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ON THE WATCH-TOWER

THERE is an extraordinary letter in *Nature* for August 18th, headed "Potential Matter—A Holiday Dream," and signed "Arthur Schuster." Mr. Schuster seems to have "dreamed" of more than his scientific brethren have yet "thought," and we should advise him to spend the rest of his life in making such "holiday." For the benefit of his fellow "dreamers" we print his letter *in extenso* :

When the year's work is over and all sense of responsibility has left us, who has not occasionally set his fancy free to dream about the unknown, perhaps the unknowable? And what should more frequently cross our dreams than what is so persistently before us in our serious moments of consciousness—the universal law of gravitation? We can leave our spectroscopes and magnets at home, but we cannot fly from the mysterious force which causes the raindrops to fall from the clouds, and our children to tumble down the staircase. What is gravity? We teach our students to accept the fact and not to trouble about its cause—most excellent advice—but this is vacation time, and we are not restricted to lecture-room science.

Lasage's particles are not satisfactory; they are too materialistic for the holiday mind; but I have always been fascinated by a passage occurring somewhere in Maxwell's writings, where Lord Kelvin is quoted as having pointed out that two sources or two sinks of incompressible liquid will attract each other with the orthodox distance law.

Let us dream, then, of a world in which atoms are sources through

which an invisible fluid is pouring into three-dimensioned space. What becomes of this fluid? Does it go on for ever increasing the volume of that all-pervading medium which already fills a vast, but not necessarily infinite, space? When we speak of the constancy of matter, we mean only the constancy of inertia, and how are we to prove that what we call matter is not an endless stream, constantly renewing itself and pushing forward the boundaries of our universe? The conception of atoms as sources of fluid does not, however, necessarily involve such a perpetual increase of substance, for an equal number of sinks may keep withdrawing the increment.

These sinks would form another set of atoms, possibly equal to our own in all respects but one; they would mutually gravitate towards each other, but be repelled from the matter which we deal with on this earth. If matter is essentially dynamical, and we imagine the motion within an atom to be reversed, the question arises whether the reversed motion is similar to the original one; in other words, whether the new atom so formed may by a change of position be brought into coincidence with the old one. And if this is not the case, we must ask ourselves whether the new atom will behave gravitationally like the old one. If atoms are sources of liquid there would be no reciprocity, and the sinks would form another and so far unrecognised world. But sources and sinks compel us to the supposition of a fourth dimension, which belongs to the domain of nightmares, not of dreams, and we try to shake ourselves free from the idea.

I, for one, cannot quite succeed in this effort, for something has been left behind, which is not easily got rid of, when once its symmetrical beauty is perceived. Surely something is wanting in our conception of the universe. We know positive and negative electricity, north and south magnetism, and why not some extra terrestrial matter related to terrestrial matter as the source is to the sink, gravitating towards its own kind, but driven away from the substances of which the solar system is composed? Worlds may have formed of this stuff, with elements and compounds possessing identical properties with our own, undistinguishable in fact from them until they are brought into each other's vicinity. If there is negative electricity, why not negative gold, as yellow and valuable as our own, with the same boiling point and identical spectral lines; different only in so far that it brought down to us it would rise up into space with an acceleration of 981 . The fact that we are not acquainted with such matter does not prove its non-existence; for if it ever existed on our earth, it would long have been repelled by it and expelled from it. Some day we may detect a mutual repulsion between different star groups, and obtain a sound footing for what at present is only a random flight of the imagination.

Even now some might argue that we possess some substantial evidence of repulsive forces. In our glorification of the Newtonian system we are apt to overlook some obvious facts which the law of gravitation fails to explain. One of these is the rotational velocity of our solar and of many stellar systems, which cannot be self-generated. Unless we threw our laws of dyna-

ON THE WATCH-TOWER

99

mics overboard, or imagine the rotation to have been impressed by creation, we must conclude that some outside body or system of bodies is endowed with an equal and opposite angular momentum. What has become of that outside body, and how could it have parted company with our solar system, if attractive forces only were acting? Another unexplained fact is found in the large velocities of some of the fixed stars, which, according to Prof. Newcomb's calculations, cannot be explained by gravitational attractions only.

The atom and the anti-atom may enter into chemical combination, because at small distances molecular forces would overpower gravitational repulsions. Large tracts of space might thus be filled unknown to us with a substance in which gravity is practically non-existent, until by some accidental cause, such as a meteorite flying through it, unstable equilibrium is established, the matter collecting on one side, the anti-matter on the other, until two worlds are formed separating from each other, never to unite again.

Matter and anti-matter may further co-exist in bodies of small mass. Such compound mixtures flying hither and thither through space, coming during their journey into the sphere of influence of our sun, would exhibit a curious phenomenon—the matter circulating in a comet's orbit, the anti-matter repelled and thrown back into space, forming an appendage which is always directed away from the sun. Has any one yet given a satisfying explanation of comets' tails; is the cause of coronal streamers known, and can any one look at a picture of the great prominence of the 1885 eclipse, and still believe that gravitational attraction or electric repulsion is sufficient to account for its extravagant shape? But this is not a scientific discussion. I do not wish to argue in favour of the existence of anti-atoms, but only to give my thoughts a free course in the contemplation of its possibility.

What is inertia? When the atom and the anti-atom unite, is it gravity only that is neutralised, or inertia also? May there not be, in fact, potential matter as well as potential energy? And if that is the case, can we imagine a vast expanse, without motion or mass, filled with this primordial mixture, which we cannot call a substance because it possesses none of the attributes which characterise matter, ready to be called into life by the creative spark? Was this the beginning of the world? Is our much-exalted axiom of the constancy of mass an illusion based on the limited experience of our immediate surroundings? Whether such thoughts are ridiculed as the inspirations of madness, or allowed to be the serious possibilities of a future science, they add renewed interest to the careful examination of the incipient worlds which our telescopes have revealed to us. Astronomy, the oldest and yet most juvenile of sciences, may still have some surprises in store. May anti-matter be commended to its care! But I must stop—the holidays are nearing their end—the British Association is looming in the distance; we must return to sober science, and dreams must go to sleep till next year,

Do dreams ever come true?

IN accordance with our promise of last month, we herewith print the full report of that portion of Sir William Crookes' presidential address, at the recent meeting of the British Association, which is of special interest to our readers. No doubt what all comes so familiar to us was new and startling to many of Sir William's hearers. The reactionaries were probably expecting some modification of their President's previous position; instead of which they were met not only with a firm "I adhere to my already published statements," but with the exasperating addition, "I might add much thereto." But indeed so vast a change has been wrought in public opinion in the last ten years that we may almost say the battle has been virtually won; the work of the future will not be so much to persuade the crowd that there are such things as undiscovered laws of nature and powers latent in man, as to keep that crowd (including our over-wise penny-a-liner leader-writers, who are the mere reflectors of average prejudice) from a too ready credulity. It will then become apparent that Theosophy has in it a sober philosophy which will enable its lovers to move with safety among the bewildering phenomena which fascinate none so readily as the over-wise. Thus then spoke the President of the British Association at Bristol:

Upon one other interest I have not yet touched—to me the weightiest and the farthest reaching of all. No incident in my scientific career is more widely known than the part I took many years ago in certain psychic researches. Thirty years have passed since I published an account of experiments tending to show that outside our scientific knowledge there exists a Force exercised by intelligence differing from the ordinary intelligence common to mortals. This fact in my life is of course well understood by those who honoured me with the invitation to become your President. Perhaps among my audience some may feel curious as to whether I shall speak out or be silent. I elect to speak, although briefly. To enter at length on a still debatable subject would be unduly to insist on a topic which—as Wallace, Lodge, and Barrett have already shown—though not unfitted for discussion at these meetings, does not yet enlist the interest of the majority of my scientific brethren. To ignore the subject would be an act of cowardice—an act of cowardice I feel no temptation to commit. To stop short in any research that bids fair to widen the gates of knowledge, to recoil from fear of difficulty or adverse criticism, is to bring reproach on

Science. There is nothing for the investigator to do but to go straight on, "to explore up and down, inch by inch, with the taper his reason"; to follow the light wherever it may lead, even should it at times resemble a will-o'-the-wisp. I have nothing to retract. I adhere to my already published statements. Indeed, I might add much thereto. I regret only a certain crudity in those early expositions which, no doubt justly, militated against their acceptance by the scientific world. My own knowledge at that time scarcely extended beyond the fact that certain phenomena new to science had assuredly occurred, and were attested by my own sober senses, and, better still, by automatic record. I was like some two-dimensional being who might stand at the singular point of a Riemann's surface, and thus find himself in infinitesimal and inexplicable contact with a plane of existence not his own. I think I see a little farther now. I have glimpses of something like coherence among the strange elusive phenomena; of something like continuity between those unexplained forces and laws already known. This advance is largely due to the labours of another association of which I have also this year the honour to be president—the Society for Psychical Research. And were I now introducing for the first time these inquiries to the world of science, I should choose a starting-point different from that of old. It would be well to begin with telepathy; with the fundamental law, as I believe it to be, that thoughts and images may be transferred from one mind to another without the agency of the recognised organs of sense—that knowledge may enter the human mind without being communicated in any hitherto known or recognised ways.

Although the inquiry has elicited important facts with reference to the Mind, it has not yet reached the scientific stage of certainty which would entitle it to be usefully brought before one of our sections. I will therefore confine myself to pointing out the direction in which scientific investigation can legitimately advance. If telepathy take place we have two physical facts—the physical change in the brain of A, the suggester, and the analogous physical change in the brain of B, the recipient of the suggestion. Between these two physical events there must exist a train of physical causes. Whenever the connecting sequence of intermediate causes begins to be revealed the enquiry will then come within the range of one of the sections of the British Association. Such a sequence can only occur through an intervening medium. All the phenomena of the universe are presumably in some way continuous, and it is unscientific to call in the aid of mysterious agencies when with every fresh advance in knowledge it is shown that ether vibrations have powers and attributes abundantly equal to any demand—even to the transmission of thought. It is supposed by some physiologists that the essential cells of nerves do not actually touch, but are separated by a narrow gap which widens in sleep while it narrows almost to extinction during mental activity. This condition is so singularly like that of a Branly or Lodge coherer as to suggest a further analogy. The structure of brain and nerve being similar, it is conceivable there may be present masses of such

nerve coherers in the brain whose special function it may be to receive impulses brought from without through the connecting sequence of ether waves of appropriate order of magnitude. Röntgen has familiarised us with an order of vibrations of extreme minuteness compared with the smallest waves with which we have hitherto been acquainted, and of dimensions comparable with the distances between the centres of the atoms of which the material universe is built up; and there is no reason to suppose that we have here reached the limit of frequency. It is known that the action of thought is accompanied by certain molecular movements in the brain, and here we have physical vibrations capable from their extreme minuteness of acting direct on individual molecules, while their rapidity approaches that of the internal and external movements of the atoms themselves.

Confirmation of telepathic phenomena is afforded by many converging experiments and by many spontaneous occurrences only thus intelligible. The most varied proof, perhaps, is drawn from an analysis of the sub-conscious workings of the mind, when these, whether by accident or design, are brought into conscious survey. Evidence of a region, below the threshold of consciousness, has been presented, since its first inception, in the "Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research"; and its various aspects are being interpreted and welded into a comprehensive whole by the pertinacious genius of F. W. H. Myers. Concurrently, our knowledge of the facts in this obscure region has received valuable additions at the hands of labourers in other countries. To mention a few names out of many, the observations of Richet, Pierre Janet, and Binet (in France), of Breuer and Freud (in Austria), of William James (in America), have strikingly illustrated the extent to which patient experimentation can probe subliminal processes, and can thus learn the lessons of alternating personalities, and abnormal states. While it is clear that our knowledge of subconscious mentation is still to be developed, we must beware of rashly assuming that all variations from the normal waking condition are necessarily morbid. The human race has reached no fixed or changeless idea; in every direction there is evolution as well as disintegration. It would be hard to find instances of more rapid progress, moral and physical, than in certain important cases of cure by suggestion—again to cite a few names out of many—by Liébeault, Bernheim, the late Auguste Voisin, Bérillon (in France), Schrenck-Notzing (in Germany), Forel (in Switzerland), van Eeden (in Holland), Wetterstrand (in Sweden), Milne-Bramwell and Lloyd Tuckey (in England). This is not the place for details, but the *vis medicatrix* thus evoked, as it were, from the depth of the organism is of good omen for the upward evolution of mankind. A formidable range of phenomena must be scientifically sifted before we effectually grasp a faculty so strange, so bewildering, and for ages so inscrutable, as the direct action of mind on mind. This delicate task needs a rigorous employment of the method of exclusion—a constant setting aside of irrelevant phenomena that could be explained by known causes, including those far too familiar causes, conscious and unconscious fraud. The inquiry unites

the difficulties inherent in all experimentation connected with mind, with tangled human temperaments, and with observations dependent less on automatic record than on personal testimony. But difficulties are things to be overcome even in the elusory branch of research known as Experimental Psychology. It has been characteristic of the leaders among the group of inquirers constituting the Society for Psychical Research to combine critical and negative work with work leading to positive discovery. To the penetration and scrupulous fair-mindedness of Professor Henry Sidgwick and of the late Edmund Gurney is largely due the establishment of canons of evidence in psychical research, which strengthen while they narrow the path of subsequent explorers. To the detective genius of Dr. Richard Hodgson we owe a convincing demonstration of the narrow limits of human continuous observation. It has been said that "Nothing worth the proving can be proved, nor yet disproved." True though this may have been in the past, it is true no longer. The science of our century has forged weapons of observation and analysis by which the veriest tyro may profit. Science has trained and fashioned the average mind into habits of exactitude and disciplined perception, and in so doing has fortified itself for tasks higher, wider, and incomparably more wonderful than even the wisest among our ancestors imagined. Like the souls in Plato's myth that follow the chariot of Zeus, it has ascended to a point of vision far above the earth. It is henceforth open to science to transcend all we now think we know of matter and to gain new glimpses of a profounder scheme of Cosmic Law. An eminent predecessor in this chair declared that "by an intellectual necessity he crossed the boundary of experimental evidence, and discerned in that matter, which we, in our ignorance of its latent powers, and notwithstanding our professed reverence for its Creator, have hitherto covered with opprobrium, the potency and promise of all terrestrial life." I should prefer to reverse the apophthegm, and to say that in life I see the promise and potency of all forms of matter. In old Egyptian days a well-known inscription was carved over the portal of the temple of Isis: "I am whatever hath been, is, or ever will be; and my veil no man hath yet lifted." Not thus do modern seekers after truth confront Nature—the word that stands for the baffling mysteries of the universe. Steadily, unflinchingly, we strive to pierce the inmost heart of Nature, from what she is to reconstruct what she has been, and to prophesy what she yet shall be. Veil after veil we have lifted, and her face grows more beautiful, august, and wonderful with every barrier that is withdrawn.

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THAT some of the writers on the London press are already beginning to trim their sails to the fresh breeze is evident by the concluding paragraph of a long leader in *The Daily Telegraph* of August 24th. The subject was a certain "wizard" called

Trimming their
Sails to the Breeze

Chambers, whom the Law has laid by the heels for two months, though why the same Law allows sandwich-men to parade Bond Street with the staring advertisements of fashionable "palmists," while it imprisons the gypsy-tramp and cow-wizard, is past the comprehension of the ordinary person, except on Mr. Bumble's hypothesis that the Law is "a hass." The Law had better get out a schedule of legitimate prediction and inform law-abiding citizens just where the mystic boundary of false pretences shades off into permissible practices. But to return to those who keep a sharp look-out for the breeze of popular favour. The paragraph referred to runs as follows :

Yet, while justice is properly severe with such impostors and pretenders it would be a vain hope to think that we shall ever get entirely rid by Board schools or parish sermons of those who feel this desire for occult help and those that minister to it. Some among the latter are probably more genuine and semi-honest than shallow observers know. It has become evident to really scientific inquirers that a few individuals are constantly born among us with special extension of the senses in strange and subtle, but authentic ways. The gifts of mental calculation, of second sight, of musical instinct, are all akin to this, and belong to a region unexplored by the orthodox and dogmatic. Society used to call such persons witches and wizards, and was wont to put them to death by fire or water. Now we only cast the more palpable cheats among them into gaol, the consequence being that the number of the genuine mediums tends to increase, and will increase. On the other side is the spectacle of the ignorant public itself, against whom enlightened folks must not rail too bitterly, bearing in mind that, with all the scandal and absurdity of such views and habits, they do nevertheless testify to the ineradicable faith of the common people in the invisible life around us all. It is better that nations should have this belief and hold to it, amid whatever follies, or even by paying half a guinea for a blessing on their cows from the Wizard Chambers, than that they should have the eyes of the spirit utterly blind and the ears of the heart wholly deaf. Out of the erroneous and benighted credence which these proceedings demonstrate something good and elevating may some day accrue to the race. But nothing except immorality and despair can come from utter scepticism in the life of the world beyond our sense-knowledge.

ALCHEMY AND THE GREAT WORK

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8. OCCULT SCIENCE AND PARACELSUS

PARACELSUS seems to have imparted a new impulse to the study of Occult Science. He had been a pupil of the Abbot Tritheim and supplemented the earlier instruction by extensive acquisitions of his own. He explained alchemy, astrology and magic as embracing the Superior Truths, but he hesitated not to eliminate whatever he regarded as additions or perversions.

Magic he defined as "the Supreme Wisdom and the knowledge of supernatural powers." He did not, however, consider miracles and supernatural powers as being beyond the province of Nature, but, rather, as the terms strictly signify, belonging to its higher departments. Christ and the Prophets and Apostles had magic powers, he declared. Hence they were able to perform many miracles, but these were all natural. "Indeed," he affirmed, "if *we* only knew the power of the human heart, nothing would be impossible to us."

Cornelius Agrippa, his former fellow-student, taught the same things. "There is a secret power concealed in all things," said he; "and this is the 'miraculous power' of magic." He further instructs his auditor that "if the student of magic is desirous to acquire supernatural powers, he must possess faith and love and hope."

Tritheim, the master himself, defined magic as consisting in the ability to perceive the essential principle of things in the light of nature, and also to produce material things from the unseen. He was careful to explain all processes as taking place in absolute accordance with law; adding significantly that the law will be learned when the person learns to know himself.

The fundamental doctrine of alchemy as set forth by Paracelsus represents nature as a living organism in which all things are in harmony and sympathy with each other. "It is the Macrocosm," the greater universe, he says. "Everything is the product of the universal creative effort; the Macrocosm and man, the Microcosm or lesser world, are one."

He describes all things in existence as being composed of three *substances* or primal underlying principles which are called alchemically Sulphur, Mercury and Salt. These are not visible to the physical eye, but are held together in forms by the power of life. "The invisible fire is in the Sulphur, the soluble element is in the Salt, and the volatile element in the Mercury." There are hundreds of different kinds of these elements in the universe and in the human body, and the greatest arcana are contained in them."

"In order to explain the qualities of these three substances," he says that "it would be necessary to explain the qualities of the *prima materia*, the original principle of matter itself. As, however, the *prima materia* was the 'Fiat,' who would dare attempt to explain it?"*

Alchemy is described by Paracelsus as having a threefold aspect and character, analogous to the body or physical nature, the soul or astral personality, and the spirit or divine principle in man. As a physical science it includes the art by which various substances are decomposed and combined, and likewise changed in their essential quality and exalted to another form. The next aspect embraces the knowledge of the invisible elements and their nature—the psychic and astral constitution of man. The third and highest aspect is the true alchemy, the exercise of the magic power of the spiritual will. This is the *arcanum* of the Philosopher's Stone and Elixir of Immortality.

In the knowledge of these three consists the whole science relating to the art of healing in all its phases, and Geber speaks

* "Is not Man," demands M. Rousset, "the seat and exemplar of the union as well as of the difference between the finite and infinite, between man and God? Does not his body, as material, form part of the universe, while his thought, his consciousness, his mind, which are not material, can be but a reflection of the thought or spirit of God?"

of it as "a medicine rejoicing and preserving the body in youth."*

9. GOLD-MAKING NOT THE SCHEME OF ALCHEMY

"At the close of the sixteenth century," says Mr. Waite,† "we find the disciples of Paracelsus seeking after the principles of their master, and by the light of experimental research : 1. The Secret of the Transmutation of Metals, and the *Magnum Opus*, and applying to chemistry the usages of kabalism and ancient astrology. 2. The Universal Medicine, which included the Catholicon or Elixir of Life and the Panacea ; the first ensuring to its possessor the prolongation or perpetuity of existence, and the second restoring strength and health to debilitated or diseased organisms. 3. The Philosophic Stone, the great and universal synthesis, which conferred upon the adept a sublimer knowledge than that of transmutation or of the Great Elixir, but on which both of these were dependent."

It is apparent to the enlightened enquirer that the notion which has so widely prevailed that alchemy consisted primarily and chiefly in the quest for the art of transmutation of metals, and the acquisition of material treasures thereby, is derived from a very superficial examination of the subject. It was a notion which the genuine alchemist rejected with undissembled scorn. "I disdain," says Thomas Vaughan, "I loathe, I detest this idolizing of gold and silver, by the price whereof the pomps and vanities of the world are celebrated. . . . Our gold is not bought for money though one should offer a crown or a kingdom for it : for it is the gift of God."

