything, ye sons of learning, wonder not. We have not concealed it from you, but have delivered it in such language as that it may be hid from evil men, and so that the unjust and vile may not know it. But, ye sons of Truth, search and you will find this most excellent gift of God, which he has reserved for you. But, as for you, ye sons of Folly, avoid you the seeking after this knowledge, for it will be destructive to you, and precipitate you into contempt and misery.”

Later history exhibits additional reasons for this secrecy. Alchemy became a department of study in every Muslim university, in Asia, Africa, and Europe. It was learned by students of medicine, and was part of the mental equipment of every teacher and philosopher. Even European universities recognised it as a branch of learning; Pontiffs like Silvester II. and John XXII., bishops and clergymen without number, and Emperors like Frederick and Rudolph II., were ardent students of the occult sciences. But with the conflicts for supremacy in the ranks of the Church and the Mosque, between Islam and Christendom, Albigeois and Catholics, there was developed a fierce hostility to every form of knowledge and belief that did not take its inception from established authority. Men of learning who were frank and outspoken in the expression of their views and enquiries were denounced as making use of the black magic art, as having intercourse with evil demons, and as being guilty of sorcery. In

* “Give not the sacred thing to dogs,
Cast not your pearls to swine,
Lest these trample them under foot,
And the dogs turn and rend you.”—*Matthew vii. 6.*

all parts of Europe they were proscribed as impious, and, as occasion served, were burned alive, broken on the wheel, mutilated in the torture-chamber, or confined in dungeons where they could be put out of the way at convenience.

The treatment of Galileo is everywhere known; the name of Copernicus is hardly yet freed from reproach; Kepler was incessantly persecuted, and the recent apotheosis of Giordano Bruno is bitterly resented. We find in such facts abundant reason for the continual use of obscure and equivocal forms of language by alchemists and others in similar peril. Thomas Vaughan has described the facts very ingeniously.*

“Many who are strangers to this art [Alchemy] believe,” says he, “that if they should enjoy it, they would do such and such things. So also even we did formerly believe. But being grown more wary by the hazard we have run, we have chosen the more secret method. For whosoever hath escaped imminent peril of his life, he will become more wise for the time to come.”

ALEXANDER WILDER.

* *Introitus Apertus ad Oclusam Regis Palatiam*. By Eugenius Philalethes, 1678.

HOWEVER intense my experience, I am conscious of the presence and criticism of a part of me, which, as it were, is not a part of me, but spectator, sharing no experience, but taking note of it. When the play, it may be the tragedy of life, is over, the spectator goes his way. It was a kind of fiction, a work of the imagination only, so far as he was concerned.—THOREAU (*Walden*).

WE inspire friendship in men when we have contracted friendship with the Gods.—THOREAU (*Summer*).

THE STORY OF GWION THE LITTLE

THE story of Taliessin is very old. Though it cannot be traced in its existing form farther back than the end of the sixteenth century, there are various incidents in the prose tale which also occur in the Book of Taliessin, an MS. of the thirteenth century, wherein the poems are chiefly ascribed to the Welsh bard, who is reputed to have flourished in the sixth century. The origin of the poems is, in truth, very doubtful, and for further information on the subject the reader is referred to *The Mythology and Rites of the British Druids*, by the Rev. E. Davies; also to the charming translation of the story of Gwion, by Lady Charlotte Guest.

Taliessin the bard was a follower of Druidic lore, and as the tale of Gwion, and his subsequent rebirth as Taliessin, involves a reference to the Welsh Goddess Caridwen, or Ceridwen, it will be well to give some preliminary account of her attributes. She is identified by Mr. Davies with Ceres, a conclusion combated by Mr. Matthew Arnold in his lectures on Celtic literature. The emblems of Ceridwen* were the cow, moon, ship and mare. Taliessin says, "What did Necessity produce more early than Ceridwen?" Mr. Davies thinks that corn was one of her symbols, because a representation of corn, or the word Dias (ear of corn), is found on coins which bear other of her emblems. Taliessin says that he "dwelled in the hall of Ceridwen, subjected to penance, and was modelled into the likeness of a perfect man."

With this preamble let us approach the tale of Gwion. Ceridwen is the wife of Tegid Vael (Bald Serenity), to whom she bears children. These are: Morvran, the Raven; Creirwy, a daughter, whose name is translated as the Taken of the Egg, or the Putting forth of the Egg; and a son, Avagddu, or Black

* See *Mythology and Rites of the British Druids*.

Accumulation. Avagddu is so deformed that his mother conceives the idea of making him more acceptable through the acquisition of wisdom. To this end she boils the cauldron of the Pherault, or Feryll, for him. Mr. Nutt, in the *Voyage of Bran*, gives this word as Feryll, and interprets it as Vergil, who was, he says, reputed a magician. Mr. Davies gives the word Pherault, and says the Pherault and the Kabiri were akin. In *Preiddeu Annwm* Taliessin refers to the cauldron of the ruler of the deep, which "will not boil the food of the coward." In another poem reference is made to the sacred vessel, the cauldron of the pine trees, which confers immortality but *deprives of speech, i.e.*, imposes secrecy. It is the same tradition as the Irish cauldron of the Daghda, imported by the Tualtra de Danann, or semi-divine men. But to return to Gwion.

Ceridwen bids a blind man keep up the fire and Gwion the Little stir the cauldron; three drops of the cauldron give wisdom, the rest is poisonous. Gwion stirs the cauldron, till at the end of a year three drops fly forth and drop on his finger; he puts his finger to his mouth and becomes endowed with wisdom. He flies; Ceridwen pursues him. He transforms himself into a hare; she chases him as a dog. He plunges into a river, and becomes a fish; she follows as an otter. He changes into a bird; she into a hawk. He transforms himself into a single grain in a heap of wheat; she, transformed into a black hen, swallows him. He abides in her bosom nine months, and is reborn as Taliessin. He is so beautiful that Ceridwen has not the heart to slay him. She places him in a covered coracle, and, on May eve, launches him upon the sea. When discovered he announces himself as Taliessin or Radiant Front, a title of the sun, King of the Bards, and the Thrice-Born.

