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ON THE WATCH-TOWER

DOUBTLESS many of our readers have thought deeply over the great logion of the Brâhmanical Vedânta, which sums up its main tenet of the *essential* identity of the individual and Supreme Soul in the brief phrase "I am Brahm." For though it may be permitted us in our highest moments of deepest meditation to have some faint sense of so sublime a hope—in those rare moments when our "I" has ceased to be the poor, contemptible thing it generally is and exalted itself towards its original nature—nevertheless it must have struck the more philosophically disposed among us that the bare dogma by itself is an exceedingly dangerous saying for unthinking and unprepared minds. And so indeed history has fully proved it to be, and in modern India it has led to one of the most subtle forms of spiritual conceit to which frail humanity has ever fallen a victim.

Spiritual Conceit

But it should not be supposed that India has a monopoly of such a dogma; it was taught in the Egyptian mysteries and in other mysteries allied thereto, and its danger for the uninitiated was fully recognised. Thus the *Sacred Sermon* of the Pythagorean and Orphic mystery-tradition, in four verses of a fragment

preserved to us, apostrophises the spiritual braggart in the following wholesome strain:

"Should any but the One say: 'I am God,' then should he make a world like unto Him, and say: 'This is my world.' And when he hath done this, not only *say:* ''Tis mine,' but take up his abode in that which he hath made. . . . Nay! it is he himself that hath been made by *Him!*"

(Quoted by Justin Martyr, *De Monarchia*, 105 c.—ed. 2 Otto: Jena; 1849, p. 132.)

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We have received permission to publish the following interesting experience of one of our members:

The Memory of the Soul

I had gone one evening to visit a poor woman who had just lost her infant, and was sitting beside her trying to comfort her. We both wept together over the tiny body of the dead child, and she said: "Oh, you don't know what a sorrow it is! You have never lost a child yourself!" "No," I replied, "I have never lost a child, but all the same I *do* know how bitter your sorrow is." And as I spoke the cottage room seemed to fade away, and I saw a spacious room, with paved floor, many pillars, and beautiful draperies, and on a couch a woman dressed in the style of garments the old Roman women used to wear, with her hair unbound, her face buried in a cushion, and her body convulsed with weeping. I felt that that woman was myself, and that I was weeping for my child. It was a most peculiar feeling, I seemed to stand on one side and look at myself. Then the picture faded and I was back in the cottage room. It could only have lasted a few moments, but it left the feeling so strong as to be almost a certainty that in some previous life I had lost a child, and hence my deep sympathy with the woman to whom I was speaking. I may say that I had not been thinking at all about reincarnation or kindred subjects that day, but had been very busy in my usual work of visiting and nursing the sick poor, and was very tired. All my life I have had a strong feeling of having lived before, but have never till that evening experienced anything like a definite recollection.

There are many of our members who have had similar glimpses of the past, and were they all put on record they would form a very large body of evidence, but most of us shrink from making such experiences public at all, or if we do consent to put them on record we desire to remain anonymous. This is quite natural, for indeed it is exceedingly painful to disclose our inner life to the prying gaze of vulgar curiosity. The finer our

feelings the shyer we are about speaking of such things. On the other hand, whenever any so constituted have the courage to speak, they do a great service to those of like nature with themselves. There is a sympathy of *feeling* which is quite as valuable as dates and names and temperature and the rest of the "tests" which embryo psychic science demands in such cases.

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A Contribution to the Heredity of Christian Phraseology

We have yet much to learn concerning the heredity of Christian phraseology and the environment of the origins. Although the major part of the evidence has been ruthlessly destroyed by a fanatical ignorance which totally misconceived the spirit of history and violated the majesty of truth, nevertheless, some fragments remain to cry aloud out of the night of the past. In a recent number of *Die Christliche Welt*, Professor Harnack deals with the most perfect of a number of inscriptions which have been discovered in Asia Minor. Most of them are very fragmentary. The only perfect one was discovered by a German scientific expedition on the site of ancient Priene. It bears the date corresponding to our B.C. 9, and is one of a number set up to commemorate the introduction of the Julian Calendar into Asia Minor by the Emperor Augustus Cæsar. (It is somewhat curious to observe that the most recent researches in Christian Chronology as based on the Synoptic accounts push back the date of the birth of Jesus to about B.C. 9.) The inscription runs as follows, referring to the birthday of Augustus:

> This day has given the earth an entirely new aspect. The world would have gone to destruction had there not streamed forth from him who is now born a common blessing.
>
> Rightly does he judge who recognises in this birthday the beginning of life and of all the powers of life; now is that time ended when men pitied themselves for being born.
>
> From no other day does the individual or the community receive such benefit as from this natal day, full of blessing to all.
>
> The Providence which rules over all has filled this man with such gifts for the salvation of the world as designate him as Saviour for us and for the coming generations; of wars he will make an end, and establish all things worthily.