Van Suchten, speaking also upon the same subject, says : "If thou dost object that not only common persons, but also great nobles have laboured a long time in alchemy with great expense, including among them many very learned men, yet not any of them have learned anything. I answer : 'That this noble art requires a sound man. All these have been sick. *They have had the gold-sickness*, which hath darkened their senses so that they could not understand the terms which the *Wise Men* use in the

* Lord Bulwer-Lytton elaborated this in his celebrated romance *Zanoni*.

† *History of the Rosicrucians*, chap. i., p. 31.

description of their art ; seeking with hot desire that only which they shall never find. But what there is to be found, *that* they do not seek ; therefore they seek in vain. Who is to be blamed, the art or the artist, that they understand nothing ? Alchemy is a pure and uncorrupted virgin ; she casts off the sensual man [who holds all truth to be a matter of the sensations only], and will have an intellectual [intuitional] one ; of whom I see but few.”

Other writers plead with the enquirer to seek the path of wisdom aright. Espagnet counsels to make use of the works of very few authors, and to select only those of best note and experienced truth.* He adds this significant suggestion in regard to the *Magic Language* : “ Let him suspect things that are easily understood, especially in mystical names and secret operations ; for Truth lies hid in obscurity : nor do the philosophers ever write more deceptively than when plainly, nor ever more truly than when obscurely.”

Enough has been adduced, however, to show that alchemy was a pursuit of serious, earnest men, who were not in eager quest of that meteor of the marsh—temporal wealth ; but who sought in preference the treasure of mind of which the possessor cannot be despoiled. Whatever regard might be cherished for physical science, that was by no means the principal aim. Nor was the acquiring of such knowledge essential, as a preliminary condition. The necessary preparation was of a moral quality. Espagnet assures the enquirer accordingly : “ A studious tyro of a quick wit, constant mind, inflamed with the love of Philosophy, of a pure heart, perfect in morals, mightily devoted to God—even though ignorant of Practical Chemistry—may with confidence enter the Highway of Nature, and peruse the books of the best philosophers.”

10. THE ELIXIR

It may be necessary to put the unwary reader on the watch in regard to the significance of the terms which have been used. The term *elixir* is employed alike to denote the “ philosopher’s

* The authors who were thus recommended were Hermes Trismegistus, Bernard Trévisan and Raymond Lully. The writers on alchemy have been enumerated as about one thousand.

stone," the agent which transmutes the baser into nobler metals, and as an essence or tincture which is capable of prolonging life indefinitely. To speak more distinctly, the philosopher's stone is itself the universal medicine and the universal solvent—the alkahest, *Allegeist*, or all-pervading spirit.

Many have erred from understanding this in a physical and literal sense. Lord Bulwer-Lytton founded the plot of his weird romance *Zanoni*, upon the reputed possibility of prolonging life. He explains his meaning, however, in terms not difficult to understand; as for example, to find out why the parts of the human body ossify and the blood stagnates, and so to apply continual preventives to the effects of Time.* "This is not Magic," Mejnour declared; "it is the Art of Medicine rightly understood."

We have all read of the witty reply imputed in the Oriental tale to the disciple of the alchemist. The master shows him, in a crucible, the universal solvent, to obtain which a lifetime has been spent; and the disciple says: "O Sage, be not deceived; how can that which is to dissolve all things be itself contained in a ladle?" Those who are partially educated are thought many times to be discerning above the wise.

Elias Ashmole treats of this matter, and gives to neophytes some cautions in the obscure language which the Apostle Paul also employed in the feeding of his disciples with "milk" because stronger food could not be borne.

"Unless," says he, "unless the medicine be qualified as it ought, it is death to taste the least atom of it, because its nature is so highly vigorous and strong above that of man. For if its best parts are able to strike fiercely and thoroughly into the body of a base and corrupt metal as to tinge and convert it to so high a degree as perfect gold, how less able is the body of

* He describes Zanoni and Mejnour as two prehistoric Chaldæans, sole survivors of an archaic Brotherhood, who have continued to exist till the last decade of the eighteenth century. Hargrave Jennings has also cited from the *Mémoires Historiques*, printed in 1687, the account of a Signor Gualdi who sojourned at Venice in 1681. It was said that the wonderful stranger attracted attention by his unlimited knowledge, the beautiful paintings which he possessed, and his apparent wealth, although he followed no business; also that he had no correspondence, desired no credit, and made use of no notes or bills of exchange. He had a picture of himself which a nobleman in Venice recognised as having been painted by Titian, who had been dead one hundred and thirty years. Upon this discovery the owner hastily left Venice for Vienna.

man to resist such a force when its greatest strength is far inferior to the weakest metal. I do believe that many philosophers, having a desire to enjoy perfect health, have destroyed themselves in attempting to take the medicine inwardly ere they knew the true use thereof, or how to qualify it to be received by the nature of man without destruction.”*

Enigmatic and obscure as this language may sound to the common ear, it is plain enough to the instructed. It signifies that any regimen, discipline, or course of conduct, should be tempered to the condition of the individual. It may be perfectly wholesome in itself, but if it be not thus adapted and qualified, it will be likely to prove a serious, and perhaps a mortal harm. A moral fitness is certainly necessary before any important truth is imparted. “He who pours water into a muddy well,” says Iamblichus, “does but disturb the mud.”

II. THE SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of alchemy is, after all, but another form of the famous riddle of the Sphinx and the solution is the same: “That which hath been is that which shall be; and that which hath been is named already, and it is known that it is *man*.” The real mystery, most familiar, and at the same time least known to every individual, into which he must be initiated or else must perish as an atheist, without God and without hope, is the *Own Self*. For him is the alchemist’s elixir of life, which to quaff before the discovering of the philosopher’s stone, is to drink the beverage of death; while it confers on the adept and the epopt, the true immortality. He may know the truth, that which really is—the *A-lethes*, the revealed wisdom.

Doctor Kopp, the author of the *History of Chemistry*, treated of alchemy at considerable length, and added this significant expression, which every Platonist and Pythagorist will instantly perceive to be the whole of the case: “If by ‘the world’ is understood the *microcosm* which man represents, the writings of the alchemists will be easy of interpretation.”

Hindu sacred legend relates that Kṛiṣṇa once commanded

* To the unprepared,” says Mejnour, “the elixir is thus the deadliest poison.”

his foster-mother to look into his mouth. She beheld there the whole universe. This story is figurative, and indicates that in man, the microcosm or lesser world, is mirrored and comprised all things pertaining to the entire creation. The alchemists denominated the philosopher's stone *microcosmos*, and Weidenfeld declares it in these words: "The Most High God hath made us partakers of all the blessings contained in the Greater World, for which reason Man is called 'microcosm,' for it has been revealed to us by Divine inspiration, that the virtues and potencies of all things, animal, vegetable and mineral, are in man."

The alchemic writer, Eyrenæus* Philalethes, also gives this brief synopsis: "Our Stone is the representative of the Great World (or macrocosm), and it hath the virtues of that great fabric comprised or collected in this little system. In it there is a virtue magnetical, attractive of its like in the whole world. It is the celestial virtue expounded universally in the whole creation, but epitomised in this small map or abridgment."

12. THE GREAT WORK DIVINE

The Great Work which the alchemists delineate is, therefore, not to be understood as a mere physical transmutation, but a metanoia, a subjective operation in the moral nature of the individual. "It is not a manipulation, a work of the hands, but a change of the natures," Artephius declares. "The separation of the pure from the impure is not done with hands, but Nature herself does it, and brings it to perfection by a *circular* operation." That is to say, the work begins with the individual and ends with the individual, thus completing the circle. It is strictly, as Shakspeare has described:

An art
Which does mend nature—change it rather; but
The art itself is nature.†

* Eugenius. [Ed.]

† General Hitchcock remarks that "an essence supposes existence, while existence supposes essence. 'One is not without the other,' says Swedenborg; whence it might be said that God is the essence of Nature, while Nature is the existence [or out-going] of God, and yet inseparable in unity. And here, if it should be asked what is the nature of God, the answer might be, that it is Nature itself; for Nature is not the nature of anything but of God, whose essence is nevertheless invisible, while his existence is altogether and absolutely undeniable."

In one of the Dialogues of Plato there is a discussion as to whether virtue can be taught. It may be said in reply, that we can inculcate it in practice. We can write about it and talk about it, but that we may not expect to transmit it to another. In order to be able to make gold we must have gold, the alchemists tell us. "The work of the Artist is only to help," says Thomas Vaughan; "he can do no more."

In the depths of the soul there is a something that cannot be imparted, or even expressed in words. This is the germinal principle of divinity; and from it the divine is to be developed and perfected. The work is *supernatural*, an operation of the higher nature by which it transforms the lower elements into its own substance. The mystic "philosophic mercury," by which this is effected, and by which the dross of the nature is dissolved and purified, is the *conscience*—the knowledge of the true and the right, which man possesses jointly with God.

This work is accomplished according to Nature, with a careful avoiding of violence to the sensibility. It is necessary to refrain scrupulously from all violence, from all external influences and appliances, from appeals to personal ends, and from acting upon the passions of fear, hope, or prudence; but instead, it is incumbent to assuage these in order that the conscience may act freely according to its own nature.

As a necessary preparation for the Great Work, Basil Valentine prescribes prayer and contemplation; and Geber gives this definite counsel: "Dispose yourself by exercise to the study with great industry and labour, and a continued deep meditation; for by these you may find it, and not otherwise." Plato himself eloquently remarks that "after long contemplation of the subject and living with it, a light is kindled on a sudden as from a leaping fire, and being engendered in the soul, feeds itself upon itself."

Another writer adds: "And this work is done without any laying on of hands, and very quickly, when the matters are prepared and made fit for it. This work is therefore called a Divine Work."

That many have been deceived by taking the obscure language in a literal rather than a metaphoric sense, and that there

have been pretenders and charlatans professing to be alchemists, must be acknowledged. It is nevertheless true, that the genuine alchemic philosophers were not engaged in a quest for physical wonders or worldly riches. They were seeking for truth in its highest sense, apart from form and ceremony, and as it is to be found innate in the mind.

This was the Sublime Secret, the Great Work, the Philosopher's Stone and Elixir of Immortality, and it can be found in no other thing in the universe, except in the nature of man made in the image of God.

In these explanations we have depended upon the utterances of the alchemic writers themselves, as the sole evidence for our ideas. We cherish for these prophetic souls a warm fraternal sympathy. We recognise in them fellow-philosophers, brothers in spirit, students of the true knowledge and participants in the true life. "The wise will understand."

ALEXANDER WILDER.

THE SONS OF GOD

BE of good cheer, brave spirit; steadfastly
Serve that low whisper thou hast served; for know,
God hath a select family of sons
Now scattered wide thro' earth, and each alone,
Who are thy spiritual kindred, and each one
By constant service to that inward law,
Is weaving the sublime proportions
Of a true monarch's soul. Beauty and strength,
The riches of a spotless memory,
The eloquence of truth, the wisdom got
By searching of a clear and loving eye
That seeth as God seeth. These are their gifts,
And Time, who keeps God's word, brings on the day
To seal the marriage of these minds with thine,
Thine everlasting lovers. Ye shall be
The salt of all the elements, world of the world.

—EMERSON.

ON THE DARK LAKE

WHEN the devout northern pilgrim starts from Petersburg on his tour to the Isles of Konevetz and Walaam,* the ascetic retreats on the Ladoga Lake, he generally passes a stormy night, or perhaps several, on that perfidious sea, always so sullen and threatening, till in the sunrise glow he at last sees far away stretching on the waters a green strip of land, with white walls surmounted by golden crosses. This is the convent of Konevetz. It is less known and attracts less worshippers and tourists than Walaam, with its weird beauty of grey rocks towering in the rosy twilight of northern summer nights. But the legends and chronicles of Konevetz are well worth studying.

One of the greatest lakes of Russia, the open route for traffic and travel of the whole north of European Russia, the Ladoga sacrifices yearly many lives. It freezes the air and paralyses life for weeks when its ice-blocks take the way of the Neva in April and May. Its winds in spring bring epidemics to the capital and open the grave for all on its shores who are ailing or delicate. The horizon of the lake is mostly shrouded in dark, gloomy clouds and even to its daughter, the beautiful Neva, the Ladoga gives that same black look—as if an evil spirit were ensouling the always moving waves. The entrance to the lake is almost closed by a small island entirely occupied by the stone walls of that living tomb, the fortress and prison—political and religious—of Schlüsselbourg, over which seems to rest Dante's warning: "Lasciate ogni speranza voi ch'entrate."

The chronicles of Novgorod† and local legend tell us the following story :

In 1379 in Novgorod, to the now demolished convent on the

* *The Isles of Konevetz and Walaam.* St. Petersburg, 1852.

† *Historical Sketch of the Beginnings of the Konevetz Cloister.* St. Petersburg, 1817.

Fox Mount, came an unknown youth of evidently gentle training and birth. He entered the monastic life, and in due time became a monk, under the name of Arseny. He showed natural artistic gifts, especially as a sculptor of metals, and worked eleven years for the convent which had given him shelter. Then he went away to Mount Athos, where Abbot John II. gave him blessing and sent him to be a missionary in the far north. To the north Arseny returned again, armed with an image of the Virgin and rules for the future convent he thought to establish in the heart of the wild, godless country round the Ladoga.

First he touched Walaam, but the greater island was not solitary enough for him. One stormy day he threw himself into a small boat and let it drift. The waves brought him to Konevetz. There on the heights he built a skit, or hermit's hut, and in it dwelt for two years. A convert, a fisher from the Finn shore, told Arseny that his countrymen had from ancient times the custom of bringing all their cattle to that island for the summer, leaving them there under the protection of the "gods"—the spirits of the isle. Then in autumn they betook themselves to the rocks, to the great Horse-stone (Kon-kamen, from which comes Konevetz), and there left a horse as victim to the spirits, whose abode the stone was reputed from of old to be. When at spring's return they came to the island again, they found no trace of the poor horse. The spirits had accepted the offering.

Arseny became very angry with the people. He sprinkled the whole island with holy water, and erected a small chapel at the top of the Kon-stone to quiet the superstitious fears of the people around. "They ceased to believe in the stone," reports the legend; but the offerings made on that dreary spot in the woods and rocks of Konevetz may not have been quite so tame as depicted; other blood than a starving horse's may have flowed over the black stone—and Arseny's triumph may not have been easy. For even so late as in 1534, Makar, Bishop of Novgorod, wrote to Czar John that "the whole lake country, Tchoud, Ijora, Yama, Ladoga, Korely, up to the rivers Neva and Sestra and the 'Konevy waters,' more than 1,000 versts in

length, is plunged in superstition and idol-worship. They adore idols with evil rites, and also offer worship to mountains, stars, the sun, the moon and the lake.”*

Has it quite disappeared, this worship of dark powers, from among the sullen, silent race on the borders of the dark lake which for hundreds of generations has personified a deity itself? The Korel country, with its aboriginal “converted” tribes, still exists in densest ignorance of its new creed; the “civilised” Finnish shore hides even more possibilities of dark hate and bloody acts—as some regrettable facts have shown of late years.

Amid the waters of Ladoga the Konevetz convent shines, white and peaceful, built in a peculiar style not without beauty. Through flowery gardens and fields of grass a path runs to the little hermitage (skit) up the “Holy Mount,” and to the black woods where, in the depths, rises the dark-grey granite stone, the Kon-kamen. It is nearly triangular at the base; its height is six sajens, its length thirteen, and breadth nine.

Its material being of the same nature as that found on the north-western side of the lake, the hypothesis is that it has been brought to the island by the motion of the ice ages ago. Ever since it has, so to say, dominated the islet. On its top stands the little chapel of wood, to which a staircase ascends, winding itself up the granite sides of the stone. The aspect of the place, even in pictures, is dreary and sad.

Far away, on the vast Ladoga (into which the whole of Switzerland could be plunged) rise the picturesque cliffs of Walaam, and worshippers stream to the famous convent created by SS. Serge and Herman, the “miracle-workers.” Seldom more than a flying visit is paid to the solitary Konevetz, where the first battle had been fought against the terrible practices of elemental worship in those dark ages, the shadow of which still hangs in the stormy clouds of autumn around the island of Kon, the old Randasari of the Finns.

A RUSSIAN.

* *Chronic. of Pskov*, II. 1851-73.

SIBYLLISTS AND SIBYLLINES

A STUDY IN CHRISTIAN ORIGINS

(CONTINUED FROM p. 41)

BEFORE attempting to give the reader a translation of a few of the most important passages, we will append a brief analysis of the first eight books, though at the risk of being slightly wearisome, in order that our quotations may fall into their proper chronological order.*

(i.) The oldest deposit is Book iii., 97-828. It consists of a number of independent oracles which may be divided into three groups, all, however, being referable to about the same period, namely, c. 150 B.C. Ewald calls it "one of the noblest and most striking poems of the latter half of the second century before Christ, and, indeed, one of the finest remaining of the whole period."†

The spirit of these poems is Hebrew and yet not Hebrew, Greek and yet not Greek, and occasionally it touches the level of a theosophic synthesis that rises superior to national interest. As the writer in *The Edinburgh Review* says: "It is noticeable that while the spirit of the composition throughout is essentially that of a devoted and an enthusiastic Hebrew, much care is taken to maintain, even in its minutest forms, the traditional character of the Sibyl which the writer has assumed. We find interspersed with the Monotheist, and even with the Messianic portions of the poem, phrases and allusions unmistakably Greek; allusions hardly intelligible except to a Greek reader; proverbs

* Unfortunately we have not at present a "polychrome" edition of the text.

† The fact that Alexandre assigns the middle group 295-488 to a Christian writer, though he stands almost alone in this opinion, shows how far Jewish ideas anticipated Christian views, and how vague was Christian doctrine in the earliest times.

and proverbial sayings . . . even puns and plays upon words and names which were in everyday use in Greece, but the point of which would be utterly lost upon an Oriental.”*

Everything points to Alexandrian, or at any rate Egyptian, Judaism for the origin of this deposit of the oracles, and on this point nearly all are agreed.

“The familiar allusions to Egypt and its religion and usages which pervade it, and the writer’s evident Egyptian sympathies, plainly point him out as an Egyptian, and probably an Alexandrian,” says the writer to whom we have just referred.†

Alexandre thinks that the Messianic oracles of Alexandria came from the *monasteria* of the Therapeuts, and we are quite content to leave the finger-post pointing in this direction. The origin of these oracular poems lay somewhere in that direction, and the fact that both Ewald and Delaunay, after observing at length upon the similarity in tone and a number of other coincidences between this group of oracles and the Enochian literature, suggest their emanation from the same school, confirms the direction of our sign-post—although, indeed, the Therapeut communities may not have been the only inhabitants of the country to which the road leads.

In the epilogue (808-828) the Sibyl declares herself to be of Babylonian origin, and the further declaration that she was a daughter of Noah takes her back to the flood-cycle period, which for the ordinary Greek would mean the Deucalion and Pyrrha times, and be not far distant from the beginning of the 1500 years’ epoch which she declares to have elapsed up to her own time from the religious origins of the existing Greek race, when the “proud kings” introduced idolatry into Greece (551 *sqq.*). All of which shows that our pious oracle-makers had made good use of the common tradition of the Sibyl, but had improved upon it by claiming greater antiquity and a purer religion for *their* Sibyl, who was, they protested, the real thing and none of your Greek Sibyls of Erythrae. But to rob a man of his clothes and then find fault with their cut, is quite an Oriental refinement of adding

* *Loc. cit.*, pp. 44 *sq.*

† *Ibid.*

insult to injury. The fanaticism of naïve monotheism, however, may be exonerated from any charge of deliberate untruthfulness; our Sibyllists no doubt honestly believed that *their* tradition was the only one, the only truth in existence.

(ii.) To this oldest deposit also undoubtedly belong the two fragments which make together some eighty-four verses and are printed as a prologue in our editions, though they are not found in the MSS. They are taken from the apology* of the Church-father Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, who flourished in the third quarter of the second century, and a number of the verses in them are also quoted by other Fathers. They formed most probably the introduction to the above deposit in one of the oldest collections of the oracles.

(iii.) The fragment Book iii., 36-92 is now generally ascribed to an Alexandrian Jew of the time of the first triumvirate (B.C. 40-30); while the fact that Alexandre and Ewald assign it to a Christian hand once more emphasises the impossibility of drawing a clear distinction between Jewish and Christian ideas in the early period.

(iv.) This is especially the case with regard to Book iv. The older critics consider it Christian, while more recent criticism would have it Jewish and place it about the year 80 A.D., tracing its origin to Asia Minor.

“It seems to have been composed about the year A.D. 80, while the burning of the Temple and the destruction of Herculaneum and Pompeii were still recent. These are dwelt upon by the author as evidences of the anger of God against the oppressors of the righteous. As to the religious belief of the author some conflict of opinion exists. Ewald gives reasons to show that, if a Jew at all, he did not belong to any strict Jewish sect;† but at the same time he finds no ground for M. Alexandre’s opinion that he was a Christian.”‡ The opinion of the writer in *The Edinburgh Review* is that probably the author

* *Ad Autolychum*, ii. 36.

† This is an important point; those who took part in the great religious revival of the first centuries were neither orthodox Jews nor Jewish proselytes exclusively.

‡ *The Edinburgh Review*, *loc. cit.*, p. 55.

of Book iv. "belonged to the sect of the Essenians,* which in the end of the first century had many ramifications in Syria and Asia Minor, with which countries the writer seems to have had a close connection."†

(v.) The contents of Book v. lie more on the borderland between Jew and Christian than any other, and the opinions of scholars are therefore exceedingly divergent. The major part of it is Jewish and may be placed somewhere about the last quarter of the first century; it is however over-worked here and there by a later Christian hand.