Mr. Davies believes the tale to be the history of an aspirant to wisdom. He construes thus: Hare, timidity; river, initiation; otter, the initiating priest; bird, the bird Drwo, implies wren, or Druid, and Taliessin says he has assumed that form; hawk, Isis; pure wheat, the initiated pupil, received by Ceres, and placed in cave or cell. Finally he is cast into the sea, an emblem of the higher mysteries.

Let us take this solution, and view it more closely. It is to be observed that Ceridwen, Nature, or the Life within, is ever driving Gwion on. The hound that first pursues him is a very general emblem of the lowest desires. There is a *starved dog* in many of Dürer's pictures of saints and ascetic knights. None the less the dog is still Ceridwen, though disguised. Next Gwion enters a river. Water is the universal symbol of the astral plane; but he is still pursued by Ceridwen and driven on. Next he becomes a bird, yet pursued by Ceridwen as a hawk, the bird of the Sun. Air (reference is made to the bird as being a "beast of the air") is the symbol of the mental plane. Then Gwion is transformed into the "pure wheat," the grain "in a great heap of corn," and is received by Ceridwen, for he has reached the plane of unity. When he goes forth from her bosom he is the "thrice born," and is launched upon the ocean of deeper mysteries.

Such is the ancient tale of Gwion the Little; an old tale, and yet new, since it is the history of what has been in the past, is in the present, and, we must believe, shall be in the future.

I. HOOPER.

How poor were earth if all its martyrdoms,
 If all its struggling sighs of sacrifice
 Were swept away, and all were satiate-smooth;
 If this were such a heaven of soul and sense
 As some have dreamed of;—and we human still.
 Nay, we were fashioned not for perfect peace
 In this world, howsoever in the next:
 And what we win and hold is through some strife.

H. E. HAMILTON KING (*The Disciples*).

THE EDUCATION OF THE HUMAN RACE

BY LESSING

TRANSLATED BY CAROLINE MARSHALL

IN offering this translation of Lessing's treatise, I should like to say that I have read, with much appreciation, a translation of it by the late Rev. F. W. Robertson, published by Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co. Mr. Robertson's translation was written of course many years ago, when the knowledge of German was by no means general, and it shows an admirable and intimate acquaintance with that language; it is scholarly, and has retained much of the quaintness of the original style. Mine is more literal perhaps, and in a few instances I see that I have differed slightly as to the rendering. But the main object I had in making an independent translation was to induce students of Theosophy to read a treatise in which is to be found so much that is of interest to them. As this translation will not be republished, those who want one in a portable form cannot do better than buy that written by Mr. Robertson.

CAROLINE MARSHALL.

I.

WHAT education is to the individual man, revelation is to the entire human race.

II.

Education is revelation which occurs to the individual, and revelation is education which has occurred and is still occurring to the race.

III.

Whether education, considered from this point of view, can be of value in learned science, I will not here investigate. But

it may be obviously of the greatest value in theology, and many difficulties from our path will be removed if we take revelation as education of the human race.

IV.

Education gives nothing to man that he could not evolve from himself; it gives him that which he might evolve, only more quickly and easily; neither does revelation give to the human race anything that human reason if left to itself would not arrive at, but revelation gave and still gives it the most important of these things earlier.

V.

And as it cannot be a matter of indifference to education in what order the powers of man develop, since it cannot give everything to man all at once, so in the same manner it has been a necessity for God to maintain an order and a certain measure in His revelation.

VI.

Even if the first man were endowed with a conception of the one God, this conception imparted to him, not self-evolved, could not long exist in its pure form. So soon as the human reason left to itself began to work, it dissolved the one Immeasurable into many measurables and gave to each of the parts a mark.

VII.

After this wise, polytheism and idolatry naturally arose. And who can tell during how many millions of years human reason would have strayed in these paths of error, notwithstanding that at all times and in all places individual men recognised them as paths of error, had it not pleased God, by means of a fresh impulse, to give it a better direction?

VIII.

But as He neither could, nor would, reveal Himself any more to the individual man, He chose out an individual nation to educate after a special fashion, and chose, moreover, the wildest and rudest people, in order to start it from the very foundations.

IX.

This was the people of Israel, of whom we do not even know what worship they held in Egypt. For the despised race of slaves dared to have no share in the worship of the Egyptians, and the God of their fathers had become to them an unknown God.

X.

Perhaps the Egyptians had expressly prohibited the people of Israel from having a God at all or any Gods, and had deliberately imbued their minds with the belief that they had no God and no Gods. To have a God or Gods was the prerogative of the privileged Egyptians, and this fact would give them the power to tyrannise over the Israelites with a greater show of justice. Do Christians of the present day act so very differently towards their slaves?

XI.

To this rude people God announced Himself at first simply as the God of its fathers, in order to make known to them and to familiarise them with the idea of a God who watched over them in a special manner.

XII.

By means of the miracles with which He led them forth out of Egypt into the land of Canaan, He proved Himself to them to be a God more mighty than any other God.

XIII.

And as He went on to prove to them that He was the Most Mighty from above, which only One can be, so He gradually accustomed them to the conception of the One.

XIV.

But how far did this conception of the One fall short of the true transcendental conception of the One which reason, so late, learned with certainty from the conception of the Eternal.

XV.

To the true conception of the One, the people, as a whole, could not rise for a long time, although the best among them approached it more or less nearly; and this is the only true reason why they left their one God, and believed that they found the One, *i.e.*, the Most Mighty, in some other God of another nation.

XVI.

But of what kind of moral education was this people capable, a people so rude and untutored in abstract thought, and so entirely in their childhood? Surely of none but such as is suitable for the age of childhood, an education by means of material rewards and punishments.

XVII.

Here also, then, are education and revelation at one. As yet God could give His people no other religion, no other law, than one by the observance, or non-observance, of which they might hope to be happy, or fear to be unhappy here on earth. For they did not as yet look beyond this life. They knew naught of the immortality of the soul, nor did they yearn after a future life. But had He revealed these things to a nation so little developed in reason, how would God have differed from the vain-glorious pedagogue who would fain hurry his pupil, and boast of his progress rather than ground him thoroughly?

XVIII.

But wherefore, it will be asked, this education of so rude a people, of a people with whom God had to begin so entirely from the beginning? I reply, in order that in process of time He might more safely be able to employ individual members as teachers of all other nations.

In them He was training the future teachers of the human race. They were Jews, they could only be Jews, only men from among a people so trained.

XIX.

To proceed. As soon as the child had grown up, amid cuffs and caresses, and had arrived at years of understanding, his

Father suddenly sent him into a strange country, and here he recognised all at once the goodly heritage he had enjoyed in his Father's house, without a consciousness of possession.

XX.

While God was leading His chosen people through all the stages of childish education, the other nations of the earth had proceeded on their way by the light of reason. The majority had remained far behind the chosen people, only a few had gone ahead of them. The same thing occurs with children who are left to themselves; many remain quite raw, some develop astonishingly quickly.

XXI.

As, however, these more fortunate few prove nothing against the value and necessity of education, so the few heathen nations, which it would seem, even in respect of a recognition of God, have been a step in advance of the chosen people, prove nothing against revelation. The child of education begins with faltering steps; it is late in overtaking many a more happily organised child of Nature; it does overtake it, however, and is never again distanced by it.

XXII.

In the same manner—laying upon one side the doctrine of the unity of God, which in one sense is to be found and in another is not to be found, in the Old Testament—I say that just as little is proved against the divine origin of these books, by the fact that at any rate the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and its accompanying doctrine of reward and punishment in a future life, are entirely foreign to it. In spite of all, the miracles and prophecies described may be absolutely true. For, let us suppose that not only were these doctrines undeclared, but that they were not even true; let us suppose that man's life ended here, would the existence of God, therefore, be less proved? Would God be less free for this reason, would it less become Him to take upon Himself immediately the charge of the temporal welfare of any nation among this transient race? The wonders that He wrought for the Jews, the prophecies which He

had recorded through them, were assuredly not for the few mortal Jews in whose time they had occurred and had been recorded; He had the whole Jewish race, nay, the whole human race, in view, the race which is, perchance, destined to remain upon earth to all eternity, even though every single Jew and every single man perish for ever.

XXIII.

Once more. The absence of those doctrines in the books of the Old Testament proves nothing against their divinity. Moses was sent from God although the sanction of his law only extended to this life. For why should it extend further? He was only sent to the people of Israel, and to the Israelites *of that time*, and his message was adapted to the knowledge, to the capacities, and to the inclinations of the people of Israel *at the time*. It was perfectly measured also for the destination of a future people. This is sufficient for us.

XXIV.

Warburton was quite right to go so far, but he should have gone no farther. But the learned man overdrew the bow. Not content with the fact that the absence of these doctrines cast no reflection upon the divine mission of Moses, he tried to even make it a proof of his divine mission.

This would have been well, had he only sought the proof of all this in the adaptation of such a law to such a nation. But he took refuge in the theory of an unbroken line of miracles from the time of Moses to Christ, according to which God had made every individual Jew happy or unhappy according to his merits in observing or disobeying the law. He maintained that the absence of these doctrines, without which no state can exist, was compensated for by the miracles, and that these miracles even proved what they would appear at first sight to deny.

XXV.

It was well that Warburton was unable, by any means, to confirm, or make probable, this continuity of miracle which he considered to be the essence of Jewish theocracy. For had he

been able to do this, he would, to me at least, for the first time have made the difficulties really insurmountable. For that which was intended to re-establish the divinity of the mission of Moses would have made the matter itself doubtful. God did not intend, it is true, to reveal it then, but He would certainly not make it more difficult.

XXVI.

I will explain myself by an illustration. A children's primer would legitimately pass over in silence this or that important item of knowledge or art which the writer judged to be over the heads of those for whom it was intended. But it must not contain anything that would bar the way to the valuable piece of knowledge that is withheld. On the contrary, all approaches to it must be purposely and carefully left wide open, and any hindrance or misleading that delayed their entrance upon the way would make the primer not only incomplete, but essentially erroneous as a guide.

XXVII.

In the same way the doctrines of the immortality of the soul and of future rewards might well be lacking in the writings of the Old Testament, which were the primers for the rude Israelites, so untutored in thought; but they were bound to contain nothing that could hinder that people for whom they were written, on their way to this grand truth. And, to say the least of it, what could have been a greater obstacle than to find therein the promise of such miraculous reward in this life, a promise made by none other than by Him who promises nothing that He does not perform?

XXVIII.

For although the unequal distribution of the goods of this life, in which so little account seems to be taken of virtue and vice, does not exactly give the eternal proof of the immortality of the soul, and of another life, in which all problems will be solved; yet it is certain that without these problems the human mind would not for a long time, perhaps never, have arrived at better and stronger proofs. For what would have impelled it to seek these better proofs? Curiosity alone.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITIES

It is one of the beneficent results of the Theosophical Society to have a Pârsî translating, and a Hindu bearing the cost of publishing, a religious book, written by an Englishwoman.

India This co-operation of people of different faiths is seen in the Gujarati translation of *The Three Paths*,

Mrs. Besant's valuable little treatise on Karma, Gnyâna and Bhakti Mârگا. We note that Gujarati translations of *The Path of Discipleship*, *The Hindu Religion*, and *Man and His Bodies*, are all ready for publication. White Lotus Day was observed with much affection and respect, and immense numbers of poor were fed in grateful memory of H. P. B. The leading branches were Coimbatore, feeding 1,500 odd ; Salem and Chittoor, each 1,000 ; Madanapalle, 800. The records of Branch activity are very satisfactory, and a new Branch has been formed at Nandyal. The Bombay branch has lost the services of a most valued member, Pestanji M. Ghadiali, who passed away in May last.