"The writer of some passages appears to have had some acquaintance with the Revelation of St. John, and may possibly have been a renegade catechumen," says Deane. And again: "One writer may have been a Christian, another filches occasionally from Christian sources, but has no lively faith in Christ."‡ These are opinions based on the assumption that the Christianity of the early years was the same as the dogmatic Christianity put forward by the compilers of our present canonical Gospels in the first quarter of the second century. Even the earliest deposit of the oracles contains passages of the same style and symbolism as the *Revelation of John*, and all the Messianic passages of the strata so far referred to shew exactly the same lack of a "lively faith in Christ"—in the orthodox Christian sense—which Deane deplures.

The author of the older Essene-Therapeut portion was apparently a native of Egypt, and derives his inspiration from the Egyptian Sibyl, the sister of Isis. Clement of Alexandria cites from this poem under the title of "The Sibyl."

(vi.) The next stratum consists of Books vi. and vii., and "seems to have been written by a Christian, one, however, who was very far from being orthodox, and held the doctrines of some of the sects of later apostolic times."§ Ewald places the date of these books in Hadrian's reign (A.D. 117-138), while Alexandre would date them about a century later.

* Harnack, *op. cit.*, p. 861, gives this as the opinion of a number of scholars, using the term "Essenic Christian."

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Op. cit.*, pp. 309 and 313.

§ Deane, *op. cit.*, 314.

(vii.) For the rest we may quote Schürer, who throughout gives by far the best summary of the results of the critics.

“Of the remaining books, vi., vii. and viii. are generally and correctly esteemed to be of Christian authorship. The origin, on the other hand, of Books i., ii. and xi.-xiv. is doubtful. Most investigators regard these also as Christian. Lücke, Friedlieb, and Dechent on the contrary ascribe Book xi. and Friedlieb Book xiv., also to a Jewish author. Dechent attempts, as Friedlieb also partly does, to point out in Books i. and ii. Jewish pieces of greater extent.”*

All of which proves that even when we get to the presumably Christian deposit the colouring is not what we should expect, and is far from satisfactory to orthodox critics. This is well brought out by the concluding remarks of Schürer, who continues: “How difficult it is to find sure footing in this respect is proved by the circumstance, that Lücke in a later section of his work (*Einl. die Offenb. des Joh.*, p. 269 sqq.) retracted his view concerning Book xi. and ascribed it to a Christian author. This eleventh book is really not worth contesting. It is a religiously colourless versified history of Egypt down to the beginning of the Roman supremacy, and may just as well be Jewish as Christian. Nor is it very different with the other pieces. The portions separated by Dechent from Books i. and ii. may in fact be Jewish, but they may just as well be Christian.”†

Thus, though the rest of the books, as we have seen, may be assigned to very various dates, all of them begin to show in many places a Christian tendency—sometimes of a “Gnostic” nature—and all proceeding from writers animated by the same literary traditions.

To the same literary heredity may be referred a mass of writings of many of which we have only the titles, while of others

* *Loc. cit.*, p. 287.

† *Ibid.*, p. 288. Harnack, who sums up the position later than Schürer, says that Books vi.-viii. are certainly of Christian origin, while Books i., ii., xi.-xiv. are doubtfully so. Dechent, he continues, has brought forward good grounds for the Jewish origin of Book xi. and has further made it seem probable that for Books i. and ii. we must suppose a Jewish original draft with numerous and proportionately late Christian interpolations (*op. cit.*, pp. 861, 862). Lightfoot (*Ignatius and Polycarp*, i. 528 sqq.) would assign Books xi.-xiv. to a Christian writer and would have them written in A.D. 267 or 268

we have but fragments, and of only proportionately a few the major part of the works remaining. Of course these writings were of very different date, merit and tendency, proceeding from writers of very varying degrees of inspiration, knowledge and education, belonging to various schools and various degrees of these schools, but all of them are integral and important factors in tracing the evolution of the religious activity of the early centuries, pre-Christian and post-Christian.

But the most important point to the student of the origins and of the subsequent evolution of an arbitrary canon, is the striking fact to which we have already referred, that the Sibylline poems were accepted as genuine and authoritative by the Fathers of the first three centuries and even later. It is a fact which no unprejudiced student can neglect, that writings which the later Church condemned as heretical and apocryphal, but which were declared to be bastard only when later centuries had made the ground secure beneath their feet by the persistent elimination and destruction of all that ran counter to an *à priori* canon which was erected to suit dogmatic proclivities and interests,—it is a striking fact that such writings were admitted as absolutely authoritative by earlier generations.

All this points to the indubitable fact that writings of this nature were judged by a totally different standard in the first two or three centuries, and that the terms apocryphal and accepted, heretical and orthodox, even to the Jew, who was much earlier with his canon, were not yet clearly determined; while for the Christian, who only finally in opposition to the Jew evolved a new canon including the works of later prophets—namely, the sayings and doings ascribed to the great prophet of Nazareth and the subsequent writings of certain of his followers—could not at the beginning refuse a like authority to many of the writings of a similar tendency belonging to the same epoch of later Jewish prophecy.

The fact that in the fourth century the Fathers grew shy of the Sibylline oracles, at the time when popular Christianity triumphed through the political influence of Constantine, and Eusebius was writing its history to suit the dogmas of his time, and that this famous literature dropped out of sight until the

revival of learning at the end of the middle ages, is no help to one who is enquiring into the origins of Christianity and listening especially to what the first two centuries have to say on the subject. The subsequent neglect of the Sibylline poems is comparatively of no importance in face of the fact that the first two centuries accepted them as of the highest authority; and I especially lay stress on this point because I place no confidence in the opinion of any writer later than the end of the second century concerning the origins. Prior to that date for one hundred and fifty years, from the time of Paul onwards, when Christianity first appeared on the surface of things, we have a mass of varied schools giving very various accounts of the origins, of the life of the great Teacher, and of his doctrines; after that date a certain view got the upper hand and gradually crushed out all opposition. With this particular view the student of the origins has nothing to do beyond tracing it back to its earliest manifestation among a number of other views of equal authenticity in their beginnings; and least of all should a student of history allow the eventually dominant "Catholic" view to colour all his investigations with the fatal pre-supposition that that view alone contains the sum total of genuine Christianity.

We will now proceed to give a very brief notice of some of the more interesting contents of this collection of oracular fragments and a translation of a few of the more striking passages.*

First, then, let us quote a noble passage from the Proem which escaped the notice of the redactor of our present collection, and, as we have already stated, is not found in the MSS. but in an apologetic treatise of the early father Theophilus. It is generally thought that it formed the Prologue to a far older collection,

* The student will find a very indifferent Latin translation appended to most editions, a German critical one in that of Friedlieb, a French version by Bouché Leclercq (*Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, 1883; vii. 236-248, viii. 619-634, etc.). In English we have only the metrical version of Milton S. Terry (*The Sibylline Oracles, translated from the Greek into English Blank Verse*, New York, 1890), which is, however, very readable and, what is more, a generally accurate translation. This is the only version into English since the partial and antiquated translation of Sir John Floyer (*The Sibylline Oracles*, London, 1713), which was followed by a defence of the genuineness of the Oracles, by W. Whiston (*A Vindication of the Sibylline Oracles*, London, 1715). Floyer's fantastic interpretations of the oracles can only be paralleled by the absurdities of the belated millennarianists of our own time who are still puzzling their heads over Daniel and Revelation. We agree with Deane that "as an instance of human credulity few books are more curious than that of this simple and uncritical knight-errant" (*op. cit.*, p. 285).

many fragments of which are contained in our present Book iii. In this instance, in order that the reader may see a specimen of his verses, we will quote from Terry's version.* Thus then begins the Sibyl:

"Ye mortal men and fleshly, who are naught,
How soon are ye puffed up, nor see life's end!
Ye tremble not, and have no fear of God,
Your Overseer,† the Most High One, who knows,‡
The All-Observer, witness of all things,
All-nourishing Creator, who in all
Implanted his sweet Spirit, and made him
The guide of mortal men.§ One God there is
Who reigns alone supremely great, unborn,
Almighty and invisible, himself
Alone beholding all things, but unseen
Is he himself by any mortal flesh.
For who is able with the eyes of flesh
To see the heavenly, true, immortal God,
Whose dwelling is the sky? Not in the beams

* The notes, however, will be our own.

† τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ὑμῶν—*episcopus* (from which our "bishop"), or rather its Hebrew or Aramaic equivalent, was a term in familiar use among the Essenes, whose communities were directed by such "overseers."

‡ γνώστην, the "knower," many of those who were subsequently called Gnostics came from the same circles as these Essene-Therapeut communities.

§ Lactantius (*op. cit.*, iv. 6) misquotes this oracle for dogmatic purposes, asserting that: "The Erythræan Sibyl in the beginning of her song, which she began by the help of the Most High God, proclaims the Son of God, as leader and commander of all in these verses: 'All nourishing Creator, who in all sweet breath implanted, and made God the guide of all.' " Here we have an indication of the re-editing of the earlier oracles to suit later dogmatic proclivities. The evolution of the dogma of the Holy Ghost is one of the most interesting to follow. After the return, the school of redactors of the pre-exilic deposit of scripture strove to modify the crude anthropomorphism of the old legends of the theophanies of Yahveh by substituting the "Angel of Yahveh" for Yahveh himself. Hence gradually the evolution of the idea of the Spirit of God. On this was subsequently grafted the Wisdom-idea of the wisdom schools, and the further Logos-idea of presumably Persian origin and Hellenistic development. When the Christians subsequently appropriated the Logos-idea, and made the Logos identical with the Supreme Deity, and further made their great Teacher identical with the Logos and that Deity, the Spirit of God was practically relegated to a secondary position in spite of the efforts of the dogmatists. The Comforter- or Paraclete-doctrine, which was substituted for the original Spirit-theory, now plays but a subordinate rôle, the very meaning of the term being misunderstood. The Devil and the Paraclete are a pair of opposites, having their origin in the Persian idea of a man's good and evil angel. Diabolos (διάβολος) is the "accuser," while Paracletos (παράκλητος) is "one called to one's aid," especially in a court of justice, hence a legal assistant, or "advocate."

Of the bright sun can men endure to stand,*
 Mortal-born men, mere veins and flesh in bones.†
 Honour him, then, sole ruler of the world,
 Who only through eternal ages‡ bides,
 The self-existent, unbegotten One,
 Ruling all things through all,§ and to all men
 Imparting judgment in a common light.||
 Of evil counsels ye shall surely have
 The merited reward, because ye failed
 To glorify the true, eternal God,
 And offer him the holy hecatombs,¶

* This seems to be taken from Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (iv. 3), where Socrates is represented as saying: "The orderer and upholder of the whole cosmos is seen to do the greatest works [*i.e.*, is seen in his works], but in disposing them remains himself invisible. And observe that even the sun, which seems to be so evident to all, will not suffer himself to be fully gazed upon by men, but if any recklessly venture to keep looking at him, he is deprived of sight"; and indeed, Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.*, v. 14) quotes the passage in connection with this oracle, but in a very corrupt fashion.

† The emendation *ἐν ὁστίεσσι* for the corruption *ἐνὸς τήεσσι* does not seem to be altogether satisfactory.

‡ Lit., "from æon to æon."

§ Lactantius (i. 7) evidently read *ἀποίητος*, "not made," or "uncreated," instead of *διαπαντός* which signifies "throughout" or "always."

|| This translation is based on the "emendation," *νέμων* ("imparting") for *ἐνὼν* ("immanent"), on the ground that "to speak of God the Father's being immanent in all would contradict vv. 5 and 6, where the Sibyl speaks of God's placing his Sweet Spirit in all" (*cf. Alexandre in loco*). But there seems no reason why we should alter the text for presupposed dogmatic reasons. The Sibyl, therefore, speaks of God as "immanent in all mortals, the means whereby men judge in the light which is common to all." This light which is common to all is simply the light of the sun, and the oracle means that as there is but one light of day for all, so there is one light of the spirit for all, God immanent in all. That the "common light" is simply the sun's light is proved by iii. 494, where the Sibyl declares that none of the cities of Phœnicia shall remain "in the light of the sun in the common light"; and that God is the inner light is further shown by i. 348, where the Sibyl declares that the nations shall know God, "even the straight path in the common light." The idea of the commentators that the "common light" is "the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world" in the "Johannine" sense is merely a scholastic device to crush out the plain, original doctrine that God the Father is *in* all.

¶ Are we to take this literally or merely rhetorically? Seeing that the offering of hecatombs is one of the chief delights of the promised Messianic age (as set forth in the fragments of these earliest oracles gathered together in Book iii.) when Paradise shall be again on earth, and all the nations shall worship God, centring round the Temple, when the "Prophets" of God shall be the law-givers and rulers, we cannot but take it literally. These earliest oracles were made entirely to subserve the interests of a popular propaganda, both Gentile and Jewish. It would have been dangerous to run counter to the custom of blood-sacrifice, which was the common basis of the popular cults of both Jew and Gentile; it was enough to try and divert the sacrifice from the Gods of the Gentile to the God of the Jew. It was too early as yet for the higher doctrine of the inner schools—the Essenes, for instance,

But unto demons made your sacrifice—
 Even those in Hades. And ye walk about
 In pride and madness, leave the path of right,
 And go away among the thorns and briers.
 Why do ye wander? Pause, O foolish ones,
 Who rove in darkness, and black night obscure,
 And leave night's darkness, and receive the light.
 Lo, he is clear to all, he cannot err.
 Come, chase not gloom and darkness evermore.
 Behold, the sun's sweet light shines wondrous fair.
 Know how to treasure wisdom in your hearts.*
 There is one God, who sends rain, earthquakes, winds,
 Lightnings and famines, plagues and mournful cares,
 And snows and ice. But why should I speak all?
 He governs heaven, rules earth, and self-exists."†

From the second fragment of the Prologue, whose burden is the same as the first, we need only quote the concluding verses:

"But they who venerate the true eternal God, these shall inherit Life and dwell for all the æon's length in Paradise's garden ever-fair, 'mid banquets of sweet food that comes from starry heaven."‡

would have nothing to do with the blood-sacrifices of the Temple—to be made binding on the people, though here and there even in the earliest fragments we can trace the influence of those who composed the purer psalms, and elsewhere inserted the loftier doctrine in the Old Covenant documents, striking the higher keynote of heart-worship instead of ceremonial blood-letting. Compare, for instance: "Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire, burnt-offering and sin-offering Thou dost not demand. Mine ears hast Thou opened by means of the book of the Law prescribed to me" (*Ps.*, xl. 6, Wellhausen's trans.). And again: "To do justice is more acceptable than sacrifice" (*Prov.*, xxi. 3). With regard to the terms "demons" and "Hades," it should be remembered that the oracles are addressed to the Greeks, for whom the term "demons" connoted excarnate intelligent entities (some of whom had been men) generally superior to ordinary mortals, and "Hades" was only a general term for the unseen world.

* The doctrine of the inner circles here clearly peeps through; for them the Wisdom was the invisible sun that illumines all hearts, whose outer symbol is the peerless orb of day. Both Essene and Therapeut turned to the sun in his rising to offer the morning prayer, "praying for the sunshine, the real sunshine, that their minds may be filled with heavenly light, and as he sets praying that the soul, completely lightened of the host of the senses and sensations, may withdraw to her own congregation and council chamber there to track out truth" (Philo, *De Vita Contemp.*). This was the true "sun-worship," the Logos-doctrine of so many of the nations, no truer cult than which exists.

† Proem, 1-35.

‡ Proem, 84-87. The term Paradise is not found in the orthodox O. T. collection. It is found in the wisdom-literature, e.g., in *Ecclesiasticus* (*The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach*), xlv. 16, in the old Latin version, where Enoch is translated

The fragments of the oldest oracles gathered together in Book iii. are characterised throughout with the bitterest denunciations of idolatry and with the proportionate glorification of the Chosen People. The frequent repetitions show that the oracles were originally circulated independently of one another, but in all of them is revealed the persistent conviction in prophetic circles among the Jews that a good time was coming, which was *then* fixed at the mystic period when the *seventh* king of Grecian race should sit on the throne of Egypt. We are thus at the period of the Maccabees, when Jewish hopes were high, and the physical prosperity and supremacy of the nation were still things to be expected. The history of the nations and of the Jews is traced in pseudo-prophetic fashion, with borrowings from Grecian and expansions of Jewish tradition, the persistent burden of every relation being woe and destruction for all because of their neglect of the Jewish God, and for the existing nations a like future woe and ruin. But let them but turn to God and leave the "holy race" free to follow out their destiny of a world-saviour and all will be well.

A careful study of these fragments will reveal the fact—the only one with which we need trouble ourselves in tracing the origin of certain factors which subsequently entered into the make-up of common Christianity—that we are dealing with a circle of thought that preponderatingly favoured not only a religious but also a social revolution in the Græco-Roman world, to be brought about by force through the agency of some powerful leader (a Messiah), such as a Cyrus or a Judas Maccabæus. Only in germ do we perceive the influence of the higher spiritual conception of a mystic Messiah, whose members should form the chosen Israel gathered from all the nations under heaven. It was only the disciples of the innermost schools who were as yet ripe for such a grandiose conception. The Zealots and their material hopes had the popular ear, and the blood of the Jews

to Paradise; it was, however, the common doctrine of the great school of the Pharisees, to the innermost circle of which belonged those whom Josephus and Philo called Essenes. Deane remarks (*op. cit.*, p. 290) that this passage "if not of Christian derivation," is "remarkable as anticipative of Christian doctrine." In i. 25 Paradise is called "ambrosial;" the *a-myra* and *nectar* of the gods was the promised food. The mystic Jew would of course in any propaganda among his own folk bring the manna-legend into prominence in this connection.

was boiling with ages of subjection and maddened with the fond expectation of an instant freedom and triumph. To aid in this great consummation their writers reverted to the more barbaric ideals of their ancient prophets and hurled forth indiscriminate denunciation on the rulers; the people were trodden down; let them join the righteous race, and become proselytes, and shake off the yoke of the tyrants, and therewith also the tyranny of the gods and of the cults and superstitions of the time. We fear that with many the political and social considerations came first and the religious second; yet perhaps not altogether so, for the Jew with his naïve theocratic ideas confounded all together in an inextricable tangle. Here we may appropriately quote a passage from the earliest fragments,* which now follows on the boastful description of Solomon's kingdom, which the writer—improving on the already fantastically exaggerated account of his predecessors who wrote up the early pre-exilic tradition into the post-exilic "history"—makes to include not only Phœnicia but also Asia Minor, the islands and Persia! All of which is of interest as showing how pious "history" was written in those days; the only excuse for the later writer being that the earlier writers, to whom he owed his knowledge of the existence of Solomon, had done the very same thing, as indeed every student of the science of Biblical criticism is well aware.

The Sibyllist wraps up the bait with which he wishes to enlist the sympathies of the Gentile populace, in the disguise of a description of the "most righteous race."

"There is a city† . . . from which I would derive the race of those most righteous ones, to whom good counsel and fair deeds are constantly a care. For never do they anxiously observe the cyclic running of the sun or moon, nor on the earth prodigious works, nor Ocean's glad-eyed seas, nor sneezing-omens and bird-auguries, neither soothsayers, nor philtre-mongers, nor yet enchanters, nor the deceits of foolish myths which mediums‡

* *Loc. cit.*, 218 sqq.

† The text is so defective that neither the name nor situation of the city can be restored with any degree of certainty.

‡ I do not quite know how to translate the word *ἐγγαστριμύθος*. It is generally rendered "ventriloquist;" but in the modern meaning of this word "ventriloquist" is certainly not a correct rendering. A "spiritualist" would probably call

impart. With art predictive, the Chaldaic art, they have no commerce, nor yet with the observing of the stars. For all such things are but deceits, which foolish men day after day search out, training their souls in work that is no good. Yea, these have taught unseemly folk to err, and from them many ills have come to men on earth, so that they wander from good paths and righteous deeds. But they, the righteous race, to righteousness and virtue give their care. With lust of goods these will have naught to do, for countless evils doth it breed for men, war and starvation which none can escape. Just measure theirs in town and field; into their neighbours' homes they break not in the night, nor do they rob their oxen, sheep and goats; his neighbours' landmark no man will displace; the rich plagues not the poor, he treads not widows down, but ever aids them from his stores with corn and wine and oil; among the folk, unto the destitute he is God's providence; while for the poor he ever leaves a portion of his crops. Thus they fulfil the word of the great God, the song found in their Law; for unto all, the Heavenly One a common earth hath given."*

This is perhaps the finest passage in the oldest fragments. There is, as yet, however, no sign of the higher doctrine that all is to be brought about by peaceful means. The righteous race is to be established by a warlike king and its enemies are to be slaughtered. It was the time of the gallant uprising of the Maccabees against the outrages of Antiochus Epiphanes, who endeavoured to root out the Jewish religion and substitute in its

such a phenomenon speaking through a "medium." Hesychius in his great lexicon says: "τοῦτόν τινες ἐγγαστρίμαντιν, οἱ δὲ στερνομάντιν λέγουσι." Unfortunately the exact equivalent which Hesychius gave is missing in the MSS. It may probably have been *πίθωνα*. Of course we know that the oracles of the Pythia and the rest of the prophetic utterances of the Pagan world were ascribed by the Fathers of the third century (such as Hippolytus) to "ventriloquism," even as similar "spiritualistic" phenomena are by those who have never studied them, in our own day; but the original term (*ἐγγαστρίμυθος*) was generally used without suspicion of deceit as a mode of prophecy (see Plato, *Sophistes*). There is a vast deal of difference between a fraudulent use of ventriloquism to deceive, and the further question as to how far "controls" are worthy of belief, and how far it is desirable for people to give themselves up to such control. The Jew who wrote our "oracle" had no doubt on the matter; such a mode of divination was the opposite of desirable, nay, was contrary to the commands of God. Theosophists also have always urged the danger of such practices from scientific and ethical reasons; there are, however, it is said, means whereby the dangers can be overcome by trained occultists in exceptional cases.