It is pleasing to note that the Hope Lodge members are earnestly striving to bring Theosophy before the public of Ceylon.

Ceylon The measures adopted are modest, though active, and as a result inquirers drop in at the headquarters at "Musæus School," where they get an

abundant supply of literature to further prosecute their studies. The Lodge has for its syllabus the study of that priceless work of Mrs. Besant—*Ancient Wisdom*. We have now two meetings during the week : a formal one on Friday evenings at 8 o'clock, and a Theosophical "At Home" on Sunday afternoons. On the latter occasions, both members of the Lodge and their friends "drop in" and a few pleasant hours are spent. Mrs. Higgins, our President and hostess, is untiring in her devotion to the cause, and she and her friend, Mrs. Beatty, make the "At Home" a most attractive and brilliant function. There is no lack of musical talent at the "Musæus," and after a pleasant "Theosophical chat" the proceedings are brought to a close with selections from the best masters, on the piano, organ and violin.

School work is in full swing now. The building fund has had a good start from a Sinhalese Buddhist gentleman, Mr. H. P. Fernando ; he headed the list with a thousand rupees. This

gentleman has been invested with the rank of *Mohandiram* for his public-spiritedness, by His Excellency, the Governor of Ceylon. In this connection Mrs. Higgins has begged us to request all friends to whom collection cards have been sent, to return them with whatever subscriptions have been raised—no matter how small they are—for every penny sent in will add to the fund and will be most gratefully received. The foundation stone of the new building will be laid on August 14th, and the blessings of all readers for the success of the Musæus School and Orphanage are solicited on that day.

It may interest our readers to learn that the "Band of Mercy," organised at the Musæus School, is doing a splendid work. The Band meets once a month, when addresses are given by the older folk, and the younger play a very important part in the proceedings.

The work in connection with the Library and *Rays of Light* is in progress. Mrs. Human, our librarian, will be grateful if friends who can spare some useful books will send them to her. We need a set of the Oriental Series, edited by Prof. Max Müller, and who among our friends will enrich the Musæus with a set? We have no funds to buy such expensive books, much as we wish to study them.

S. P.

ON June 20th, Mrs. Besant was welcomed back from India for the summer months. The series of five lectures announced last month to take place in the Small Queen's Hall, Langham Place, W., on Sunday evenings, at 7 o'clock, are on "Esoteric Christianity."

The programme of the arrangements for the eighth Annual Convention of the European Section of the Theosophical Society, fixed for July 9th and 10th, is before us, but we reserve our report until next month.

The Reference Library of the Section has received a valuable addition in the twenty-five volumes of *The Encyclopædia Britannica*.

Five lectures were delivered before the Blavatsky Lodge during the month, each one remarkable for its exposition of a point of interest to students of the Esoteric philosophy. On June 2nd, Mr. Bertram Keightley drew a slight sketch of the life and times of the sixteenth century Theosophist, "Jacob Böhme." Mr. Moore discoursed on "Atoms and Vibrations," on June 9th. On June 16th, Mr. Leadbeater gave the second part of his most instructive explanations of *Light on the Path*. In Mr. Mead's May lecture on "The Sibyl and her Oracles" there had not been sufficient time to give out all the

valuable information upon the subject that he had so carefully collected, and it was thought best to finish the outline of the Sibyl traditions on June 23rd, and to reserve the lecture put down for him on the syllabus until July. In place of Mr. Burrows, whose throat, we are sorry to say, is still giving him trouble, the Lodge, on June 30th, listened to a lecture from its President, based upon a study of the differences between true occultism and its various imitations. The Lodge meetings are to be suspended during August.

The West of England Federation meeting was held on June 26th, at Bristol; Mrs. Besant, Miss Cooper and Mr. Keightley were present and addressed the members.

We notice that intending subscribers to the THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW Club are requested to communicate with Miss Goring, 62, Brondesbury Road, Kilburn, N.W. By paying 3s. per annum, anyone can have the REVIEW sent on to him in his turn.

During Mr. Chatterji's recent visit to Paris, he gave five lectures at the Bodinière, and three for the local branch of the Theosophical Society in the Salle des Mathuriens; all of these were well attended. Besides this, private classes and groups for study were formed.

From the Netherlands Section we hear that on June 10th, Mme. Meuleman gave a public lecture in Haarlem on "Arguments in Favour of Reincarnation." The hall was well filled and the debate following the lecture was particularly interesting and well sustained. Some persons present contended that the theory of Reincarnation was opposed to the Christian faith, but the speaker very ably shewed that this was not the case, and that Theosophy in no wise opposed the teachings of the Christ. On June 17th, W. B. Fricke lectured, by request of the Utrecht Spiritist Association, before the Spiritists of that town on "The Relation of Theosophy to Spiritism." The meeting was well attended and many of those present took part in the debate. The proceedings throughout were most harmonious. It is the first time that in Holland the Spiritists have met Theosophists on friendly terms to discuss the points of mutual agreement. Mrs. Besant's lecture in London before the Spiritualists has greatly contributed towards a better understanding. The report of her lecture, published in *Light*, has been published in full in the Dutch Spiritist paper, together with a full-page portrait of Mrs. Besant, copies of which were for sale in the room after Mr. Fricke's lecture. In response to an appeal from Ceylon for workers willing to help Mrs. Higgins in her work for the education of Buddhist girls, Miss S. Pieters, a member of the Amsterdam Lodge of the Theosophical

Society, has volunteered her services and will, all being well, leave for Colombo at the end of July. There is some difficulty in finding the necessary passage money, and subscriptions can be sent in to Miss Willson, 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, London, N.W.

The Scandinavian Section of the Theosophical Society holds public meetings once a month in the large hall of the Agricultural Academy in Stockholm. At some of these meetings, Swedish translations of the lectures delivered there by Mrs. Besant last January were read by Dr. Emil Zander, on "The Immortality of the Soul," and "Theosophy and Christianity." The three Lodges in Stockholm, the Orion, the Ajax and the Stockholm, have joint meetings regularly. Major Kinell read the "Invisible Helpers," by Mr. Leadbeater. "The Buddhic and Nirvânic Planes," from Mrs. Besant's book, *The Ancient Wisdom*, have been studied, and created much interest. The notes taken down by Mrs. Sharpe at Mrs. Besant's receptions during her stay in Stockholm last winter have been translated, and afterwards studied and discussed at the Branch meetings. The forty-two members of the Gothenburg Branch have displayed much activity during this year. Their lecture list contains translations into Swedish of "Buddhism," from Mrs. Besant's *Four Great Religions*; "The Astral Plane" from *The Ancient Wisdom*; *My Books*, and *A Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury*, by H. P. Blavatsky; and "The Two Brothers" from THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW. Two lectures delivered by Mrs. Besant during her visit were re-delivered from the same platform in their Swedish form, and large and attentive audiences were pleased to hear Mrs. Besant's words in their own language. The Gothenburg Branch regrets the loss of its valued president, who has removed to Stockholm; Mr. Gustaf Sjösted will be his successor. The Lund Branch has been busily and profitably employed in studying Mrs. Besant's teachings given during her visit to them. Their lectures comprise one on "The Secret Life of the Soul," and another on "Atlantis," besides two by Mrs. Sjösted on "Masters as Facts and Ideals," and "The Immortality of the Soul." Favourable reports are also received from Copenhagen and Christiania, where Branches are working steadily and increasing in membership. During the summer months the Branch work in Sweden is suspended, but the individual members are actively employed in translating and preparing for the September meetings.

FROM various parts of America we have bright reports of activity,

a few of which we give: The Golden Gate Branch of San Francisco is rejoicing in the increased facilities of America its new rooms, which are larger than the old ones and in a better position. Wednesday evening, the regular Branch meeting, is devoted to the course of study devised last year by the Chicago Committee. From this study most satisfactory results have been obtained; some of the members are rapidly becoming clear and ready speakers. A public meeting is held every Sunday evening and there are two afternoon classes during the week. The Lotus Circle for children meets on Sunday afternoon. The ladies of the Library Committee open the rooms every day for the convenience of those who wish to avail themselves of the circulating and reference library. "We all feel that we have entered upon an era of renewed interest, enthusiasm and prosperity." The Ananda Branch of Seattle, Washington, still continues to hold its three meetings each week, all open to the public and all fairly well attended. Dr. Mary Weeks Burnett continues her propaganda work, and has formed a Branch at Peoria. The Section contains sixty-five Branches.

Theosophy in Australasia informs us that "the nucleus of a Sectional Library has been formed by the transfer of the books of the Maybank Library to the care of the General Secretary, Mrs. New Zealand Parker having very generously presented them to the New Zealand Section. They will be collected at Headquarters, and will then be available for use wherever wanted throughout the Section."

Dunedin Branch held its annual meeting recently, the officers being re-elected: Mr. G. Richardson, President; Mr. A. W. Maurais (*Star Office*, Dunedin), Secretary.

The Assistant Secretary is in communication with a learned Maori, who has in his possession much of the lore of the Tohungas, and he has already received much truly valuable information regarding the religion, science and philosophy of the ancient Maoris, which will in course of time be, at any rate partially, made public. These teachings have been handed down for many thousands of years, and are another, and an interesting, corroboration of the universality of the ancient Wisdom Religion.

White Lotus Day was celebrated as usual at Headquarters. The Sunday public meeting of the Auckland Branch was afterwards held, and addresses were given by Mrs. Draffin, Dr. Sanders and Mr. F. Davidson, on subjects appropriate to the occasion.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

ASTROLOGICAL VISIONS

The Degrees of the Zodiac, symbolised by "Charubel." (London: Nichols & Co., 1898. Price 2s.)

THIS little volume consists of reprints from *Modern Astrology* of articles dealing with minute subdivisions of the signs of the Zodiac and their alleged qualities. The author, "Charubel," is according to the preface a born seer, and the result of his seeings as regards the starry heavens is embodied in the description of symbols and their interpretation filling the greater part of this book. In the title-page it is claimed (by a quotation from Æschylus) by the author that he has "brought to light the fiery symbols that were aforesaid wrapped in darkness." No explanation is given as to how the pictures seen by the clairvoyant were connected with the division of the heavens. It is not easy to understand how a degree of the Zodiac could be taken and looked at.

For each degree there is not only a symbol but an interpretation. The reader will sometimes find it as difficult to connect the interpretation with the symbol as the latter with the degree. For instance, an angle of 45° is explained as denoting a person of good abilities, who seeks public favours by pandering to tastes.

A curious point is that adjacent degrees appear to differ as widely as do the signs themselves. A person born with 27° Leo on the ascendant must avoid low places, such as cellars, etc. But if he has 28° Leo, he ought to deal with what lies deep in the earth. What the man on the border of the two degrees is to do we are not told. Keep to the flat perhaps, and avoid stairs.

As a degree is simply a very inconvenient division of a circle, the separating of degrees in such a vigorous fashion does not seem to have much to favour it. A degree has not even the comparative reality of the "line" of the equator—once so familiar to unsophisticated travellers. However, here are the visions, put forward with all good faith, and our astrological friends can go their own way to

work with them while the rest of us can wait the result with due patience.

Added to this collection of "symbols" is a short essay, also on subdivisions of the Zodiac, by Mr. H. S. Green, who explains an Indian astrological system. This has at least the advantage of being systematic and lends itself to diagrams—which are a great convenience and dear to many of us. Mr. Green points out one or two coincidences between this system and the symbols of "Charubel," but does not show or attempt to show much agreement. Some useful lists of prominent people, with the sign and degree on the ascendant, are provided for comparison. The whole essay is well worked out and should add to the information of the ordinary astrological student.