* *Loc. cit.*, 218-247.

place the cult of the Greek divinities (B.C. 170-168). At this crisis the "prophet of the Lord," to encourage his co-religionists, foretells the immediate coming of the Messiah in the following strains :

"Forth from the sun* then God a king shall send, making all earth to cease from evil war. Some shall he slay ; with others faithful covenants enact. Nor shall he of himself do all these things, but in submission to God's good decrees. Then shall the people of the mighty God with weight of fairest wealth o'erladen be, with silver and with gold, and purple vestments ; earth shall her full stores yield, and sea shall teem with all things that are good."†

Yea, the rulers will attempt to destroy the temple of God and God's "best men" ; but then shall judgment fall upon them and the end come in fearful terrors and universal destruction by immediate intervention of God's almighty hand, for such impiety. The earth shall be dank with their blood, and the wild beasts glutted with the bodies of the slain. Thus shall all men be forced to acknowledge the supremacy of Yahveh and his chosen folk. Then shall the "righteous race" have their good time of prosperity and material well-being.

Such was the crude Messianic ideal of all the Jews of the time with the exception, perchance, of the very, very few in the inner schools. The suffering people of God was to be vindicated by force ; a Judge‡ was to arise to take vengeance on their foes, here on earth.

Before leaving Book iii., however, we would refer to a passage in the opening verses just preceding the fragment assigned to an Alexandrian Jew of B.C. 40-30. It is the climax of a fine monotheistic outburst, and runs as follows :

"This is the God who made four-lettered Adam, the first-created, a name embracing east and west, and north and south. 'Tis he who fixed the type and form of men, and made the beasts, and creeping things and birds."§

* Generally rendered from the East ; but elsewhere in the oracles we find the synonymous phrases "from heaven" and "from the ether" as indicative of the origin of the coming one.

† *Ibid.*, 652-660.

‡ The meaning of the term "judge," as used by the Old Testament documents, is "vindicator."

§ *Loc. cit.*, 24-28.

This primal "man" was the macrocosm according to many schools,* and not the Adam of the literal meaning of the crude myth of *Genesis*. We are not, however, inclined to put the whole thing on one side with a simple reference to the "puerile amusement of an acrostic,"† although, of course, it is impossible to have any respect for the topsy-turvydom of the word-play and letter-play which was such a strong feature of Jewish mystical exegesis.‡ The point, however, which scholarship invariably overlooks is the fact that the doctrines thus falsely deduced from the names need not necessarily be false in themselves; the name-play, was simply a device for invoking the authority of popular sacred names for doctrines derived from a totally different source. Thus the doctrine of the Cosmic Man, which was the common property of mystic tradition, was popularised by these Essenic scholars, under cover of the authoritative Adam-myth. The four-fold Cosmic Adam gave "names" to all the creation; the "name" being the power within the gross form. In other words, the "soul," or animal part, was from the Cosmic Adam; the life-spark or mind, on the contrary, was from the Father of Lights.

G. R. S. MEAD.

(TO BE CONCLUDED)

* See especially Hippolytus, *Philosophumena*, § "Naaseni."

† See Alexandre *in loco*. Augustine explains the four-lettered puzzle as follows (*Ennaratio in Psalmum* xcv. 15): "According to the Greek tongue, Adam himself signifies the whole world. For there are four letters A, D, A, M, and in Greek speech these are the initial letters of the four quarters of the earth."

‡ This word-play, however, was by no means confined to the Jews. We find it widespread among the Greeks, Egyptians and Hindus; philology, in our sense, was in those days undreamt of, and the most fantastic derivations of names were considered legitimate for purposes of edification.

A PLEA FOR DARWINISM

As a student of Theosophical literature I have long considered that the view as to man's physical descent expressed by Madame Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine* is eminently unsatisfactory. The general evolutionary scheme, however, set forth in that and other Theosophical writings, is so attractive in itself and seems so well to fit all the known facts, that I have for years been content to lay aside that portion which seems in conflict with the evidence, and to await the advent of some publication which might throw further light on the hitherto dark places.

As, however, practically nothing new has so far as I am aware been published concerning this branch of the subject, and as Mr. Sinnett in his *Growth of the Soul* (chapter "The System to which we belong") seems tacitly to approve of *The Secret Doctrine* account of man's physical evolution, I have felt impelled to place on record some of the arguments in favour of the Darwinian account of man's physical origin which, as it appears to me, have never been answered, in the hope that those better acquainted with the subject may, if there be an answer, place it before the Theosophical world, and thus set at rest the honest doubts of some students.

Let us therefore consider the differences between the two theories, for to us they are no more, unless we are prepared to unlearn all that the past has taught us, and go back once more to authority.

Madame Blavatsky says emphatically and repeatedly that man even physically is not descended from any animal, existing or extinct. Darwin on the contrary, though uncertain as to the identity of the ancestor, seeks to show that the conclusion that man's origin physically is to be found in the animal kingdom is irresistible.

I suppose it is hardly necessary to quote chapter and verse for this version of *The Secret Doctrine* theory, but perhaps it will be safer to make one or two references, though the first volume is full of such statements.

In Vol. i.,* at p. 185 (first edition), it is said: "Occultism rejects the idea that Nature developed man from the ape, or even from an ancestor common to both. . . . The real line of evolution differs from the Darwinian, and the two systems are irreconcilable except when the latter is divorced from the dogma of 'Natural Selection' and the like."

At p. 168: "This is diametrically opposed to the now generally accepted theories of evolution and the descent of man from an animal ancestor."

At p. 660: "The Monad had but to step into the astral body of the progenitors, in order that the work of physical consolidation should begin around the shadowy prototype."

One could go on indefinitely, but I assume that everyone who has read *The Secret Doctrine* knows that the learned author denies most emphatically that man's physical body is of animal descent, and says that it was formed round an astral model by a "gradual process of condensation," whatever that may mean. This then is the question at issue. I place on one side entirely all the elaborate discussion of the details of the various hypotheses, in which the whole effort seems to be directed to disprove the descent of man and monkey from a common ancestor—a fact which is freely admitted in another portion of the book. For the sake of my argument it is all beside the question, which is: Had man as to his physical body an animal ancestry or had he not?

First, therefore, one has to consider whether the somewhat vague statement that the physical body "gradually consolidated" round the shadowy (astral?) prototype, is satisfactory. Does it mean that physical *human* cells were floating about in the atmosphere and condensed after the fashion of minerals round the nucleus of an astral form? If so, I can only say that to me it appears not only improbable, but incomprehensible. If, on the

* This should be Vol. ii. [Ed.].

other hand, the physical cells are created off-hand by the nature spirits—from what material we are not told—then I think that is equally unsatisfactory and difficult of belief. Where was the necessity of the long evolution through the lower kingdoms which we are told was to evolve the form fit for Manas to inhabit, if the whole process is to be given away in this manner, and a special creation advocated not one whit more rational—rather less so—than that of old orthodox Christianity?

It has always appeared to me that one of the strongest arguments of the Darwinian school was that of the rudiments. Among these may be mentioned the muscle which in animals is used to twitch the skin, and which, though quite useless to man, is still found in a rudimentary condition in many men; the extrinsic muscles which serve to move the ear, and the intrinsic muscles which move the different parts; the projecting point of the inwardly folded margin of the ear; the nictitating membrane or third eyelid (found in use among birds, but rudimentary in man); the rudimentary coating of hair on the body of man and fine down on that of the woman. With reference to the subject of hair, too, an explanation is required of the fact that the human foetus during the sixth month is thickly covered with wool-like hair which is afterwards shed before birth; in abnormal cases the child is born with the whole body and face covered with fine, long hairs, which, however, as in the case of the monkeys, is entirely absent from the palms of the hands and soles of the feet. Then there is the *os coccyx*, or vestige of a tail and its rudimentary muscles.

I expressly refrain from referring to rudiments of the organs (sexual) of one sex found in the opposite sex, as these are probably referable to a hermaphrodite ancestor. And as to this, I must admit that Madame Blavatsky appears to have the best of the argument in making that ancestor human; that is a side issue—though no doubt in itself important to our main discussion.

Now it appears to me that all these rudiments are fully explained by Darwin; but quite incomprehensible on *The Secret Doctrine* line of descent. If we are descended—physically, not mentally or spiritually—from “Lunar Pitris” or

any other class of astral or ethereal beings, why the rudimentary tail? why the hairy covering of the fœtus? why the rudimentary third eyelid? why the cycle of evolution through which the fœtus runs?

I have refrained from stating the above objections at greater length, because everyone who is not familiar already with them can, by turning to Darwin's *Descent of Man* and *Origin of Species*, Wallace's *Darwinism*, Romanes' *Darwin and after Darwin*, and a host of other works, find them fully set forth.

Nor have I thought it necessary to recapitulate the whole story of embryology, which the Darwinists contend, and I think rightly, supports their view, while Madame Blavatsky maintains the contrary.

There is, however, in a note to *The Secret Doctrine* (Vol. i,* at p. 660, 1st ed.) a statement, which in itself appears to me to contradict the theory stated in other parts of the book, and even on the same page. It reads: "Theosophists will remember that, according to occult teaching, cyclic pralayas so called are but *obscurations*, during which periods Nature, *i.e.*, everything visible and *invisible* on a resting planet remains *in statu quo*. Nature rests and slumbers, no work of destruction going on on the globe even if no active work is done. *All forms*,† as well as their astral types, remain as they were at the last moment of its activity."

Now, if this means anything at all, it means that the bodies as well as the astral types were preserved. In other words, the humanity of the third round was preserved, and served as the basis (physically) of the humanity of the fourth. But this is giving away the whole argument and admitting Darwin's main contention, namely, man's descent physically in a direct line—not a broken one—from an animal ancestor.

May I ask if this is the secret of Mr. Sinnett's Noah's Ark?‡ If so, a lot of valuable space in *The Secret Doctrine* has been absolutely wasted in fighting a shadow. For if these third round

* This should be Vol. ii. [ED.].

† These italics are our contributor's. [ED.]

‡ See *Esoteric Buddhism*, pp. 152, 153, 7th ed.

forms were merely occupied by the men of the fourth round and modified according to their necessity, the whole argument is conceded.

Perhaps I may be permitted to say that Darwinism without Theosophy appears to me to be a body without a soul, but that is no reason why it should be rejected when kept within its legitimate limits—that is to say, the origin of the physical body of man.

H. W. HUNT.

THE TRIUMPH OF SPIRIT

AN ALLEGORICAL SKETCH

ONCE in the time of the world's youth, when men's spiritual eyes were open and they could behold the angels ascending and descending, there lived a holy man to whom the distant future was unveiled.

He loved the earth and its inhabitants exceedingly, and it saddened him as he gazed into the oncoming years, for he saw that whilst our planet remained almost as fair as ever, the descendants of those who were so dear to him had lost their spiritual vision and sunk into materialism.

By and bye, he was able to discern the Eternal Good which had been from the beginning, standing white and erect, but with a dark shadow creeping at her side—the shadow of evil—which increased daily in magnitude.

He beheld war, pestilence and murder. It made his heart ache to note how the beasts he loved were maltreated, and how men slew them for food instead of subsisting as formerly on fruit and grain.

Everywhere he saw blood and was sickened by the ghastly sight.

He recognised the World-children's error in becoming flesh-eaters, he knew that cruelty, grossness and diseases resulted from the unnatural diet.

Then in a vain endeavour to discover cures for maladies engendered by their own foolishness, the deluded mortals experimented on animals, and besides blackening their own souls, reaped physically the reward of their wickedness, for the diseases, if apparently stamped out, were in reality simply transformed into different ones of a more subtle kind.

The holy man could see a long line of false scientists, each more arrogant than his predecessor, each glorying in a transitory success.

The beasts were tortured and men's bodies poisoned and defiled, but the false scientists grinned and enlarged their charnel houses.

The holy man perceived too that religion was no more expressed by the humble and hourly uplifting of the soul to God; it was instead cramped into a system, or rather into various systems.

The most pious persons were frequently the most intolerant and self-righteous; having mislaid the golden key which unlocks the hidden and spiritual, they adhered to the dead letter which was never meant to be taken literally and followed.

Whilst the rich built churches, expending money on them which might have saved millions from the hard grip of poverty, vice and cruelty flourished—and grew rampant.

Then presently the holy man saw that many of Heaven's angels were striving to re-open the arrested intercourse betwixt Earth and the Spheres of Light.

Under Divine direction they worked day and night; dearly they loved the World-children, for most of them had once resided on this sorrowful planet.

What was the joy of those beneficent spirits when they found that some speedily yielded to their influence, and recovered in a measure those spiritual senses and faculties which had become blunted and inert.

But these fortunate mortals were scoffed at by the masses, who were inclined to regard them as dreamers—verging on the confines of insanity. They cared not for jeers and a general attitude of incredulity, however; they gloried in their redemption from the bonds of matter, and being filled with re-

forming instincts, strove to raise the multitude to higher levels.

The holy man was able to gaze on until he saw that the shadow of evil was diminishing, and earth's inhabitants rapidly emerging from the abyss of delusion in which their souls had so long been plunged.

Then he fell on his knees and praised the Great Creator of the Universe for His never-ending kindness to His children, and he begged that in the coming ages he might be permitted to minister as an angel of mercy to those whose eyes were darkened.

While the holy man's soul soared heavenwards on the wings of prayer, the destined moment for the severance of the cord which bound spirit and body together arrived.

So etherealised was the holy man's casket—so sudden was the snapping of the connecting link, that his transition to celestial regions seemed instantaneous both to himself and to watching spirits.

* * * * *

The holy man's soul had ever dwelt in Heaven's vestibule, and now it had reached the inner courts where all is one radiancy of Light—where life is unmeasured by time and Love reigns supreme.

The holy man had scarcely known sin, he was happy with an all-pervading happiness—yet happier those on whom the Shadow of Evil has fallen, and who have wept bitterly because it overtook them. They shall rejoice still more when they reach the Light.

MINA SANDEMAN.

EARLY ARABIAN MYSTICISM: AL-KINDI

AND has not such a story from of Old
Down Man's successive generations roll'd ?

OMAR KHAYYÂM, *Quatrain* xxxviii.

Of all Semitic people there is none whose ancient history is so deeply veiled in an impenetrable gloom as that of the Arabians.—LUDOLF KREHL, *Ueber die Religion der Vorislamischen Araber*.*

IN an epoch which was pre-eminently a labyrinth of half-truths and of unreconciled antagonisms—when the mind of man seemed to be loosening its hold on the solid monuments of its mental past, and to have turned upon itself, doubting at once all that it was and the value of all that it hoped to be, an obscure nation, gifted with an unheard-of activity of intellect, an impetuous and intense love of research, arose to study, compile, translate and comment on the records of Greek philosophy, Oriental “paganism,” Persian mysticism, Egyptian thaumaturgy, Chaldæan sabæanism and Syrian christianity.

It has been said that there is in truth no such thing as Arabian philosophy; that the Arabs absorbed that of other nations with the rare eclecticism which is theirs alone, distilling it in the alembic of a subtle and profoundly metaphysical temperament, and that they gave to the world with a wealth of imagery and an encyclopædic erudition, certain unique gems of thought which they found as indestructible heirlooms in the dust-heap of documentary sources to which they had obtained access.

It is these heirlooms of an ancient psychology, canons of a “beautiful Pagan creed,” for whose dead deities Proclus mourned, and of whom Erigena endeavoured in vain to speak to the deaf adder of the West, which give its special character to

* Leipzig, 1863.

Arabian mysticism, and the vivid realism in the treatment of abstractions and intellectual conceptions which constitutes its peculiar value.

As the Latin scholastic was the Logician of the Middle Ages, so the Arabian was the Metaphysician by virtue of his synthetic mind and the mystic and contemplative temperament which is only understood by the study of his mental heredity and the influences of early Arabian civilisation; and it was his insight into the practical side of Dialectics, the intense earnestness with which he posited his methods of mental analysis, which so fascinated the Logician, wearied of his barren talent of ratiocination, and puzzled by long poring over the "strange compendia and crabbed commentaries which were more difficult than the matter they pretended to elucidate."*

There is an additional interest in Arabic records arising from the fact that they are the work of omnivorous readers and book-hoarders in many countries and in many tongues, who from their unbiassed point of view understood how to classify much that they found and to give it its due place in comparative philosophy. The Arab, being an alien in every city and a heretic in every Church, never avoided any school of thought or any set of ideas, never hesitated to imbibe from any source, conscious of his peculiar innate genius and of his sincerity in the pursuit of truth. Fifty years ago this page of the past was inaccessible to all but Arabic scholars; and it cannot be too much emphasised that though this obscure section of intellectual life is being rapidly opened to all European readers, much, very much, perhaps the pearl of the whole chain, is still in some hiding-place where it was left in long-forgotten days by the heedless hands of Time.

Arabian Philosophy, properly so-called, begins in the ninth century with a great name and a great work, to understand the importance of which it is necessary to refer to the history of the preceding centuries.

The great work is an old Arabic version of the celebrated *Apocryphal Theology* ascribed to Aristotle, and the name is that of Al-Kindi (or Alchindus) called "the Philosopher," sometimes

* Vaughan's *Aquin*, p. 341.

the "Magician," "the Most Excellent" of his time, and "the Only One" of his century, who revised and corrected the version in question.

A commentator of 1455 A.D., speaking of it, writes: "The modern scholars say that a book of Aristotle has been found in Egypt in which he has altered his doctrine of the eternity of the world. He wrote this book at the end of his life. It contains secrets of wisdom and philosophical mysteries. It is from a very old Arabic writing corrected by Al-Kindi."*

"And," Munk adds, "it is thus Arabian literature which has preserved for us this monument of Alexandrian philosophy.† We therefore find in the Arabs a distinction between Aristotle the exoteric and the esoteric," based on these Arabic works of which the Greek originals are lost—and it is this distinction which was the core of all Arabian philosophy, and which explains the peculiar nature of its influence on Western scholastics. There are many Arabic versions of lost Greek works and there is nothing in Greek which is not also in Arabic; and it should be borne in mind that many Arabic translations were undoubtedly made straight from the Greek.‡

The Arabic versions of Greek works known to En-Nêdim, "the Secretary," in 987 A.D., are in his work the *Fihrist*,§ the "Guide-book to the History of the Learned, and the Names of the Writings which they have written."

In this way the *Theology* and the book *De Causis* became, by the medium of the Arabian commentators, the key to the Western phase of thought in the thirteenth century.||

These two works both contain the emanation-theory. In the *De Causis* the Supreme Cause is ineffable but illumines the secondary causes by its rays.¶

* Munk (S.), *Mélanges de Philosophie juive et arabe*. Paris, 1857, p. 248. See also Munk's article on the Arabians, in the *Dict. des Sciences Philosophiques*. Paris, 1844.

† It is lost in Greek. See Dieterici, *Theologia Aristotelis*. Latin trans. from the Arabic. Leipzig, 1882.

‡ Jourdain's *Recherches critiques sur les Tradd. latines d'Aristote*, p. 90. Ed. A. Stahr: Halle; 1831.

§ See R. Nicolai, *Griechische Litt. Geschichte*, vol. iii., p. 27. Magdeburg, 1878.

|| Stahr's Jourdain, p. 202.

¶ Vacherot, *Histoire de l'École d'Alexandrie*, vol. iii., p. 96. Paris, 1846.

The First Cause is Being; then follows the order of the Intelligences.

In the *Theology* there is the same teaching of intermediary agencies and the descending ladder of beings. "For it is not possible that that which is above Perfection should have created the imperfect thing without an intermediary."*

How this work and the *De Causis* (also attributed to Aristotle), which Aquinas thought was an extract of Proclus' *Elevatio Theologica*, influenced the later mystics Amalrich of Bena and David of Dinanto, we shall see later in comparing them with the great mystic work of Ibn Gebirol in the eleventh century.

The emanation-theory in all its developments found a congenial soil in the Arabian mind, imbued as it was with that curious mixture of Sabæanism and Neo-platonism, of which the former sect with its recondite pantheism has been longer remembered than any other sect in the world.†

"It is very strange," says Schmölders, "that we do not know this doctrine through Greek sources, as it seems to have had a great renown in the East, at least among the Arabs, who make mention of it in all their polemical books."

The time of Al-Kindi and this Arabic "Theology" was that of the great Caliph Al-Mamûn, the Charlemagne of the East, at whose school of translators at Baghdâd the first Arabic versions of Aristotle were made.