A. M. G.

THE MONOTHEISM OF ZOROASTER VINDICATED

Zarathushtra in the Gâthâs and in the Greek and Roman Classics.

Translated from the German of Drs. Geiger and Windischmann, with Notes on M. Darmesteter's Theory regarding the date of the Avesta, and an Appendix by Darab Dastur Peshotan Sanjana, B.A. (Leipzig: Harrassowitz; 1897.)

THIS is a cosmopolitan production and a decided novelty; not only is a German scientific work translated into English by a Pârsî priest, but it is printed in India, and published at Leipzig. The translation of the treatise covered by the first part of the main title (*Zoroaster in the Gâthâs*) is translated from the MS. text of Geiger, which is also printed in the original German. The second part of the main title covers selections from Windischmann's posthumous work *Zoroastrische Studien*.

The greater interest will certainly centre round the main inferences drawn by Geiger from his close research in the Gâthâs or Hymns which form the oldest deposit of the Avesta as known to us. They are: "(1) The Irânians had in very olden time, and without any foreign influence, independently acquired through the Zoroastrian Reform the possession of a monotheistic religion, and its founders had attained to that stage in ethics to which only the best parts of the Old Testament rise. (2) The Irânians display an inclination towards that depth of moral intuition which is perceptible in Christianity; at a very early period the Gâthâs knew about the ethical triad of the righteous thought, the righteous word, and the righteous deed."

These are points of enormous importance to the student of comparative religion in tracing the influence of Zoroastrianism on post-exilic Judaism and thence its further blending in its Essene-Gnostic form with the evolving stream of Christian thought. The habit of regarding Zoroastrianism as essentially a crude absolute dualism has become so ingrained in every department of Biblical research, that it is now considered sufficient to declare such or such a doctrine of early Christianity due to "Zoroastrian dualism," to brand it as heretical. The error in this ostrich-policy is twofold. In the first place, if there is any religion in the world which is based on dualism it is "orthodox" Christianity itself; for without the Devil where would be the need of the Christ, without dualism what would become of the whole scheme of salvation? In the second place it is simply not true that Zoroastrianism is dualistic, as Theosophical students have contended all along. The mere fact that a *manifesting* universe is unthinkable without the pairs of opposites, does not take the existence of opposites into the domain of the absolute. Yet in spite of this, every encyclopædia, every dictionary, and every "authoritative" work on such subjects persist in harping on the worn-out string of "Zoroastrian dualism" and the "Manichæan heresy." Biblical critics and theologians thank God that Christianity is free from "Zoroastrian dualism" and this is one of their canons of orthodoxy! The fact that the teachings of the great Master Zarathushtra were fundamentally monotheistic, though he was naturally bound to posit a dualism in his treatment of the phenomena of the manifested universe, and the fact that the whole Christian scheme of first and second Adam depends entirely on the same dualistic hypothesis, makes no difference to those who seek for discrepancy and not for unity in the world-faiths. The glorious fact of the oneness of the inspiration is ignored by those who quarrel over their naïve conceptions of monotheism and dualism. They cannot comprehend that the Wisdom manifests itself to our small minds not only as *both* monotheistic and duotheistic, but also as polytheistic and pantheistic. Dr. Geiger deserves the thanks of all Theosophists for his vindication of one of the great world-faiths against the aspersions of prejudice.

Windischmann's studies are already known and make a useful appendix. The whole is "adorned" with two photogravures of some young man who is neither one of the authors, nor the translator, nor the publisher. What he has to do with it remains a mystery; cer-

tainly we should have preferred the portrait of one of our two scholars or of our Pârsî translator, if we were to have one at all thrust upon us.

G. R. S. M.

EARLY EGYPTIAN ETHICS

Religion and Conscience in Ancient Egypt. Lectures delivered at University College, London, by W. M. Flinders Petrie, D.C.L. (London: Methuen; 1898.)

OF the seven lectures contained in this interesting little volume of 179 pages, the two on ethics (vi. and vii.), which consist mostly of quotations from the texts, present us with a picture of so high a state of civilisation and so lofty a moral standard, that we are little prepared to follow the writer in all his deductions and opinions (lectures ii. to iv.) regarding the many phases of religion in Egypt, of which we obtain glimpses in the chaos of inscriptions and papyri which still remain. We are all the more strongly confirmed in our view by a perusal of lecture v., where Professor Petrie treats of "The Nature of Conscience," irrespective of whether it be the Egyptian conscience or not. His views are purely physiological, and show no signs of a real comprehension of the religious, spiritual and psychological problem with which he is dealing. He makes conscience entirely dependent on heredity. "It is needful to remember," we read, "that conscience is an inherited development, as much an inheritance in the structure of the brain as any other special modification is in the body."

In order that our readers may judge for themselves of the high ethical view of the ancient Egyptians, we will quote a few of these moral maxims from the two lectures to which we have already alluded.

"If thou goest the straight road, thou shalt reach the intended place."

"Go straight forward and thou wilt find the way."

"Let not thy heart be great because of thy knowledge, but converse with the ignorant as with the learned."

"He that obeyeth his heart shall command."

"Put this aim before thee, to reach a worthy old age, so that thou mayest be found to have completed thy house which is in the funereal valley, on the morning of burying thy body. Put this before thee in all the business which thine eye considers. When

thou shalt be thus an old man, thou shalt lie down in the midst of them. There shall be no surprise to him who does well, he is prepared; thus when the messenger shall come to take thee, he shall find one who is ready. Verily thou shalt not have time to speak, for when he comes it shall be suddenly. Do not say, like a young man, 'Take thine ease, for thou shalt not know death.' When death cometh he will seize the infant who is in his mother's arms as he does him who has made an old age. Behold I have now told thee excellent things to be considered in thy heart; do them and thou shalt become a good man, and all evils shall be far from thee."