The energy of these translators seems to have been inexhaustible, and the Arabs moreover jealously guarded the perfect MSS. and would not allow the Christians to see them. Roger Bacon says they deliberately corrupted them. There is a story told that Aristotle appeared in a vision as an old man to the Caliph Al-Mamûn and greatly excited without gratifying his curiosity concerning some valuable works of his; in consequence of which the Caliph took the opportunity of obtaining certain rare Greek MSS. from the Emperor Michael III. as a condition of peace, which documents he carried to his school at Baghdâd to be translated, and then burnt the originals. This sort of proceeding

* Munk's *Mélanges*, p. 253.

† Schmölders, *Essai sur les Écoles philosophiques chez les Arabes*, p. 130. Paris, 1842.

may explain to some extent the state of things in the thirteenth century, and the despair which made Roger Bacon say that if only he could collect all the versions of Aristotle that had ever been made, he would burn them all. Bacon is said to have known "Greek, Hebrew and Chaldee," yet he lectured on Aristotle at Brazenose from "the Latin translation of a Hebrew version of an Arabic commentary of an Arabic translation of a Syriac version of the Greek text" !*

And the story says that a Spanish student (who probably knew Arabic) laughed aloud when Bacon gave out this extraordinary announcement.

But as Bacon pathetically remarked : "If the Saints made mistakes in translating Arabic much more do these men. So though we have many translations of the sciences by Gerard of Cremona, Michael Scott, Alfred the Englishman, Herman the German, and William Fleming, they are all false."†

In a manuscript of the thirteenth century, *Tract. de Erroribus Philosophorum*, supposed to have been written by a pupil of Aquinas, the whole of Chapter x. is devoted to Alchindus the Magician.‡

According to Hauréau, all the errors of which he is accused are those of the Alexandrian gnosis, except the last, which may be considered Peripatetic. "And," he adds, "the mystics of any religion have all the same illusions, the same delirium. If one compares Alexander of Hales, Henri de Gand, and S. Bonaventure, we shall find these aphorisms of Al-Kindi : 'That individuals cannot escape from the dominion of secondary causes, and that, animated by the same breath, they are all particles of the same universal matter.'"

Schmölders also says : "S. Bonaventure must have been influenced by Moslem mystics, and I repeat that there are more ideas than is known in the scholastics of which the merit is due to the Arabs, and I am sure that more study of them will show this beyond a doubt." . . "For the Arabs taught to the Western

* Lewes, *History of Philosophy*, vol. ii., p. 60.

† Fr. Rogeri Bacon, *Opera Inédita*. Preface, p. lv. *Chron. and Memorials of Great Britain*, 1857.

‡ Hauréau, *Philosophie Scholastique*, vol. i., p. 363. Paris, 1850.

Christians the learning into which they had been initiated by the Eastern Christians." This being so, it is very significant that the most marked effect of Arabic writers on the schoolmen was to make them approach and dally with the "pernicious heresy" of Pantheism, which at once fascinated and terrified them, and which they alternately studied and condemned.

Al-Kindi, the earliest Arabian mentioned by the scholastics, and, as far as we know, the earliest Arabian commentator of Aristotle, is the first of the philosophers properly so-called among the Eastern Arabs. He was born about A.D. 810 in the debatable land of the Persian Gulf, and was descended from a long line of Arabian princes; but though of the purest Arab blood, he seems to have come under the influence of the Persian Motazelites, a free-thinking sect, much affected by the Caliph Al-Mamûn. This strange system had lately sprung up as an amalgam of the Shyyites and the Persian transcendentalists, to which latter the Caliph's mother belonged, being herself a Persian. Instead of belief in the inspiration of the Korân there was the authority of a Divine Imâm, or spiritual leadership, by which the world is directly conducted; God, infinite and unique, does not exercise any direct action in preserving and governing human affairs. There are twelve Imâms, they are the secret, invisible rulers, and have their vicegerents on earth, who exact implicit obedience from their followers. Apart from the Imâms all is darkness. With them all is salvation. This sect developed into the Assassins at the end of the eleventh century.*

Muir describes the Motazelites as "an elastic development of Islâm, sublimated by the mysticism of Persia and refined by the subtleties of Indian philosophy."

To return to Al-Kindi, second to none in his independence of mind and his versatility. He is quoted as one of the twelve greatest minds of the world by Cardanus (*De Subtilitate*, c. 1550) and the learned Spanish ex-Jesuit Andres, of this century, calls him the Thales and Pythagoras of Mussulmen.†

* Cf. Gobineau, *Les Religions et les Philosophies dans l'Asie centrale*, chapter iii., p. 59. Paris, 1865. Also Sir W. Muir's *Annals of the Early Caliphate*, 1883.

† See Dr. G. Flügel's "Al-Kindi; Ein Vorbild seiner Zeit und seines Volkes," *Abhandl. f. d. Kunde des Morgenlandes*, vol. i., pp. 1. sqq. Leipzig, 1859.

There is no record of his birth or childhood ; the most reliable sources as to his writings are the *Fihrist* and the *Classes of Physicians* by Ibn Oseibia, and *The History of Philosophers* by Ibn Kufti.

He threw off, while still young, the narrow fetters of Islâm, choosing rather to "follow his being's law with motion free"—forming one of the brilliant circle round the clever and cultivated Caliph Al-Mamûn.

These were the palmy days of Moslem learning. Philosophers, physicians, poets, mystics, scholars, sceptics, "magicians" and "pagans" were encouraged to collect together in the court of this remarkable man. Hundreds of Al-Mamûn's camels might be seen coming from Armenia, Chaldæa, Greece, Syria and Egypt, loaded with Greek, Hebrew and Persian manuscripts,* which his agents were bringing to Baghdâd, the "City of Peace," the Alma Mater of Arabian Philosophy. It was in these surroundings that Al-Kindi developed his metaphysical genius, and wrote the two hundred works ascribed to him.

He is said to have known the sciences of Greece, Persia and India, and the Caliph became so jealous of his great learning that he took away all his books from him.†

Among his books were the *Metaphysics* and the *Resurrection of Souls* of Empedocles, mentioned by Schahrastânî;‡ the works of Ammonius Saccas, Porphyry, Alexander of Aphrodisias, the *Timæus* of Plato, the works of Apollonius of Tyana, Plutarch, Valentinus and the Neo-platonists, as well as "all the Theurgics and Gnostics, who gave," says Schmölders, "to the Arabs their love of magic, alchemy and secret sciences in general."

Al-Kindi's works§ consist of translations, commentaries and paraphrases of Greek originals. He worked at Hippocrates,

* *Life and Labours of Th. of Aquin*, by the Very Rev. R. B. Vaughan, O.S.B. Longmans; 1871; p. 273.

† The same childish punishment was inflicted on Roger Bacon, but then for a Franciscan friar he was far too fond of them; whereas with the Caliph it was simply the inexcusable jealousy of one omnivorous reader at the "intellectual hoggishness" of another.

‡ Schahrastânî's *Chronicle Kitab el-Milel*, trans. by Haarbrücker. Halle, 1850. See also Ueberweg's *Hist. of Phil.*, vol. I. p. 406.

§ Flügel, *loc. cit.*

Plato, Alexander of Aphrodisias, Porphyry, and especially Aristotle.

Ibn Gulgul, quoted by Casiri, says that "Al-Kindi was nearer Aristotle than any other man."*

He also worked at Euclid, Hypsicles, Autolycus and Ptolemy, and compiled numerous works on astrology.

The chief original work of Al-Kindi is a collection of essays called *The Polemics*, one of which is devoted to refuting the Manichæans, another against the Dualists, and one answering the fallacies of the Sophists. There is also an essay defending the Unity of God and the Freedom of the Will. But of all his essays the most interesting are those *On the Soul*, and a series dealing with psychological problems, called *On à priori Principles*.†

His books *On the Soul* are as follows (as given by Flügel) :

No. 184. "That the Soul is a simple, eternal Substance influencing the Body."

No. 185. "That the Soul has Consciousness, and that it existed in the World of Understanding before it entered into the World of Sense."‡

No. 187. "On the Enigma of Love."

No. 188. "On the Cause of Sleep and Dreams, and on that which the Soul secretly declares."

He tries to show that the soul has existed before its earth-life, and that dreams and the enigma of love are among its special activities, or, as we should say now, specific energies of the soul.

Then follow his books *On à priori Principles* :

No. 225. "Essay on the Secrets of the Preconceptions of Experience."

No. 226. "Essay on the Preconceptions of things which lead to the Knowledge of (future) Events."

No. 227. "Essay on Foreknowledge for Information (of future events)."

* Casiri (M.), *Biblioth. Arabico-Hispana Escorialensis*, vol. i., p. 353. Matriti, 1760.

† Or *On Preconceptions* (*Vorgbergiffe*) ; see Flügel, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

‡ The title of this last is given by Casiri as "Quod anima memoriâ ac intellectu ex se prædita sit antequam in corpus infundatur." *Op. cit.*

No. 228. "On Foreknowledge of Prophecies" (that is, of things that can be foretold).

No. 229. "On the Preconceptions of Cognition with the Help of the Heavenly Bodies to obtain Conclusions as to Future Things."

Casiri gives a list of books called *Spherica*, among which is one entitled :

"That the Universe is a Sphere."

Thus we are brought back again to the pantheistic psychology of the Sabæans to whom in the last analysis we must refer all these religious philosophies and secret sciences.*

In Sabæanism we shall find the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul as well as that of fore-knowledge of events, and lastly the theory of spheres.

We therefore revert to our initial statement, that it is in the ancient teachings of the Sabæan sects that we shall find the kernel of all later mysticism, and as their philosophy was echoed by Porphyry, so that of Plotinus was echoed by the Western Arab, Ibn Gebirol (Avicbron), in his great pantheistic work the *Fons Vitæ*, the abstruse reasoning of which is far easier to follow if we have first a clear idea of the fundamental tenets of Sabæanism.

A. L. BEATRICE HARDCASTLE.

* See Schmölders, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

FRATRES LUCIS

THE ORDER OF THE KNIGHTS AND BROTHERS OF LIGHT

(CONCLUDED FROM p. 81)

PART II. (*continued*)

FIRST DEGREE

SECTION II.

"Of the Chamber and of the Admission itself."

§ 6.

"WHEN the person requesting admission comes, he is made to go into a separate room, and the Brother-Receiver goes in to him.


§ 7.

"Here the person who receives him makes a short but formal speech to the candidate requesting him three times to turn back.

§ 8.

"But if the candidate ceaselessly entreats to be received, then the Brother-Receiver desires him to put on the dress of the Master Freemasons, and after that :

§ 9.

"The receiver asks the candidate in what lawful  he is received? Then he asks him the words, the signs, the mysteries of the three degrees, and leaves him with the entreaty to consider once more what he has undertaken."

After some more preparatory offices he is allowed to pass into the chamber of reception, then :

§ 13.

"The candidate is led in and placed at the end of the table ;

here the Secretary commands him to make the subsidiary signs of the Freemasons, and once such a sign as is necessary. The Chapter thanks him by a bend of the head."

§ 16.

"Immediately after the Secretary of the Chapter makes a short speech : (a) How this Master Freemason has been received into this Order by three Knights and Brothers of Light who are responsible for him. (b) How, for this reason, he is admitted by the choice of the Provinces. (c) And therefore he is to sign his oath.

§ 17.

"I, — —, Master, promise by the only God and the duty of an honest man, to observe all the mysteries and all the articles which shall be read to me by the reverend, wise and worthy Chapter of the Knights and Brothers of Light, the Novices of the 3rd year, even if they shall seem to me troublesome to follow and unheard of, and to regard them as the revelation of the ultimate forces of Nature."

Then comes the signing of the Oath, after which a sort of exhortation is read to the candidate as follows :

§ 19.

"The general articles on the duties of the very reverend, most wise Seven Fathers, the Heads of the seven Churches of Asia.

"1. The Knight and Brother of Light who wishes to be received as a Novice of the 3rd year, must promise to attempt nothing generally, or singly, under any pretext against all or anyone who may in future be in the Sublime Order of the very reverend and mighty and wise Knights and Brothers of Light, or against any of the grades wherewith he may be concerned in the different Chapters, and nothing against the rights of the community, but on the contrary, so far as it depends on him, to dispel and avert every danger and injustice.

"2. He must promise complete submission and entire obedience to the laws of the Order.

"3. Since all the mysteries of the Sublime Order are from

the True Light, he must promise to follow them to the end of his life, not asking by whom they were given, nor from whence they were taken, are taken, or shall be taken. Whoso seeth the Light clearly, he must be indifferent as to its source. The history of all times will more than justify this absolute necessity.

"4. He must promise to protect as far as possible the three degrees of the Freemasons of the world, as the elementary school of our Sublime Order, and to render every service which it is possible for him to give for its enlargement.

"5. He must promise to protect the reverend, mighty and wise Order of Knights and Brothers of Light with all his power, to contribute in an honest and active way to its enlargement, to defend its members with true, sincere, and fraternal love, to help them and to recognise them in every case with a word, to love each severally and all sincerely with the love that nature implants in one Brother for another."

The next articles deal merely with technical points, after which the signing follows, and then in procession all the Brothers pass into the Chapter Room, where the religious part of the ceremony is to take place. After various opening phrases, a long list of questions is demanded of the candidate, among which are the following :

"Where wast thou received a disciple of the Freemasons?"

"What Masters gave to thee that name?"

"Where didst thou become a Master Freemason?"

"Who received thee as Master?"

"How long hast thou been a Freemason?"

"How long hast thou been a Master?"

"When all these (and other) questions have been duly written down in the official register, and it has been notified that the candidates from the Freemasons has already been in that body for seven years, then the whole document is re-read once more. After this a solemn silence reigns throughout the Chapter for some time, finally the reverend Corrector of the Novices interrupts it by ringing his bell three times, and this is repeated according to a certain order, and then the Corrector of the Novices begins the following prayer :

"O God our Creator ! Thy Name is known throughout the

earth, and we give Thee thanks in Heaven. Out of the mouth of babes hast Thou established Thy strength against Thy enemies, that Thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. When I behold Thy heavens, the work of Thy hands, the moon and the stars which Thou hast also created. They that have ears, let them hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches: To him that overcometh I will give to eat of the Tree of Life which is in the Paradise of God.

“And to the angel of the Church in Smyrna write, saying: This is the first and the last, he that was dead and that shall live again.

“They that have ears to hear, let them hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches: To him that overcometh I will give of the hidden manna, and I will give him a good testimony written in his name, but none shall know it but him that owneth it. For all this hath the Lord spoken, and the Word of the Lord is pure, as pure silver, purified seven times.”

§ 33.

“After this prayer, the Corrector of the Novices says then to the person who requests to be received: Pray, my Brother, the good elements of all creatures that the 1 and the 3, the 5 and — may be with us, that they may lead thee on the path that thou art entering.” After this comes the ceremony of robing and unrobing the candidate; he then recites a psalm, after which the following address is made to him:

“Thou hast been brought here, my son, in order to study the laws of His eternal wisdom, His justice and His mercy, of all His power. We desire that thou shouldst come among us with a sincere heart, with the spirit of goodwill, obedience and submission, with love and ardour to study the true wisdom. If, my son, thou hast goodwill, if thou givest thyself with sincere trust into the embrace of the pure Light, then we also will freely teach thee our Mysteries with the same sincere heart, with a still greater desire according to the strength of thy spirit, and by gradual steps we will lead thee to where thou wilt thyself enter into the Light.”

This passage bears a striking resemblance to one, well-

known to students in *Light on the Path*, wherein it says : “ For within you is the Light of the world—the only Light that can be shed upon the Path. . . . You will enter the Light. . . . ”*

In such passages do we recognise the similarity of this teaching with our own, changed though the setting may be.

“ Then, after a period of silence, he continues : Now, dear Brother, give us the final token of thy obedience, that will help us to show the beginning of our trust in thee. Pronounce the oath that I am about to require of thee, of the inner quality of which the Infinite Justice will judge, and will reward or punish thee.”

The curtain of the Holy of Holies is raised while the Corrector of the Novices says to the Brothers : “ Pray to God in your hearts that He may bless in His heart the oath of the Brother-Novice who has just entered.”

Then after some ceremonial this candidate repeats after the Secretary the following pledge :

“ I —— swear by the only law of the true and unknown Being, to continue all my life faithful to the duties of the Knights and Brothers of Light ; if I violate a single one of them, may my superiors, by the miraculous power of magic, make me the most pitiable of creatures, may the powers of evil rise up against me for ever, the cruel spirits which hide themselves from the Light ; may the mighty princes of darkness assemble all the terrors of night around me like a dark cloud, and draw forth all the light from my spirit, from my soul, and from my body, and may the source of good which is One and Three shut me out for ever from their mercy.”

The next ceremonial is the giving of the signs and passwords, directly after which the second Master-Novice begins his discourse and explanation as follows :

“ From times already long past, worthy Brother Knight Novice, there have been certain persons who, united in mysterious and indissoluble bonds, have endeavoured by their combined powers to learn the occult forces of being and to prove them. Such societies have taken most various names ; they

* P. 6, para. 12, new ed., 1894.

have hidden their science, their study, and their mysteries in hieroglyphics which no saint could understand, but which were known to their disciples, and they acted thus with great prudence, on purpose not to render them less sacred, and so make them common. And in truth it would be dangerous to make known to the world truths which, for the welfare of the people, should always remain secret. These societies have, as was said, been known under very different names, and belonged to this place, or that, according to their leaders. Their centre was, however, always in Asia. . . . Some Knights who took part in the war against the Saracens were admitted there. And as from all sorts of errors come hatred, jealousy and persecution, greed, calumny, false witness, and finally death ; so a portion of this society, who had learned many mysteries in Asia, perished by a thousand tortures in bloody ruin, to the great disgrace of humanity. Three wicked men made an inhuman compact among themselves and carried it into execution. In political history they are known as Clement VII., Pope of Rome ; Philippe-le-Bel, King of France, and Nogaret, the Chancellor of Philippe ; they are distinguished by a thousand crimes. That society was known by the name of the Knights of the Temple, a few of whom escaped from the hands of their executioners and the tortures appointed for them by leaving for Asia. From the ruins of those mysteries arose the Radiz or Knights of John, the German Order and the Golden Fleece ; who all shared in what remained known of the mysteries of the Knights of the Temple, so far as any means were left for their attaining them. But still more ancient is the Order of Freemasons, whose body, though new in many respects, has yet best preserved the hieroglyphics of the Knights of the Temple, which the other bodies changed by a thousand absurd ceremonies."

"The Temple of Solomon, which was regarded as the greatest miracle of human power and wisdom, appeared to them the grandest hieroglyph ; a fact the more agreeable to them since they had found in the ancient records of the Knights Templars, collected with great pains in several places, that they had also used it, and that they had divided the Temple of

Solomon into hieroglyphics, and their Order into degrees, and then to each degree they gave some hieroglyphics for the mysteries, and they gave a moral interpretation to the Sacraments, and also to the hieroglyphics. . . . The chief objects, worthy Brother, which the Freemasons on the one side ill-understood, but on the other side were ever seeking, were Alchemy, Theosophy and Magic; and this search was almost always in vain, partly because they were either quite ignorant of these lofty sciences, or they knew but little of them. But now, worthy Brother, our duty is to instruct thee in all these matters so far as thou shalt deserve, clearly and distinctly, and that thy reason may be thoroughly enlightened we will give thee a true explanation of the first degree of the disciples of the Freemasons, and just before.

“1. Before receiving thee into the Order, they took thee into a dark room; this was to teach thee that our matter is found in a black matter—our earth.

“2. Then they took away from thee all the metals that thou wearest; to show thee that our matter grows not where metals grow.

“3. They did undress thee to show thee that our matter also is stripped of the veil that nature has given it, for it can be drawn as from the breast of a mother.

“4. Then they removed thy shoe, and uncovered thy left hand; this removal and this uncovering of the hand, though it may relate to another branch of the meaning, yet the removing of the shoe signifies also here a mysterious severance, and is one of the most ancient hieroglyphics which was known to the Israelites. When one of them wished to refuse the wife of his deceased brother, then his shoes were taken from him; in the same way, when anyone renounced an inheritance, or a ploughed field that he had bought, then he did the same thing. But this sign of renunciation ever has a mysterious signification.

“5. Thy eyes were covered, because though our matter is luminous, shining and clear in itself, yet it can be found only in the darkest dwelling.

“6.

“7. The noise that is made on the floor in token of

affirmation or consent to the reception of the disciple of the Freemasons, signifies that we procure our matter from the dwelling of the Volcano, and that the Order has for its chief object the physical mysteries wrought by fire.

“8. The laborious journeys made by thee three times, the discourses of the Superintendent and the ceremonies connected therewith, signify the obedience, fidelity and silence necessary towards thy chiefs; they also teach thee that great pains, application and reflection, an upright heart, and an open soul, are needed to enable thee to rise toward us; and finally by silence they show thee that this path can be found only in silence and in secret, and that great trials have to be surmounted and a firm and fearless constancy shown before we can attain thereto.

“9. The point of the sword was laid on thy breast to remind thee to beware of it. It should remind thee that no two-edged weapon must ever be used to slay our Hiram and procure his precious blood, which is shown afterwards by a weak brother and his bloody handkerchief, as is explained to the Knight Novice of the 7th year.

“10. The inner silence □ signifies that our matter, when it is prepared, dissolves all metals noiselessly.

“11. In touching thee with a compass (on a plate of blood), holding up the plate with the blood signifies that we have another poignard besides the one which was shown to thee, and which we thrust into the bosom of our matter so that it pours forth blood.