The backbone of the ethic of the ancient Egyptians is of course contained in the famous so-called "Negative Confession," which should be too well known to our readers to need quotation. This and such maxims as we have cited, present us with a picture of high moral ideals that leave little to be desired. Mingled with such quotations Dr. Petrie cites many old adages and wise saws full of practical, every-day wisdom, and also a number of aphorisms connected with the social customs of the times.

Whether or not we shall ever be able to discriminate the innumerable phases of religion, or even the various religions of ancient Egypt, it is very certain that the ethical standard was high. The real inner cults of Egypt were secret; Egypt was pre-eminently the land of mystery in things religious, and there is little hope that we shall ever penetrate beneath the many veils with which the priests invariably shrouded their wisdom. As for the popular cults, they were legion, for we have to deal with a "continuous record of four thousand years before Christianity and an unknown age before that record"; we have further to deal with "at least four distinguishable races in the earliest history, and a dozen subsequent mixtures of race during recorded history." Therefore, if any one speak of the religion of Egypt, it would be as well to ask what religion he refers to; and if he speak of its ethic, to enquire what ethic.

G. R. S. M.

AN APOLOGETIC PARAPHRASE OF THE BIBLE

The Voice of the Spirit: Literary Passages of the Bible written in Modern Style. By Howard Swan. (London: Sampson Low; 1898.)

IN our June issue we warmly welcomed "An Unapologetic Translation of the Bible" in the three volumes already issued of the first uncom-

promising attempt at a critical translation of the Bible by competent specialists. We have now before us two volumes bearing the general title printed above.

Book I. bears the three sub-titles, *Afflicted, The Spirit Uplifts* and *Songs of Beloved*, which few will recognise as the labels of *Job, Joel,* and *Psalms* lxi. and xxii. Nor will the sub-title of Book II., *Spirit-is-Safety*, lead the general reader to expect that he is to be presented with a paraphrase of *Isaiah*.

The editorial opening words of the collection of the Isaiah school of prophecy—"The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah"—is not enough for Mr. Swan. Determined to find the "inner light" everywhere and to seize the "spirit" of the ancient writing which so many have missed, he paraphrases as follows: "The vision of Spirit-is-Safety, son of Vigorous, which he saw concerning Those who are Praised and the City of Peace, in the days of Spirit-is-Strength, Spirit-is-Perfect, Spirit-Grasps, and Spirit-is-Power, kings over the Praised."

This part of Mr. Swan's otherwise very readable rendering is fantastic if not worse. One would almost think him a reincarnation of some Talmudic Rabbi or of an Alexandrian allegorist who read into the crudest legends of the early Bedāwin days of semi-savagery preserved in the oldest deposits of his national literature, the sublimest conceptions of the wisdom schools. This he mostly did by juggling with names. Mr. Swan does precisely the same: every trace of history and environment—indeed the whole setting of the picture—is blurred over with this name-play. Hence, in many passages, what was originally only national becomes world-wide, and what was local becomes cosmic. The attempt of the Greek translators, the so-called Seventy, to universalise their scripture by translating the name of Yaveh by "God" or "Lord," is emulated by Mr. Swan, who renders it by "The Spirit," and so by these means we get read into the old records ideas which would have made the original authors and compilers gasp with amazement. Mr. Swan frankly admits that he has done his very best to get the very highest meaning he can out of the words; an admirable exercise for the pious, provided it be clearly understood that this is *their* idea of the "undermeaning" and not a translation, or even a rendering, of what the author really wrote.

It is a curious fact that it is almost invariably those who are ignorant of the original language in which a scripture is written, who

are most eager to interpret the "real spirit of the author." This is Mr. Swan's case. That his paraphrase (if we omit the name-play) has a literary merit is true, but that it is an improvement on the great literary monument of English which the Authorised Version will ever be, is not the fact. In brief, our author's paraphrase is "apologetic" in the worst sense of the term and will help no one to appreciate the old covenant documents at their true value.

G. R. S. M.

MAGAZINES AND PAMPHLETS

"OLD Diary Leaves," in the June *Theosophist*, deals with the formation of the Coulomb plot and the subsequent difficulties that arose out of it. Mr. Mayers begins a paper on "Contemporary National Evolution," the purpose of which is to discover "how, out of the collision of organised selfishness on the platform of national unity, is the principle so dear to us, that of universal amity and brotherhood, to be evolved?" Mr. N. Subbi writes on "The Indebtedness of Popular Christianity to Buddhism;" he advisedly uses the term "popular Christianity, for he believes that what generally passes current under the name is very wide of the mark, when compared with the religion taught by Jesus of Nazareth." This is of course true, but why then contrast Christianity in its degraded forms with Buddhism at its best, or is it possible that the writer will admit that the Buddhism of to-day has also widely digressed from the teachings of its Founder?—which is also true. The title of the article clearly indicates the line of the author but it is unfortunate that his bias should make him go so far as to make the absolutely erroneous assertion that "the Essenes of Palestine are now proved to have been Buddhist priests, though they are commonly reckoned to be a sect of the Jews." For all the most reliable historical data go to prove the contrary. We will refer Mr. Subbi to Mr. Mead's account of the Essenes in *LUCIFER*, for January, 1897, and to the Rev. Dr. Ginsburg's article in Smith and Wace's Dictionary. Dr. Ginsburg says the Essenes "were an order of the orthodox Jewish faith, . . . one of the three sects of Judaism at the time of Christ." Mr. Mead says: "These Essenes or Essæns were Hebrews of the Hebrews, imbued with the utmost reverence for Moses and the law," though there were "striking similarities between the discipline of the Essenes . . . and that of the Buddhist Saṅgha." It seems certain that "the teacher Jesus was a member of or intimately acquainted with, the doctrines and discipline

of the great community of the Essenes or Healers," and primitive Christianity was pre-eminently Jewish. Mr. Stuart contributes some "Notes on Divination," and Mr. Kessal writes on "The Geocentric System and Astrology." A translation of the "Krishnopanishad" is given by Mr. R. Anantakrishna Shâstri.

The Prashnottara. "The States of Consciousness" is still continued. B. B. gives some information about the Auric Egg, and "Questions and Answers" deals with the responsibilities incurred in dreams.

The Ârya Bâla Bodhinî contains a more than usually interesting account of the way in which "White Lotus Day" was kept at Adyar. Dr. King's "Convocation Address" is continued, and he quotes a story from the Hindu writings, which shows that when India was visited by the plague in ancient times, the method of segregation enforced by the Hindus was in all main points analogous to that which the present English Government has employed.

The Dawn, for April, continues the translations mentioned in our last issue. "The Fire Proof Tree" is an interesting account of a tree, locally known by the name of "Chaparro," which not only survives the great plain fires which annually devastate a large part of Columbia called Savannahs, but has also the power of resisting the scorching flames which surround it, and can even use the hot currents of air to scatter its "winged seeds" far and wide. The natives of Tolima assert that this tree only grows where "there is gold in the soil below." The "Miscellanies" contain several notes of interest, but space only permits us to mention one, the frank admission of Abbé J. A. Davais of his failure to make any conversions in India. After thirty years' experience he says: "I have made, with the assistance of an active missionary, in all between 200 and 300 converts of both sexes. Of this number two-thirds were pariahs or beggars, the rest were composed of Shûdras, vagrants, and outcasts of several tribes, who, being without resources, turned Christians in order to form connections, chiefly for the purpose of marriage, or with some other interested views. . . Let the Christian religion be presented to these people under every possible light, the time of conversion has passed away, and under existing human circumstances there remains no human possibility of bringing it back." As it is well-known that the Roman Catholic priests are by far the best of all the Christian missionaries, we may judge of the value of the reported conversions by our Protestant Missionary Societies.

The Theosophic Gleaner is now edited by our colleague, Dr. Arthur Richardson, and he writes on "The Place of Esoteric Religion among the Creeds." There are reprints from the American newspapers of Mrs. Besant's article called "The Riddle of Love and Hate," and Svâmi Abhedânanda's "View of Christ." There are many mistakes in spelling which denote a certain lack of care in the proof reading ; this will no doubt be corrected in the future.

The Siddhânta Dîpikâ continues the translations and articles mentioned in the last issue, and there is a reprint from the *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, called "The Poets of Tamil Lands." Mr. T. Virabadra Mudaliar writes concerning the recent important decision of the authorities of the Madras University ; they have followed "the example of the other Indian Universities," and now insist upon the adoption of the Devanâgiri Alphabet for Sanskrit. It has never been used in Southern India, where from time immemorial Sanskrit has been written in the various vernacular alphabets of the South. Tamil has been especially persistent in refusing to modify its alphabet, but has framed another, "the Grantha characters," for the exclusive use of Sanskrit study. Mr. Mudaliar discusses at some length the many difficulties likely to arise out of this far-reaching alteration.

The Vâhan for July is quite up to its high standard. Under the initials of C. W. L., we have an explanation of how far, and in what way, the organs of the physical body correspond with the astral, and secondly, the question how those fare who die suddenly by accident is dealt with. A. B. gives the occult meaning of the Church sacraments. G. R. S. M. writes on the theosophic interpretation of the healing of the palsied man, and the remark of Jesus when so doing. B. K. throws out some suggestions as to the best method of demonstrating the immortality of the Ego.

The May issue of *Theosophy in Australia* devotes several pages to its Convention Report. Mr. W. G. John contributes a good article on "The Aims, Achievements and Prospects of the Theosophical Society." The "Outlook" discusses a review of the Polychrome Bible, and the proof, given by a recently discovered apparatus called the myophone, that nerves may "live many hours after the death of the body."

Teosofia for June continues its translations of Countess Wachtmeister's "Spiritualism in the Light of Theosophy," and "Scientific Corroborations of Theosophy," by Mr. A. Marques. Signor Aureli writes on "Solidarity."

Revue Théosophique Française opens with an article by Mrs. Besant called "The Results produced by Evolution." Dr. Pascal ends his article on "The Spirit and the Letter in Christianity." The translation of *The Devachanic Plane* is continued. In "Questions and Answers," A. B. gives some valuable suggestions to those desirous of functioning on the astral plane. M. Courmes announces the forthcoming publication of the "Stanzas of Dzyan and Commentary" as the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine* in the French edition. In the preface, M. Courmes mentions the help he has received from Mrs. Montefiore, Dr. Pascal and Demirgian Bey in this arduous undertaking.

The contents of *Theosophia*, from Holland, are: "Not looking back," by Afra, the continued translations of *In the Outer Court*, and *Masters as Facts and Ideals*, by Mrs. Besant. Mr. Von Manen gives a Dutch rendering of the *Tao Te King*.

Sophia, from Spain, contains Mr. Soria's continuation of "Genesis," also the translations of an article by H.P.B. on the "Esoteric Character of the Evangelists," "In the Twilight," and the conclusion of "Spiritualism in the Light of Theosophy."

In *Mercury*, Mrs. Besant's article on "Proofs of the existence of the Soul" is ended. Mr. Marques also finishes his papers on "Reincarnation." Mrs. Solly continues her "Theosophical Studies in the Bible." There is a marked improvement in the printing of the Magazine where the Convention Report begins; would it not be possible to have the articles equally well done?

M. Courmes' booklet, *A Theosophical Question Book*, has just been translated into English by Mrs. Salzer and Mr. Harry Banbery; it is thrown into the form of questions and answers after the style of *The Buddhist Catechism*, and should prove useful to members in giving them a general outline of the main theosophical teachings.

We have also received *The Ārya Patrikā*; *The Mahā-Bodhi Journal*; *The Rays of Light*; *Teosofik Tidskrift*; *The London Year Book*; *Light*; *Modern Astrology*; *The Agnostic Journal*, etc.

ERRATUM

Page 341, l. 15. For "In Indian philosophy 'nescience' and 'non-being' are ultimately the same as 'science' and 'being.'" Read "In Indian philosophy . . . are the same as are"