“12. The order of the Grand Master to take care of the sick is the same that the Grand Master gives in the workshop □ not to injure the body. The Knight Novice of the 7th year receives further explanation on this.

“13. All that is repeated in thy □ three times, signifies that our matter is animal, vegetable and mineral, as the Knight Novices of the 7th year know.

“14. The name of Thooelkan was given to thee to show thee that our matter lies where the volcano has its fire and its dwelling.

“15. Thy insignia, and the administering of the oath, and the equality of religions in the □ relate to our theosophical

and political statutes which thou wilt learn in our fifth degree.

"16. And finally, thou hast been asked, so far as thou couldst remember them, thy name, thy place of birth, etc. This is useful to our Chiefs, from their kabalistic knowledge, in tracing the most secret windings of thy heart and thy character.

"The Explanation of the Carpet."

"1. The four quarters of the world signify that God has given to our Chiefs such wisdom that they are raised by this privilege above all mortals, from east to west, from south to north, so that for them it matters not what lies above the system of the Whole, there is nothing unknown; they hold the same relation to the four principal winds of which our Father Hermes speaks: The wind bears it in its bosom; that is to say, I bear the matter, for it is the source and the end of all things.

"2. The border and the fringe denote our unchangeableness.

"3. The mosaic flooring shows to the Chiefs the well-known magic squares.

"4. ☆ is the word Aesch Mazor,* or the watery flame, or the flaming water which we can obtain for ourselves.

"5. The sun and the moon signify the masculine and feminine elements, or that which is active and that which is passive; the same thing is signified by the two beams Jachin and Boaz, which, however, have their signification in divine magic: for they are the beams laid by the ten Sephiroth and of the divine sacred chariot. . . ."

All the rules which follow the instructions above quoted are full of the mystical and symbolic meanings attributed to the various implements used in the ceremonies; but the minute details of forms and customs which have undergone so many changes become wearisome.

The term Theosophy is constantly recurring in the various rules, and finally they read to the Knight Novice the history of

* This is also most probably referred to in the *Æsch Mezareph*, quoted by Knorr von Rosenroth. The whole title refers to "Cleansing Fire." See *Collectanea Hermetica*, vol. iv., p. iv. Edited by W. W. Westcott. T.P.S.; 1894.


the Order—"the theosophy, and the magic science with the chemical work of his degree, and all is communicated to him according to order."


After that the Chapter is closed with the usual blessing and ceremony. The next step is the passing on of the Knight Novice of the 3rd year, to become a Knight Novice of the 5th year. We must remember that three years have elapsed since the entering of the first degree took place, and during these three years the neophyte has had time for both reflection and study. Much of the ceremonial is the same as that which we have already given, so that only portions of the addresses need be quoted.

SECOND DEGREE

§ 7.

"1. . . . Formerly, digging our matter out of the earth was the duty of the workmen, and in fact the workmen of old did carry out this work, until the abuses which followed on too much knowledge became very frequent, and now this duty belongs to the Masters of the Freemasons, and is explained to the Knights Novices of the 7th year.

"2. The entrance signifies the approaching union of three principles separate in themselves; and the other preparations which thou didst undergo were so light because there was nothing new to teach thee, and they were but a repetition of what thou hast learned in the pupil's degree: and so also in  of the workmen those doctrines only will be repeated which are already somewhat known to the pupil.

"3. The letter F in a blazing star < signifies the active Principle of the Creative Elohim, which is explained with perfect clearness in our theosophy, an explanation which is known to none but the Brothers of Light alone, and from which follows a very important explanation of the reason why a Freemason signs with a square containing a point in the centre .

"4. The seven degrees signify the seven metals which have to be perfected by our work. They also signify the smallest number of the true Jewish name of our matter. Thus Zechariah saw one stone with seven eyes, and finally, seven wheels ('rotations'), which are our last workmen, by means of which we

raise ourselves to perfection. . . . Finally, they signify seven stars, the power of which is found explained in our kabalistic science, for natural magic is very useful and necessary to our Chiefs in the work. . . .”

Much must be left, for space would fail to give more than a cursory survey of this degree. We must pass on to the next portion and again select what appear to be the most salient points in the next degree.

THIRD DEGREE

“The Knight-Novice of the 7th Year.”

“ . . . The second Master . . . begins the following explanation . . . :

“The Temple of Solomon, reverend Brother, which was in general the synthesis of our art, and which represented the symbols of all the mysteries, theosophical as well as magical and alchemical, was in the time of Solomon an allegory of our Order and replaced the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians, which, excepting a few, were not used in our Order ; and as in the 3rd degree of Freemasonry study was needed, an allegorical account was composed of the history of Hiram, King of Tyre, who had assisted Solomon in the building of the Temple, from which important doctrines might be deduced ; and thou must at once learn the true origin of this, and then the true sense of the allegory which was made about it. In the Prophet Ezekiel one sees even more clearly that Hiram had a universal meaning, Nephesh, Urim, Thummim, that he died, not from any illness, but that he was killed.

“In the Chaldean book, Jalkot, the following is related of him, which is considered a clear and historical explanation of the 28th chapter of the Book of the said Prophet :

“Hiram, King of Tyre, who had assisted Solomon in the building of the Temple, had by his wisdom gained inexhaustible riches, and was 800 years of age ; afterwards he became proud of his wisdom and believed himself equal with God. He fashioned by his art two beams, and upon them seven heavens, and in these seven heavens he caused an altar to be built which was to be like the altar of God. When God was wroth with

this great sin and error, He sent to him His Prophet Ezekiel to declare his sins and pronounce their punishment; then Jehovah destroyed with thunder the seven heavens of Hiram, and he fell from his height and was slain by the hands of men.

“As our theosophical-magical-chemical School began to multiply in the world, our supreme wise enlightened Master and Chief found it necessary to regulate it all. And hence arose the signs and passwords of each separate degree, so that when the Workmen or the Disciples came to seek their reward (their apprenticeship being taken for granted), each one could be recognised by the word and signs, so as to know to what degree he belonged. . . . The secret meaning of the history of Hiram is as follows: Hiram, which signifies our matter, has been killed by three Workmen, in order that they may procure the Word, which is Jehovah, that is to say, the Central Fire. They have buried him, and already have his *caput mortuum*, and they have made a hillock; the dead head appears as if the spirit were excited with rage, which is shown by the Acacia. . . . The Master of the Freemason's degree, however, shows the nature of our matter by a touch-stone or a mineral, by a dead head or an animal, by the Acacia or vegetable; that is to say, our matter is not to be divided, but must contain not one but all these three kingdoms. Jehovah, the symbol, which appears in the centre of this triangle, shows the fulfilment of the work, which is the Central Fire and the greatest Light; this matter, reverend Brother, is our book, which is here shown to thee, and which after close study thou wilt find adorned with all these qualities.”

The whole of this address is most suggestive to students who give careful thought to the matter or substance of the present sevenfold division of the plane of our system. Many will understand the true meaning of the legend of Hiram, although it has often been distorted and the truth almost destroyed. The remainder of the address deals with practical details which need not at present be published.

The next important passages which need attention are in the Fourth Degree, or that of the Levite, to which we must now pass on;

FOURTH DEGREE

"Of the Reception of the Levites."

§ 2.

"The Chapter of the Levites has no carpet ; here carpets already cease to be used.

§ 5.

"Question. What is Perfection ?

"Answer. One, Two, Three and Four.

"Q. What is the Perfect Flame ?

"A. That which lights, which blazes, and destroys not.

"Q. What is that which must not be spoken, while the pure stones of marble are being procured ?

"A. Majim, Majim.

"Q. What is Elohim ?

"A. Elih and Ki, the Light without will, and the Light with will ; the Light without colour and the Light with colour.

"Q. Who gives the colour ?

"A. The will.

"Q. How many of them are there together ? and when did they begin ?

"A. They are altogether the same, both now and for ever.

"Q. What is the Serpent that flies through the air and burns ?

"A. The ant which is found within its scale represents it.

"Q. How long was Moses with Schamajim ?

"A. Forty days.

"Q. What did he bring with him ?

"A. The setting forth of natural laws written on a stone.

"Q. Who was he among the people of Israel ?

"A. Law-giver, Levite, Protector, and a great Captain."

Many more questions and answers follow these, and then the officiating Brother speaks as follows :

"I beseech Thee, O Lord, to grant me two graces, which Thou mayst not deny me so long as I live ; take away from me idolatry and falsehood, give me neither poverty nor riches, but only my daily bread. Give me reason and wisdom, that I may learn both good and evil."

This Chapter, or service, is much shorter than those of the earlier Neophytes. No public instruction is given, but much stress is laid upon the ethical side of the Neophyte's life. Finally, we come to the reception of the Priest, the last office which is given. Priests only are present, and the ritual is more severe in character, and perhaps more solemn :

FIFTH DEGREE

"Of the Reception of Priests."

In the opening of this Chapter the Levite, who is now to become a Priest, is brought in after having had all the preliminary questions put to him, different of course in character to those already instanced, but similar in tone and style. As soon as the Levite is brought in, the officiating Brother thus addresses him :

§ 7.

"Now, reverend Brother, thou art near the last article of the explanation given to thee before taking thy oath. Now thou drawest near to the barrier which—if God permits—being enlightened by the Light, thou thyself wilt pass. Now thou hast reached the end of the secret Mysteries of our Royal and Priestly Order, which, besides those which may yet be given, are of such a nature that nowhere save in the Light can they be sought and found."

After this injunction the Levite has certain ceremonies to perform before the "Sacred Fire," which has been lighted with religious rites, and the closing of the ceremony takes place. Various references have been made to the "Light" at different stages of the neophyte's progress, and in order to understand, in some measure, the importance of what the leaders of the *Fratres Lucis* were trying to teach we need only turn to the instructive Lectures of T. Subba Row, in which the true meaning of the Light is clearly given. In one passage he says : "The one great power, that is as it were guiding the whole course of evolution, leading nature on towards its goal, so to speak, is the Light of the Logos. The Logos is as it were the pattern, and emanating from It is this Light of Life."*

* *Discourses on the Bhagavad Gîtâ*, by T. Subba Row, pp. 8, 17, 36. Bombay ; 1888.

It is in this Light that man lives, moves, and has his being, although for many earth-lives that Light is, too often, but darkness to him until his spiritual eyes are open. The whole teaching of the *Fratres Lucis* was to try to make man step out from the darkness of the sense-life into his heritage, the Light of spiritual life. The same writer says, *op. cit.*, p. 17: "Bear in mind also that the one energy which works out the whole process of evolution is that Light of the Logos which is diffused through all these principles and all their manifestations." . . . "This Light, moreover, manifests itself as consciousness."

This, then, is the Light to the understanding of which the Knights of Light were leading their students. The ultimate goal is also hinted at in this last ceremony in the words already quoted. "Now thou drawest near to the barrier which—if God permits—being enlightened by the Light, thou thyself wilt pass."

What is the "barrier" to which the approach is so supremely difficult? Once again the clue is given by T. Subba Row. When speaking of the Logos he says, *op. cit.*, p. 8: "It is the one great mystery in the Cosmos, with reference to which all the initiations and all the systems of philosophy have been devised." This, then, was the Mystery hinted at constantly throughout the various ceremonies through which the students passed, from step to step, from light to light, guided by the Teachers at the back, through whose initiative the Society was formed and founded. "This Light of the Logos is the bond of union and brotherhood which maintains the chain of spiritual intercourse and sympathy running through the long succession of the great hierophants of Egypt, and extending to all the great adepts of this world who derive their influx of spiritual life from the same source."*

The links stretch backward far into the night of time, but the evidence of the links stands unbroken and unshaken as it comes out to the light of knowledge. T. Subba Row rings out for us the same spiritual note that was struck by the Knights

* *The Theosophist*, August, 1886, p. 705; in Subba Row's review of *The Idyll of the White Lotus*, under the signature "The Solar Sphinx."

of Light for the students of their time. Thus is the old story once more re-told.

Students will remember that the Light condenses from plane to plane, and that the careful study of the planes is of the utmost importance for us. Its connection with us is given by Ârya-saṅgha as follows: "That which is neither Spirit nor Matter, neither Light nor Darkness, but is verily the container and root of these, that thou art. The Root projects at every Dawn its shadow on Itself, and that shadow thou callest Light and Life, O poor dead Form. (This) Life-Light streameth downward through the stairway of the seven worlds, the stairs of which each step becomes denser and darker. It is of this seven-times-seven scale that thou art the faithful climber and mirror, O little Man. Thou art this, but thou knowest it not."*

ISABEL COOPER-OAKLEY.

THE EXISTENCE OF THE SOUL

PROBLEMS OF RELIGION. II

(CONTINUED FROM VOL. XXII., p. 535)

LET us next consider the problem concerning the existence of the soul, entering a region where the pinions of thought flag less than in that where they essayed to soar into the existence of God. Men ask, "Is there a soul?" "I am a soul," answers the spiritually enlightened philosopher. But how can we make this answer effective for the thousands of educated men and women who to-day doubt the very existence of the soul?

Let it be clearly understood from the outset that their doubt is not the outcome of a wish to doubt, still less of a desire to live licentiously—as some bigoted folks imagine; it arises from the play of the mind on facts around them, and from the exigencies of an intellect that they cannot honestly escape; they cannot accept ideas about the soul that appear to them to be illogical

* H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, iii. 513.

and imbecile, and prefer to grope in the twilight of Agnosticism rather than be false to their conception of truth. And verily such scepticism is nearer the kingdom of God than the easy-going repetition of a formula that is not the expression of the speaker's thought. It is the fashion among many religious people to speak harshly of unbelief; they have never faced the problems which the unbeliever has faced and has tried to solve. They have never endured the bitterness of despair that overwhelms the mind and heart ere the man who has once believed can say that he believes no longer, and that in the deeper loyalty to truth he must surrender loyalty to creed. No one who has passed through that storm, who has entered into that darkness, can ever again feel aught but keenest sympathy with those who are enveloped in it and who prefer the nakedness of unbelief to the soiled garments of dishonesty. To every such soul, loyal to truth in this life or in any other, the sun shall arise in the darkness; to every soul that refuses a light it knows to be false, and would rather live in the darkness than accept it, shall come the light of knowledge and faith conjoined; it matters little whether in this brief span of life it come or not, provided that under all stress of unbelief the soul remains loyal to truth and to righteousness and keeps unstained its faith in virtue and its love to man.

In seeking to help such as these to solve the problem of the existence of the soul, it is useless to adduce metaphysical arguments, for these have been tried and rejected; it is useless to appeal to an intuition which for the time is clouded, and the voice of which has been disregarded as likely to be mistaken. We must meet the sceptic on the only ground that for the time being he recognises as secure, and submit certain elementary arguments based on experiment; these, while they will not prove the existence of the soul—that will come at a later stage—will carry the student into the position of acknowledging a super-physical consciousness, a consciousness not dependent for its activity on the normal physical conditions, but in direct conflict with them. The first difficulty that we have to surmount is the idea that the consciousness normally working in the brain is dependent upon that brain for its existence, that thought is the

result of nervous activity and cannot work apart from it. To overcome this difficulty we need not prove the existence of the soul, with all the wide connotations of that word; by leading the student to prove for himself that consciousness can function despite the paralysis of its physical organ and outside physical limitations of time and space, we enable him to reach a position where other lines of proof will lie open before him, and he can take these up one after the other till he finds himself face to face with the knowledge of the soul.

The first step is to see that the consciousness of a man includes much that is not normally present in his waking hours, and that there are many "layers of consciousness" that emerge from obscurity when the avenues of the senses are closed and the outer world is excluded. Further, that the more complete the exclusion, the larger appears to be the content of consciousness. The action of consciousness when the body is sleeping may form the first object of study. A first idea of the range of this study may be gathered from such works as Du Prel's *Philosophy of Mysticism*, and Sully's *Illusions, Delusions, and Hallucinations*. Dreams should be classified (see Leadbeater's *Dreams*), and special note should be taken of cases where authors obtain suggestions and plots in dream, as R. L. Stevenson with *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*; his own account of his "Brownies" may be read with advantage. Many people can solve problems asleep that baffle them awake, and the student might on this head experiment on himself. The extreme rapidity of dream-consciousness should be studied, the succession of states of consciousness enormously exceeding in speed any rate of vibration of which physical nervous matter is capable. The curious results of suggestion during sleep may be tried, resulting in the proof that conduct may be controlled by a part of the consciousness which does not show itself during waking hours.

From sleep the student may pass to the consideration of abnormal conditions resembling it in the exclusion of the outer world, such as trance, delirium, and the excitation of consciousness sometimes preceding death. Mozart and Tennyson bear witness to a state familiar to each of them, transcending the normal and setting at naught its limits of time; from this state

Mozart brought back some of his noblest inspirations. Drowning men, brought back to waking consciousness, have testified to having seen, as in a picture, the whole of their past lives. Dying men have been recorded as speaking languages forgotten since childhood, and babbling of minute incidents of the past long sponged from the slate of waking memory. As we come face to face with these facts consciousness insensibly changes its aspect, and we see a vast ocean surrounding us, only a little of which trickles through our brains. Nothing seems to be lost; it is pushed out of the brain by a stream of fresh impressions, but is not allowed to drift out of reach. It is somewhere in that ocean of consciousness that is ours, and yet not ours, that we must explore.

The trance condition may be most closely studied through mesmerism and hypnotism, and it is not necessary to enter here into a detailed examination of the experiments which may be studied in standard works and reverified by personal observation. Richet's *Études sur la Grande Hystérie*, Binet and Féré's *Animal Magnetism*, and Sinnett's *Rationale of Mesmerism*, may serve as a commencement, the last named book giving plentiful references to other works. It will suffice here to summarise the facts: suggestion can cause and prevent physical lesions, as burns and blisters; it can make the senses respond to objects that exist only in thought, and dead to objects that normally stimulate them—as seeing and feeling an object where none is physically present, and seeing only empty space where a physical body is standing; it can transfer a disease from one side of the body to the other, and from one person to another, and can heal it altogether; it can impose at will the feeling of pleasure, pain, horror, wrath, love, hatred; it can make an honest person steal, a kind person cruel; it can wipe out memory, and do a myriad other things beside. That is, an outside consciousness can take possession of a brain and work it for its own ends, the real owner being meanwhile ejected. Further, in trance the real owner may show himself far more fully than he does when normally working through the brain; memory is intensified both as to past events and present adhesive capacity; reason becomes keener and subtler; imagination takes flights it cannot reach

when clogged in nervous matter ; power of expression appears and the halting tongue is eloquent ; latent faculty awakens and a factory girl rivals Jenny Lind. Nay, physical boundaries are transcended, and the entranced person diagnoses internal disease, the diagnosis being later confirmed by *post-mortem* investigation ; or he sees what is occurring hundreds of miles away, he reports a conversation held at a far distance. Space fails me even to summarise the facts, but this matters not, for the student must read, must investigate for himself, in order that the force of the ever-accumulating evidence may play on his own mind, forcing him to the conclusion that but a small part of consciousness expresses itself through the brain.

Very important—but also very scanty—are the results obtained by hypnotising lunatics. Cases are on record in which, in the trance condition, the lunatic became sane, returning to his normal lunacy when he emerged from trance—or, as I should say, when he again began to try to function through the imperfect instrument of his brain. It is difficult to imagine more definite evidence that the brain is but the instrument of the waking consciousness than that obtained along this line, and it is much to be desired that doctors in charge of lunatics should collect facts in relation to them under the influence of mesmerism or hypnotism.

The student should next study the evidence for the appearance of “the double” apart from the physical body, the “phantasms of the living” as they have been called. Messrs. Gurney and Myers’ work on this subject will serve as starting-point, and each may collect evidence on this head for himself from his own circle of acquaintances. A few will find that they can themselves reach distant friends in this way by an effort of the will, but the experience will be rare. But if human evidence is to be held as worth anything, the fact that phantasms of the living do appear can be put beyond doubt, and this means that consciousness can function far away from the physical body which it normally uses as its instrument.

The next stage is to show that the individual consciousness, thus found able to work outside the body during “life,” survives “death.” Here the phenomena classed as “spiritualistic” have

their place as evidence, and no better work can be first studied than that in which Sir William Crookes records his own investigations. Any sincere and patient investigator may convince himself by personal experiment of the fact of individual survival, and apart from all *séances* and formal seekings there is evidence and to spare of volunteered communications, visible and audible, from those who had passed "beyond the veil" but for some reason strove to reach again their friends in the flesh.

When in this way a strong *primâ facie* case, to say the least, has been established for the separability of consciousness from its physical organ and for its survival after the death of that organ, the student may be willing to submit himself to the training and the discipline necessary to obtain a true knowledge of the soul's existence. The way of meditation, reaching the higher consciousness, is the path he must now tread, and he cannot be expected to enter on it until he thinks that there is a possibility of gaining the knowledge he seeks. The process is toilsome and laborious, and demands long perseverance ere much apparent progress is made; but scores upon scores, nay, hundreds upon hundreds, of men and women have pursued it both in the past and in the present, and they bear witness to the results obtained by it. If complete control be gained over the mind, so that it can be directed unswervingly on a single point, and then, dropping that point, can remain poised and steady, the brain still, the senses asleep, then there arises above the horizon of the mind another kind of consciousness, recognised by the thinker as himself, but as himself in a higher condition of being. As he rises into this condition his powers suddenly enlarge, limitations vanish, a new and keener, subtler life pulses through him, he seems thought rather than thinker. Problems that puzzled him offer their solutions; questions that were unanswerable are answered simply and clearly; difficulties have vanished; all is luminous.

Does any one say that this state is a mere day-dream, in which the dreamer is at the mercy of his imagination? Surely the evidence of those who have experienced it is more valuable than the assertions of those who have never reached it, and their testimony is unvarying and covers thousands of years. This is

one of the methods that has been pursued in the East for uncounted generations, and this practice has developed not mere dreamers, not mere poets—if poets are to be despised by scientists—but some of the keenest metaphysicians, the profoundest philosophers, that humanity has yet produced. The mighty literature of India—to say nothing of the sacred books of other lands—bears witness to its efficacy, for the writers of the noblest Indian works were men of meditation. It is not the view of the enthusiast only, but the view of many of the keenest minds in Europe, that Indian thinkers offer solutions of psychological problems and theories of man and thought that deserve the most respectful consideration and the most careful study. Meditation, as the way to transcending mere brain consciousness, is recommended not only by the mystic but by the metaphysician, by intellects that plunge into the Ocean of Existence and swim where the majority drown. By it may be obtained the knowledge that man is a consciousness transcending physical conditions, and only when that consciousness is reached can the existence of the soul be proved by way of the intellect.

There is another way, the way of devotion, that reaches the goal attained by way of the intellect, and for many of us that way is more attractive, that road is more readily trodden. In that our meditation is directed to an Object adored and loved, and the passion of the soul for that high spiritual Being burns away every sheath that separates it from the object of its worship, until in union with Him it finds the certainty of its own immortality, knowing itself as self-existent since one with the One who is life. Then knowledge replaces faith, and the devotee, like the philosopher, knows himself eternal.

ANNIE BESANT.

THE CROSS

MOST of us were brought up in the belief that the cross was an exclusively Christian symbol, and it may be that there are still some people left who hold to that view. If so, it is of course simply because it has never occurred to them to investigate the question; for if they took up the matter and examined the evidence they could not fail to be struck with the remarkable universality of the use of this sign.

An exhaustive catalogue of the places in which the cross occurs before the Christian era would make a respectable book in itself, but in glancing over some of the modern works on the subject I see that evidence is adduced of its use in one or other of its forms in ancient Egypt, at Nineveh, among the Phœnicians at Gozzo, among the Etruscans and the prehistoric race who inhabited Italy before the Etruscans arrived, upon the pottery of the primitive lake-dwellers, amid the ruins of Palenque, in the earliest remains yet discovered of ancient Peru, India, China, Japan, Corea, Tibet, Babylonia, Assyria, Chaldæa, Persia, Phœnicia, Armenia, Algeria, Ashanti, Cyprus, Rhodes, and among the prehistoric inhabitants of Britain, France, Germany and America—a list which, partial and incomplete as it is, might well astonish the advocates of the exclusively Christian theory of the cross which prevailed in the days of our youth.

The only form of this symbol which is generally associated with Egypt is the *crux ansata*, or handled cross, but it is quite a mistake to suppose that the ancient inhabitants of Khem were unacquainted with the other varieties, for both Greek, Latin and Maltese crosses, as well as representations of the svastika, are to be found among the relics that they have left to us. I had the pleasure in 1884 of going over the museum of Egyptian antiqui-

ties at Boulak in the company of Madame Blavatsky and under the guidance of its learned curator, M. Maspero, and I well remember the interest with which I noticed among the contents of a case of trinkets attributed to one of the very earliest dynasties several beautifully cut cornelian representations of the cross rising out of the heart, exactly similar to the little charms of that shape which might be bought at a Catholic shop in London in the nineteenth century.

The most widely-spread of the derivatives of the simple cross is perhaps the svastika, which is to be found, I believe, in every one of the countries mentioned above. It has been generally supposed to be identical with the hammer of Thor, but there seems good reason to believe that the latter sign was originally made simply in the shape of the letter T. At any rate it is certain that when, as King Olaf was keeping Christmas at Drontheim,

O'er his drinking-horn the sign
He made of the cross divine
As he drank, and muttered his prayers,
But the Berserks evermore
Made the sign of the hammer of Thorr
Over theirs—

they were in reality using symbols practically identical. The svastika also appears occasionally in later Christian symbolism; for example, it may be seen ornamenting the hem of the chasuble of a mediæval bishop in a fine full-length figure sculptured upon one of the tombs in Winchester Cathedral.

The Theosophical student will of course avoid the mistake, so often made by the more superficial observer, of confusing the meaning of all these various forms of the cross symbol. Each of them—the Greek, the Latin, the Maltese, the Tau, the Svastika—has its own particular signification, and is by no means to be confounded with any other, as will presently be seen.

There is one particularly gross delusion, unhappily widely prevalent in connection with this subject, from which we ought definitely to clear our minds before we can hope to consider it with profit—and that is the delusion of phallicism. Many writers appear to be absolutely obsessed by this unclean idea, and can

see nothing but phallic emblems in all the holiest symbols of antiquity; whether it be the cross, the triangle, the circle, the pyramid, the obelisk, the dâgoba, or the lotus, to their prurient imagination it can have but one obscene signification.

Happily occult investigation assures us (as indeed common sense would naturally suggest even without such aid) that this unpleasant theory of the origin of all religion is absolutely devoid of foundation. In every case yet examined it has been found that in the earlier and purer stages of any faith none but the spiritual meaning was ever thought of in connection with its various symbols, and that where creation was suggested it was always the creation of ideas by the divine mind. Wherever on the other hand phallic emblems and ceremonies of an indecent nature are found to be associated with a religion, it may be taken as a sure sign of the degeneracy of that religion—an indication that at any rate in the country where such emblems and practices may be seen, the pristine purity of the faith has been lost and its spiritual power is rapidly passing away.

Never under any circumstances are the phallicism and the indecency part of the original conception of a great religion, and the modern theory—that all symbols had primarily some obscene meaning in the minds of the savages who invented them, and that as in the course of ages a nation evolved to a higher level it became ashamed of these cruder ideas and invented far-fetched spiritual interpretations to veil their immodesty—is exactly the reverse of the truth. The great spiritual truth always comes first, and it is only after long years, when that has been forgotten, that a degenerate race endeavours to attach a grosser signification to its symbols.

Putting aside then all later misrepresentations, what meaning was originally conveyed by the world-wide symbol of the cross? Part at any rate of the answer is given to us by Madame Blavatsky herself in the Proem to *The Secret Doctrine*, when she describes the signs impressed upon the successive leaves of a certain archaic manuscript. It will be remembered that first of all there is the plain white circle which is understood to typify the Absolute; in that appears the central spot, the sign that the First Logos has entered upon a cycle of activity; the spot

broadens into a line dividing the circle into two parts, thus symbolizing the dual aspect of the Second Logos as male-female, God-man, spirit-matter ; and then, to show the next stage, this dividing line is crossed by another, and we have the hieroglyph of the Third Logos, called in Christian parlance God the Holy Ghost, the Lord, the Life-giver.

But all these symbols, be it noted, are still within the circle, and so are emblems of different stages in the unfolding of the Triple Logos—not as yet of His manifestation. When in the fulness of time He prepares for this further descent, the symbol changes, usually in one or other of two ways. Sometimes the circle falls away altogether, and we have then the even-armed Greek cross as the sign of the Third Logos at the commencement of a mahâkalpa, or great cycle, with His creative power held in readiness for exercise, but not as yet exercised.

Along this line of symbolism the next step is the svastika, which always implies motion—the creative power in activity ; for the lines added at right angles to the arms of the cross are supposed to represent flames streaming backwards as the cross whirls round, and thus they doubly indicate the eternal activity of the Universal Life, first by the ceaseless outpouring of the fire from the centre through the arms, and secondly by the rotation of the cross itself. Another method of expressing the same idea is seen in the Maltese cross, in which the arms ever widening out as they recede from the centre once more typify the divine energy spreading itself forth in every direction of space.

Sometimes instead of dropping the circle altogether the cross simply extends itself outside it. Then we get the equal-armed cross with the small circle in the midst of it, and in the next stage that circle blossoms forth into the rose—another well-known life-emblem—and so we have the familiar symbol from which the Rosicrucians take their name. Again, the cross not only bears the mystic rose in its centre, but itself becomes rosy in colour, showing that that which is poured out from it and through it is ever the fire of the divine love.

Naturally the great occult rule, “As above, so below,” holds good in this connection also, and with very slight variation these symbols may be, and sometimes are, employed to indicate

much lower stages of evolution; hence Madame Blavatsky's reference to the various races of men in her explanation of them. One can easily see how out of a misunderstanding of this lower interpretation, and its association at one stage with the separation of the sexes, the unsavoury ideas of phallicism would take their rise. Indeed, the knowledge of the true meaning of the Greek cross seems to have been lost to public view at a very early period; its connection with the Third Logos has remained for ages known to occultists only, and superficial students have almost invariably confused it with the Latin cross of the Second Logos, the derivation of which in reality is entirely different.

Writing some months ago on the Christian Creed I explained how, in tracing back to its origin the well-known symbol of the crucifix, we had expected to find the figure disappear, leaving us what we supposed to be the still earlier cross-symbol. As a matter of fact exactly the reverse took place; the cross disappeared, and the figure with uplifted arms remained, typifying the Divine Man standing in space with arms upraised in blessing, pouring forth freely of Himself in every direction. That even the early Christian Church had some tradition of this seems to be shown by the fact that in the paintings in the catacombs at Rome we frequently find just such a figure as this, with arms uplifted in the peculiar manner indicated, standing in the midst of the twelve apostles, exactly where the figure of the Christ would naturally be expected. This is generally spoken of as the "orante" or praying figure; it has sometimes been supposed to be feminine, and has given rise, I believe, to considerable speculation among ecclesiastical archæologists, but the most natural explanation of it appears to me to be that which I have suggested above.

Even when the cross was added to this figure to represent the further descent of the Logos into matter, there was still no shadow of a suggestion of pain or suffering in connection with it—only of a certain binding down and limitation; and this much at least of the truth is now beginning to be understood by even the Christian investigators, for in an article by H. Marucchi, the well-known Catholic archæologist, in the new

dictionary of the Abbé Vigoroux, the writer refers to the fifth-century gate of Santa Sabina at Rome and to an ivory of the same date in the British Museum as the oldest known examples of the crucifix, and says, "It is to be remarked that the Christ is here represented as still living, with the eyes open and without any mark of physical suffering."

He goes on to say that in the sixth century the crucifix is more frequent, but still the figure is always living and clothed in a long tunic, and that it is only in the twelfth century that "they cease to represent the Christ as living and triumphant on the cross." He seems to think that the new school of painting of Cimabue and Giotto is to a large extent responsible for the change.

The Latin cross, therefore, is always to be regarded as the symbol of the second Logos, and must be carefully distinguished from the Greek cross, which in its various forms signifies the different stages of the work of the Third. Something has previously been said as to the function of each of these divine Powers in the formation of the solar system, so that it will not be necessary here to do more than briefly recapitulate. It is the first great outpouring from the Third Logos—the Holy Ghost, the Life-giver—which vitalizes and energizes the virgin matter of the cosmos, and so brings into existence out of the original atomic ether what chemists call the elements.

Into this matter, thus vivified, and therefore no longer virgin or unproductive, descends the second great outpouring, which comes from the Second Logos, God the Son, who thus becomes *σαρκωθέντα ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου καὶ Μαρίας τῆς παρθένου*—incarnate of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary. When this second outpouring reaches the physical plane in the shape of what we have sometimes called the mineral monad, it gives to the various chemical elements the power of combination, and thus the way is prepared for the other and higher manifestations of life which are to follow in the later kingdoms.

Now it is obvious that with such exceedingly fragmentary knowledge of all these wonderful operations as we at present possess, and with the further disadvantage of looking at them all from so low a plane, examining all their action as it were

from below instead of from above, any ideas which even the wisest of us may form as to the real working of the great scheme must necessarily be so incomplete that they may well be hopelessly misleading, and unless put forward with due reservation and modesty they would be only too likely to be blasphemous as well. Yet it seems to me that, in such examination as is possible for us of this marvellous complexity of evolution, we get here and there glimpses of a part of its plan—hints which we can test by applying them to different levels of this process of development.

Here, for example, we seem to see clearly in action the broad principle of first of all generating a certain set of elements, and endowing them with so much of stability, and as it were individuality, that under all ordinary conditions of temperature and pressure they maintain their position as separate entities ; while as a later and distinctly higher stage of their evolution there is developed within them the capability of and the desire for union. It is impossible not to be reminded, by this rough outline of evolution in the mineral kingdom, of the statement that the Logos Himself has become manifest only in order that from Him might emanate an immense multitude of individuals who, when they have become sufficiently separated to be each a living and powerful centre, shall rise again towards perfect union and realize their oneness in Him.

Even when we turn to examine the individual development of man, we may still see the same principle working. After man as an individual with a causal body has definitely come into existence, the whole force of his environment seems to be directed to the evolution in him of manas, the discriminative and separative faculty, which in him as the microcosm distinctly corresponds with Mahat, the universal Mind or the Holy Spirit, in the macrocosm. Much later comes the development of the buddhi, the faculty of combining and unifying, which may be taken as in many ways corresponding with the Second Logos in the wider world. Indeed, incomprehensible though the statement may be, hopeless as would be any effort to explain it, it is in reality true that the principles in man which we call âtman, buddhi, manas, are not merely correspondences, not

merely even reflections or rays of the Three Great Logoi, but are somehow in very truth themselves those glorious entities, uncreate, incomprehensible, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Thus we see that the two crosses, the Latin and the Greek, may quite fitly be used (and often *are* used), as symbols of certain stages in the development of the individual man, or even as significant of certain principles in him. Sometimes also they are used in reference to the stages of world-evolution, for there also we find the same general law holding good. In it also so far the action has been chiefly creative and separative, chiefly concerned with the development of manas, and we have scarcely as yet even the dawn of the unfolding of the buddhi, the great unifying power which is truly the Christ in man.

Here and there we see one man who shows a little of its influence—here and there faint indications of what is to come may be discerned by those who know how to read the signs of the times. Nay, it may even be that some of the most terrible features of our social condition, evil though they are in their results, evil in their organization because so hopelessly marred by the selfishness and ignorance (and the blind hatred of every one wiser and better than themselves) which are always shown by their promoters, may yet in all their iniquity have this much dim reflection of a hope behind them, that they may perchance be the first blind and misdirected gropings of the uninstructed after the true unity that is one day to come, though by means the very opposite to those which are now employed.

We must remember that after all we have but just passed the turning-point of the whole system of evolution—but just entered upon the mighty upward sweep which is to end in divinity. We are still in the fourth round—the round properly speaking devoted to the development of kâma and the astral body—and the fact that we find ourselves possessed of manas at all at this stage of the proceedings is due almost entirely to the help and stimulation given to our humanity by the advent of the great Lords of the Flame at a period which is after all comparatively recent. The full development of manas even is not due until the next round, so that surely the merest foretaste of

the stupendous power of buddhi is all that we can expect for a very long time yet.

Still nature is slowly moving forward towards that stage, and the future is with those who even now will recognize that fact and work for it—who will strive in every possible way to help forward the unifying principle, to break down the barriers of distrust and hatred which unfortunately so often exist between class and class, between nation and nation. That indeed is truly Theosophical work, the work of our Masters—work in which it is the greatest of privileges to be allowed to join.

And indeed this symbol of the cross may be to us as a touchstone to distinguish the good from the evil in many of the difficulties of life. “Only those actions through which shines the light of the cross are worthy of the life of the disciple,” says one of the verses in a book of occult maxims; and it is interpreted to mean that all that the aspirant does should be prompted by the fervour of self-sacrificing love. The same thought appears in a later verse: “When one enters the path, he lays his heart upon the cross; when the cross and the heart have become one, then hath he reached the goal.” So, perchance, we may measure our progress by watching whether selfishness or sacrifice is dominant in our lives.

While we cannot but recoil with horror from all the terrible and indeed blasphemous ideas associated by the orthodox with the thought of crucifixion, we may yet gratefully recognize in the sign of the cross a constant reminder of the ineffable self-sacrifice of the Logos—of the enormous patience with which His almighty power bears with all limitations, in order that in the slow progress of their development these manifold forms which He takes may be gradually expanded and yet may not too soon be broken, so that each of them may be serviceable to the uttermost.

It may serve to remind us also that man himself is thus crucified, if he did but know it; and that if he knows it not, it is because the living soul, the true Christ within him, is still blindly identifying himself with the cross of matter to which he is bound. It may help us to realize that our bodies, whether physical, astral or mental, are not ourselves, and that whenever

we find as it were two selves warring within us we have to remember that we are in truth the higher, and not the lower—the Christ and not the cross.

It should tell us, too, that all true sacrifice must be like that of the Logos—a willing sacrifice ; that as long as any thought of pain is connected with it, the sacrifice is not complete ; as long as a man is forcing himself to do what he would rather not do, he is but on the way to the fulfilling of the great eternal law of Yagña. But when he gives himself fully and freely, forgetting all pain or trouble, forgetting himself altogether in the work that he has to do, giving himself to it because having once seen its glory and its beauty he can do no other than give himself—then, and then only, is his sacrifice one with that of the Logos ; then, and then only, has he truly signed himself with the sign of the cross of the eternal Christ.

C. W. LEADBEATER.

THE MAORI TRINITY

IT is a matter worthy of note, that the remnants of a belief in a Primal Trinity exist among many savage tribes. The belief is found in so striking a form among the Maoris, that I have thought it might be of interest to draw attention to it.

Not only do we find a trinity but also among certain Maori tribes there is a legend of duality. Heaven and earth are originally joined together, being torn apart by their children, the gods of the elements. This belief has been greatly ridiculed by Europeans, but students of Theosophy will perceive that the legend simply indicates the duality of Spirit-Matter, to which we are accustomed to refer as Spirit *and* Matter, Life *and* Form.

The belief as to a trinity is found upon the island of Mangaia, and the Rev. W. Gill,* who was for twenty-two years a missionary among the Mangaian people, gives a most interesting account of the tradition. It is fair to say that Mr. Feather-

* *Myths and Songs from the Southern Pacific.* London ; 1876.

man* throws doubt upon the antiquity of the belief. He holds that some "educated native," willing to please the missionary, must have, in recent years, written down some "mystical metaphysical nonsense." Mr. Featherman is strongly prejudiced, and writes with marked bias. He rejects all missionary testimony. He is not prepared to give any evidence of the correctness of his assertion; at least, he does not give any, but apparently bases it upon the inherent improbability of such a belief originating with the uninstructed Mangaian.

On the other hand, the Mangaian cosmogony is unlike anything which a Christian missionary would be likely to teach his flock. Mr. Gill states that he has specially guarded against colouring the traditions; and Professor Max Müller, in his Preface to Mr. Gill's work, remarks upon the great care which the author has taken to avoid error, and to present a candid and unbiassed account.

According to Mangaian legend then, there exists what might fairly be termed an archetypal world called Avaiki. It is the hollow of a huge cocoa-nut shell, which is supported by a gradually tapering stem. Within this shell are the lands of the first hierarchy of Gods, who are six in number, exclusive of the mother whence they proceed. The eldest God, Vātea, is represented as being half a fish, and the sun is termed his eye. It may be remembered that the fish symbolism is widely spread; also that, in Egypt, the sun was called the eye of Osiris.

In the archetypal world Mangaia was formed before being dragged into daylight by the God Maui, who was assisted by his two brothers. Though Mangaia is now in the light of day, yet it also exists in the archetypal world; all that occurs on earth being a mere echo of that which is taking place in Avaiki, *i.e.*, the cocoa-nut shell.

But my concern is, for the present, with the Mangaian trinity. The stem, supporting the shell which contains the homes of the Gods, is the abode of three formless spirits, named as follows: First, Te-akaia Roê, who occupies the thinnest portion of the stem, and sustains the fabric of the universe; the

* *Social Hist. of the Races of Mankind.* London; 1881, etc.

name of this spirit is, according to Mr. Gill, intended to convey the idea of a quivering Point, at which existence begins. Second, Te-tangaengae, whose name signifies Breathing. Third, Te-manavaroa, or the Long-lived. It will be observed that the names of the first and second persons of this trinity convey the idea of Motion. The first name appears to indicate a conception kindred to that of the Point in the Circle. In the second name also we perceive the idea of Motion or Breath; while the third person is not the Eternal, but the Long-lived; the Evolver of the matter which endures throughout the world-cycle.

The conception of Motion is inseparable from the Maori trinity, and it will be remembered that in *The Secret Doctrine** it is stated that: "Motion is eternal in the Unmanifested, and periodical in the Manifest."

Next to the stem presided over by the trinity, is a "woman," the great Mother, whose name indicates "The Very Beginning," from whose body proceed Vātea and the first hierarchy of Gods.† All this, it must be remembered, is represented as taking place before the appearance of Mangaia, and before the creation of beasts and men.

It may be of interest to point out, in conclusion, that these people have their "Mysteries" and an esoteric teaching imparted by the priesthood. Mr. Gill managed to learn the nature of some of these teachings; at least he became acquainted with certain tales, which, it was asserted, formed part of the priestly instruction. These were evidently parables; they breathed a spirit very unlike that which one would expect to find among a people whose social customs were such as many of those attributed to the Mangaians. These parables are well worth consideration, but my subject being the Maori trinity, I must refrain from embarking on the discussion of this department of Maori tradition. I cannot but believe that the reader, especially if he or she be a student of Theosophy, will agree with me in thinking that the existence of this system of theogony and cosmogony among the Maoris is a fact worthy of attention. When viewed in conjunction

* Vol. i., p. 124. Note.

† In Raratongo her name means Mud, Chaos of Mud ("Prolific Slime"). See *Secret Doctrine*, i. 110.

with the universal teaching as to a trinity, found in the recognised faiths of the world, it affords further evidence, if evidence be needed, of an original Source whence flow all systems of religion found among present-day humanity. Mr. Gill tells us that the heathen intellect has no conception of a Supreme Being creating a Universe out of nothing; the primary conception of such an intellect is a point, then something pulsating, next something everlasting. (I quote Mr. Gill.) For my own part, while entirely disagreeing with the general conclusions of Mr. Featherman, I must admit that I fully perceive the justice of his contention as to the utter improbability, if not impossibility, of such a symbolism and conception of creation having originated with uninstructed people, at a low stage of culture.

I. HOOPER.

THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITIES

THE next Convention of the Indian Section is to be held at Benares, on October 26th, 27th and 28th. It promises to be a notable gathering; besides the President-Founder and Mrs. Besant, there are to be present the Countess Wachtmeister, Miss Lilian Edger, Dr. Richardson, Dr. Pascal of Toulon, France, and Mr. Bertram Keightley.

WE have received the report of the Buddhist Schools in the island under the management of the Colombo Theosophical Society.

These schools give education to close on ten thousand boys and girls, and though they earn a government grant it is by no means sufficient for expenses. The Annual Fancy Bazaar in aid of these schools will be held in December, and any contribution in the way of articles or money will be thankfully received and forwarded to Ceylon by Mr. C. W. Leadbeater, if sent to 19, Avenue Road, London, N.W.

THE lecture list of the various English and foreign Lodges shows that work has been resumed. During September five lectures have

been given in the Blavatsky Lodge, London.
 Europe Mr. J. C. Chatterji, on the eve of starting for his winter's work in America, spoke on the *Gunas*, under the title "Threads of the World-Web." Mr. Leadbeater gave

a most interesting description of "The Religion of Chaldæa," on September 8th, sketching the elaborate ceremonies connected with the star worship of the ancient Chaldæans. On September 15th and 22nd, Mr. Mead gave two lectures on "Hermes, the Thrice Greatest." A translation of the *Shepherd of Men*, by the lecturer, was read to the Lodge with explanations showing its agreements with other theosophic accounts of cosmogenesis and anthropogenesis and with man's ascent to his divine source. Mr. Cuffe's lecture on September 29th, on "Mystical Mohammedanism," was a useful contribution to the elucidation of a most necessary link of theosophic heredity.

From Sweden we learn that three of Mrs. Besant's books have been translated into Swedish, viz., *The Ancient Wisdom, In the Outer Court*, and *Four Great Religions*. Mrs. Besant's recent lectures on Esoteric Christianity have also been translated. At the Scandinavian Convention of 1898 the number of members on the rolls was 471 against 321 the year before. A correspondent sends us the following interesting account of the Countess Wachtmeister's recent lecturing tour.

"The Countess Wachtmeister has been very busy in Sweden this autumn. She arrived at Gothenburg about the 15th of July, and found most of the Lodge dispersed for their summer vacation. Nevertheless a packed meeting was held at the rooms of the Lodge, where an informal talk was given by the Countess. There is a great deal of interest in Theosophy in Gothenburg, and the Lodge is the strongest in Sweden. Then the Countess enjoyed a much-needed rest of five weeks by the beautiful lake of Siljan in Dalecartia, and Theosophical activities were suspended for a while, with the exception of a short cycling tour, which Count Axel Wachtmeister made along the muddy roads of Dalecartia to a place called Wåmhus, where he lectured to a number of the sturdy men and women of Dalecartia, the most independent and perhaps the most intellectual people in Sweden. The Count was besieged with a number of questions, which showed how naturally the people took to the metaphysics of Theosophy. It was interesting to note that among the audience were several schoolmasters and mistresses; even some of the clergy are highly interested.

"About September 1st the Countess Wachtmeister started on a lecturing tour to the northern provinces of Sweden. She first visited Luleå, a shipping town in the northernmost part of the Baltic. Here there is a flourishing Lodge of the Theosophical Society, and

the Countess gave her first lecture in Swedish, by no means an easy task, as she had not spoken the language for six years. However, the lecture was very well received by the public and the press. The next place visited was Boden, the terminus of the 'Great Northern Railway,' a growing village of a couple of thousand people, where the houses are scattered pell-mell all over the place, like an American frontier town.

"An audience of workmen and miners, about 140, were crammed into the small hall and listened very attentively to the lecture. Next day the Countess went south, but her son remained and gave another lecture in the same locality to a crowded audience, and the following day he and Mr. N. af Ekenstam, Vice-President of the Luleå Lodge, went by rail to Gellivare, the great mining centre of Lapland. There two lectures were given, one by the Count and the other by Mr. Ekenstam, and it was surprising to find what a great interest was aroused, especially among the mining population. All the books that were brought for sale were purchased at once, and many more were ordered. As a result of the lecture the nucleus of a library was formed and also a class for study, the first above the Polar circle.

"At Boden a class was also formed and a library. The Countess Wachtmeister visited Sollifteå, Hernosand and Sundsvall, and at each of these places her lectures were very well attended, and many intelligent questions asked at the meetings for discussion.

"At Sundsvall the Countess lectured in the Town Hall—a most beautiful place—to an audience of about five hundred. At Sollifteå and Sundsvall there are good working lodges, and in Hernosand, a very conservative town, a Lodge will probably soon be formed. The greatest interest was, however, shown in the prospering town of Gefle. On the whole the north of Sweden is a most promising field for the teachings of Theosophy, the people seem to take to them naturally in a very broad-minded spirit. The month of September is not a very favourable one for Theosophical work in Stockholm, most people still being in the country, and the two lectures in English which the Countess gave in the Hall of the Musical Academy were not very well attended. The Countess remained a week in Stockholm, receiving every day at the headquarters of the Society, and on two evenings she spoke there in Swedish. All the lectures were favourably reported in the newspapers, and some very animated discussions took place at the Lodge rooms. The Countess then went to Lund

and Copenhagen *en route* for Marseilles, whence she sailed for India on September 29th."

The Copenhagen Branch holds its public meetings on the first and third Sundays in each month. The method adopted for conducting the meetings has been to read a selection from the works of the most prominent Theosophical writers, Mrs. Besant especially providing a large part of the material used. At present one of the members is translating the lectures on "Esoteric Christianity." The Countess Wachtmeister lectured on September 23rd, speaking on "Devotion in Practical Life and the Power of Prayer" to a small but interested audience. Following this the Countess held two meetings for enquirers in the Branch rooms. Miss Holmes from California also assisted the Branch in May and June.

THERE are now sixty-seven Branches in the American Section, nine new ones having been lately chartered.

America The Chicago Branch re-assembled on Wednesday evening, September 7th, for the autumn and winter session. It will continue the study of *The Ancient Wisdom* for the present until the committee appointed for the purpose arranges a detailed programme for the season. The National Committee meets on the first Saturday in every month, and now has the propaganda work for the American Section fairly well systematised.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

HOW TO BECOME A MAGICIAN

Some Philosophy of the Hermetics. (London: Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co.; 1898.)

"ISSUED by the authority of the"—a square with a circle in the middle and diagonal lines. Thus is our attention arrested by the title-page. Moreover, we are informed significantly on the same page that: "There are some who will see and seeing will perceive, others will understand," a statement we will not dispute, merely admitting a little envy for such privileged people, among whom we cannot be placed.

It is difficult to understand the title of this book. The "philosophy" is concealed so well that we could not miss its absence, and "the Hermetics" appear to have no connection with anything Hermetic, but are probably the mysterious body represented by the not very picturesque figure above described. They are defined as "those who could speak or *keep silent*," but nothing more illuminative is to be gathered. The book consists merely of a collection of detached scraps of essays on such subjects as faith, concentration, memory, imagination, and so forth. They are written for the most part in a rather extravagant manner, with many italics and dashes and other ornaments of printing, but so far as can be seen by a common person who is not able to "perceive" there is nothing that could not be better expressed in a simple and unpretentious manner and in a very few pages. As for the occultism of the book—well, here is a sample: "Would you be a magician, stir up the smouldering coals at your own fireside. Begin to burn. Feel your blood hot in your veins. Warm yourself with memories of sun-tinted dreams. *Pray—pray—pray* at the shrine of the Sphinx." The budding magician may obtain much more esoteric instruction of the same order if he has a few shillings to spare.

A. M. G.

IN THE SHADOW OF LAHORE.

Where Three Creeds Meet. By J. Campbell Oman. (London: Grant Richards; 1898. Price 3s. 6d.)

IN this story the author has endeavoured to depict "one aspect—the religious aspect—of the complex and many-sided life of the natives of

Upper India." He claims no more than this, and his pen has not been unsympathetically handled, but we would rather have phrased it that he has depicted "one aspect of the religious life of India," for although Hindu, Mohammedan and Christian appear in these pages, it is chiefly the ignorant and fanatical who are presented to our view. The thread of the narrative is slight enough; we have rather a series of pictures than a well-knit story; but the pictures are gloomy, and show life in the Punjab under a cloud of pestilence, rendered still more lurid by the curse of religious fanaticism. Two murders prompted by religious emotion are among the chief incidents of the plot, affliction descends more or less on all concerned, and the curtain falls on desolation and despair.

Clearly Mr. Oman recognises the futility of ordinary missionary enterprise, and puts his conclusion into the mouth of a missionary character who recognises that among the lower outcast classes there are alone signs of "conversion," and says: "The upper and educated classes, as far as I can see, are at present more actively hostile to Christianity than I have ever known them to be." The author also expresses through his missionary characters the conviction that India's greatest danger lies in the materialising tendencies of much of the literature and teaching which she is receiving from the West, and recognises that we are responsible for this and for the evil which may arise therefrom.

A. B. C.

BURTON AS A JEW-HATER

The Jew, the Gypsy and El Islâm. By the late Captain Sir Richard Burton. Edited with a Preface and Brief Notes by W. H. Wilkins. (London: Hutchinson & Co.; 1898.)

WHEN Lady Burton destroyed one of her husband's MSS., which was presumably to have appeared under the auspices of the Kâma Shâstra Society, and thus have made familiar to the English-reading public the worst form of oriental eroticism, she was blamed and praised. It certainly would have been better if Burton had destroyed it himself, better still if he had never devoted his talents to the translation of such a work. Of the twenty remaining MSS. of this voluminous writer we are now presented with three in *The Jew, the Gypsy, and El Islâm*, and the world would have been none the poorer if the first and last had never seen the light. *The Jew* is a bitter Anti-semitic tractate, but not so bitter as another of Burton's MSS. which Mr. Wilkins still hesitates to publish, and in which Burton roundly ac-

cuses the Jews of human sacrifice. *El Islâm* is an equally unbalanced writing which goes to the other extreme of unqualified praise of El Islâm ; both are useless to the student. *The Gypsy* is the best of the trinity, and though for the most part controversial has a basis of solid work to rest upon. Burton belonged to the age of fifty years ago when it was thought that an Eastern name could be spelled in the same paper in half a dozen different fashions, and his editor, Mr. Wilkins, has had great difficulty in deciphering many of these names. Indeed the editor does not possess the necessary scholarship for such a task and the book is full of mistakes from the first to the last page. Better to have left Burton in all his slipshod originality than to have quarter edited him. The book is very disappointing, nevertheless many will read it for the benefit of the bracing atmosphere of the great traveller's unqualified assertions, for we live in such nerveless times now-a-days that no man has any longer the courage to assert anything. Better assert a lie than be a nerveless jelly-bag. True you direct your force in the wrong direction, still you have force and live, while the jelly-bag has none and dies.

G. R. S. M.

MAGAZINES AND PAMPHLETS

COLONEL OLCOTT in "Old Diary Leaves," in *The Theosophist* for September, tells the story of his visit to an Indian astrologer, who consulted a Nadigrantham or book of prophecies, supposed to be of great age and to contain predictions connected with all who should in the future consult its possessor. Readers of *The Theosophist* for 1885 may remember an exposure of one of these worthy prophets and his mysterious book by Mr. Subba Row. Of all methods of prediction the most improbable and miraculous ever invented would appear to be that of these palm-leaf books. The prophecies which Colonel Olcott obtained, though of interest, are not very convincing. A lecture by Miss Edger, "The Finding of God," delivered on her Indian tour, follows the editor's history, and shows the characteristics of clearness and careful planning with which the lecturer has familiarised us. Dr. Hübbe Schleiden contributes a curious paper on "Cycles and Indian Chronology." The nightmare of "the first 5,000 years of Kali Yuga" supposed to end about this time, is not treated with much respect. The 5,000 years' period is said to be contrary to right Indian chronology, which may very well be true, only have we any "right" Indian chronology at all? Much information as to the huge figures which our Eastern brethren delight

in is given in the paper, and some highly speculative arithmetic indulged in. As the result we receive the astonishing news that the present year is 155,521,972,949,000 of the present Mahâ Kalpa! Among other articles are "Friends and Demons," "Further Thoughts on Contemporary National Evolution" and "Bengali Folk-Lore." The result of Colonel Olcott's work among the Pariahs will be looked forward to by many with interest.

The opening contribution in *The Dawn* is the concluding part of a lecture by Mrs. Besant, "Is Spiritual Progress Inconsistent with Material Progress?" The lecture deals with the condition of things in India, and points to the fact of the great decrease of wealth in that country as the result of introducing modern Western methods and manufactures among a people for whom they are not fitted. *Prabuddha Bhârata* appears in a new form with its third volume. The extraordinary picture on the cover has disappeared, but the printing and general get-up have by no means improved. The editor of the first two volumes died a short time ago, and the journal is consequently in new hands. Its chief contributors are Svâmi Vivekânanda and the other "Svâmis" belonging to the same order. "True Vairâjyam" is a naïve story of a recluse and his "god," to whom the recluse offers his food before eating it himself. The god does not find the food to his taste, and asks his devotee to get him something more luxurious, with the result that there is a dissolution of partnership, the recluse preferring to give up a god who is so particular. A quaint story as it is told, obviously belonging to a very rudimentary kind of cult. Unfortunately the writer seems to regard it as presenting an ideal worthy of serious consideration.

The Prashnottara gives a short catechism of Hinduism in its August issue. A work such as this might be made most valuable if carefully and accurately done. No indication is given as to whether or not it is intended to continue the catechism, but one may hope that something more will be done in this direction. A Hindu is defined as one who accepts the Vedas, the Smṛitis, the Purâṇas and the Tantras as the basis of religion. We have hitherto supposed that the Vedas only were universally accepted as the basis of belief. A very fine "definition" of Brahm or the supreme God follows a statement of the nature of the Vedas, but our reverence is somewhat disturbed when we come to the method of worshipping Brahm.

We have also received from India *The Theosophic Gleaner*, *The Light of Truth*, *The Sanmârga Bodhinî*, *The Journal of the Mahâ-Bodhi*

Society, and *The Ārya Bāla Bodhinī*, with an address to some students by Miss Edger, and from Ceylon *Rays of Light*.

In *The Vāhan* for October A. A. W. begins the "Enquirer" with a further answer on the question of Buddha's desertion of his wife and child. The mass of the "Enquirer" is made up of a long answer by G. R. S. M. on Plato's idea of reincarnation, his reply in the last issue giving rise to a further set of queries. A very curious and interesting passage is quoted from Plato's *Republic*—a vision of souls coming back to incarnation. The way in which the souls take up their "karma" for the coming life is quaintly told. Ulysses, having had enough of the heroic for a life or two, hunted in the heap from which the souls chose for an obscure private life, and "with great difficulty found one lying in a corner." C. W. L. writes on the influences that determine the race in which a man is born and on the desires which persist in the *kāma-rūpa* after its separation from the physical body.

The Revue Théosophique is supplied in this issue almost exclusively by Mr. Leadbeater and Mrs. Besant, the translations including "The Ākāshic Records," a ghost story and a *Vāhan* answer by the former, and the continuation of *Man and His Bodies* by Mrs. Besant. Madame Blavatsky's *Glossary* is continued, and a substantial piece of *The Secret Doctrine* is given at the end.

Mercury appears in a new dress, although the somewhat massive symbolic figure is retained. The colour of the cover is an improvement. With the September number the fifth volume begins, and the mere fact of a continued issue under the difficulties of a year or two back is an evidence of earnest work. A portrait and short sketch of Mrs. Davis are given. Dr. Marques contributes a paper on the aura of metals. Some account of early and recent photographic experiments with metals is presented, and the supposed "vapours" of the metals are identified with the lower metallic auras. The subject is an interesting one from either the scientific or the "occult" point of view, and now that the X rays have opened up the scientific eye to regions hitherto unknown, we may expect some systematic investigation of the less familiar properties of bodies. An address by Mr. Fullerton follows Dr. Marques' paper, the subject being universal brotherhood. As may be expected, the merely sentimental side of the question receives but scant sympathy. One of Mrs. Besant's Chicago lectures, "Clairvoyance and Mental Healing," adds to the interest of the number, and the concluding article is

an illustrated one on "Totem-Worship among the American Indians." The illustrations are good, and the paper gives some most interesting information. On the whole the first issue of the new volume is distinctly a step in advance.

The chief article in *Theosophy in Australasia* of August is by W. A. M. on "Heredity and Personal Responsibility." Following this is a short story of a very melodramatic nature, in which a man has a struggle with an astral double of another and stabs it, with the result that the blows repercuss on the physical body and kill the man.

We have received from the editor, Sydney Alrutz, Part 7 of his philosophical periodical, *I Vår Tids Lifsfrågor* (*Life Problems of Our Age*), recently published in Stockholm. The principal article is an account, by Dr. Emil Fehr, of the Religio-Scientific Congress, held in Stockholm in 1897, from August 31st to September 4th. The idea, which was suggested by the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in 1893, was to offer an opportunity for the discussion of Christian and other religions in a perfectly open manner, and more especially from a scientific standpoint. Unfortunately, however, no representatives of any non-Christian religion, except the Jewish, were present at the Congress. Bishop v. Scheele was elected president.

Papers were communicated by Max Müller (who was unable to attend personally) on the Historical Study of the Religions of the World; by Chantepie de la Saussaye on the Comparative Investigation of Religions and Religious Beliefs; by Auguste Sabatier on Religions and Modern Culture; by O. F. Myrberg on the Import of Christianity as a universal World-religion; by H. Martensen Larsens on Jesus and Religious Histories; and by K. L. Tallqvist on Christianity and Mahommedanism. There were also three discussions, one on Religion and Social Developments, another on Religion and Morals, while the third was rather teleological than religious.

There were also lectures and addresses by Arnold Meyer on Modern Investigations into Early Christian History; by S. A. Fries on Modern Conceptions of the History of Israel; and by S. Michelet on the Prophets of Israel as Bearers of Revelation.

It will be seen that the Congress dealt almost exclusively with questions of general religious or historical interest.

In the September issue of *Sophia* Señor Soria appears to bring to a conclusion his lengthy series of papers entitled "Genesis." At least no notice of continuation is given. These articles contain an

immense amount of information relative to the combinations of geometrical forms, and would well repay the work of any student of a mathematical mind who cared to follow closely the valuable investigations. The subject is of course too difficult and technical for the majority of readers to follow with ease. Translations fill the remainder of the issue.

The second number of *Philadelphia*, the new South American Theosophical journal, is up to the standard of the first. It opens with a lecture on "Religion," delivered by the late founder of the Luz Branch, whose *nom de plume* was adopted as the title of the magazine. A number of translations and reprints follow, selected from Theosophical and other sources. A Spanish translation of Mrs. Besant's *Death and After* from the French, has just been published at Buenos Ayres. This is a little strange, as there is already a Spanish translation of the book, according to the list at the end of *Sophia*. There has probably been some oversight. It is a pity to have done so much unnecessary work if this is the case.

Our Dutch *Theosophia* begins its September number with a paper by its constant contributor, Afra, on "Training." Translations of *In the Outer Court*, *The Tao te King*, and *Theosophy and its Evidences* are continued, and are followed by an address on the future of the Theosophical Society delivered by Mr. van Manen at the recent Convention of the Dutch Section.

Teosofia, from Rome, contains two translations, *Scientific Corroborations of Theosophy*, by Dr. Marques, and *Reincarnation*, by Dr. Pascal, as well as an original paper by Signor Calvari on "The Theosophical Society."

We have to acknowledge the receipt of *Im Vorhof* and *Die Uralte Weisheit*, German translations of Mrs. Besant's *In the Outer Court* and *The Ancient Wisdom*, excellently printed and produced, and forming a most valuable addition to our Theosophical literature in German; *A Christian Theosophist* and *The True Theosophic Theory of Universal Brotherhood*, by Alexander Fullerton, the former reprinted from THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW, and the latter an address delivered at the Convention of the American Section; *Mind*, from New York; *The Metaphysical Magazine*, also from New York; *Light*; *The Agnostic Journal*; *The Literary Guide*, with some interesting reviews and notes; *Humanity*, the journal of the Humanitarian League; *La Paix Universelle*, discussing, among other things, the eternal "Affaire Dreyfus"; *The Vegetarian*; *The Temple*; *The Herald of the Golden Age*.

A.