By his appearing are the hopes of our forefathers fulfilled; not only has he surpassed the good deeds of men of earlier time; but it is impossible that one greater than he can ever appear.

The birthday of God has brought to the world glad tidings that are bound up in him.

From his birthday a new era begins.

We are indebted for this reference to Professor Harnack's exceedingly interesting article to a summary in *The Christian World* of January 4th, which continues as follows:

Harnack regards this inscription as more important for the history of Christianity than the majority of Christian inscriptions. When Paul undertook his great mission in Asia already for two generations this inscription had been read and noted in the market places of the principal Asian cities, an inscription which spoke of a World Saviour who was to appear, who would satisfy the desires of all nations, who should bring peace to the human race, who should indeed make life worth living. Such language has now become Christian, but it was not so at the beginning. The ideas were first of all Asian-Greek, and their immediate object was the Roman Cæsar. It is to be remembered, too, that these expressions represented a genuine religious cult of the Emperor. Says Harnack: The struggle of Christianity against heathendom in the second century, was a struggle against the religion of the Cæsar-Saviour. All other pagan religions were, compared with this, of no account. When the author of the Apocalypse wrote to the Church at Pergamos, "I know where thou dwellest, where Satan's throne is," he referred to the Cæsar-cult which had there its principal seat. Melito, Bishop of Sardis, in the second century, as quoted by Eusebius, gives a curious testimony to the prevalence of this worship when he speaks of the kingdom of the Cæsar and of the Christian kingdom as twin sisters. That this language of the Cæsar-cult has been taken over into Christianity can be to us, says Harnack, no reason for complaint. In this application it reaches a depth and intensity and range of meaning such as the Roman religion could never call forth. We may well use this language of Christ, for He is worthy of it and we have no better. He asks, however, whether it would not be possible, and whether the coming generation may not make it practicable, to come back to the simpler language which Christ Himself used. In conclusion, he would have us remember, when speaking of the originality of Christianity, how much on the one hand of Judaism, and on the other of the best religious work of the Greeks, was captured and brought into requisition by the force of the Gospel.

We need not agree entirely with all of Harnack's remarks, for although it is now an acquired fact of criticism that the Jewish document underlying the Apocalypse was originally a

seditious religio-political attack on the reigning Emperor, it is by no means clear what the Christian over-writer had in mind in his address to the Church at Pergamos; nevertheless the inscription is immensely important, and deserves the fullest discussion. If the deification of the Cæsar was condemned by the Christians as blasphemy, equally so was their identification of Jesus with God regarded by the Jews as blasphemy. That the Christ had a million times greater claim to the highest honours men could bestow upon Him than Augustus, none will deny, and we hope with Harnack that it may be practicable for the coming generation "to come back to the simpler language which Christ Himself used"—for we are convinced that whatever language He *did* use was an illumination of the reason instead of a stultification of the understanding.

* * *

The Present Position of N.T. Criticism

In the January number of *The Contemporary Review* Dr. Stalker contributes an interesting paper on "Our Present Knowledge of the Life of Jesus Christ," in which he makes the following remarks on the present position of New Testament criticism:

> The impression prevails in the English-speaking countries that with the overthrow of the Tübingen theory on the Continent, the criticism of the Gospels has practically come to a standstill, and that Bishop Lightfoot administered the *coup de grâce* to all negative speculation on the Gospels in England. This is, however, a very innocent view of the actual state of scholarship. Even the orthodox writers of Germany have no hesitation in sacrificing a saying of Jesus as unauthentic when it does not agree with their own views. An author as conservative as Weiss has a theory of the composition of the Gospels almost as elaborate as the current theories of the Hexateuch, with a scale of values attached to the various documents; and Holtzmann, whose *Handcommentar* is exercising a widespread influence in other countries besides his own, ascribes the form of the various Gospel incidents to every conceivable origin rather than to the fact that they happened just as they are narrated. . . . It is more than possible that within the next decade the Gospels may be issued from the press in all the colours of the rainbow to indicate the different documents of which they are composed, as is happening to the books of the Old Testament at the present hour. The materials already exist in abundance for such an effort, and only a bold hand is required to appropriate them.

We have often pointed to this position ourselves, and regard it as a very healthy sign of the times; for once that the grand figure of the Christ is restored to its natural environment and removed from its present unhistorical and artificial surroundings, it will stand forth in a true light that will bring the reality of the great Master home to the hearts of many millions who are at present indifferent or entirely incredulous. The days of our Little Bethel bibliolatry are fortunately numbered, although at present the worshippers of the letter may be blissfully unconscious of the fact.

* * *

STUDENTS of Theosophy are familiar with the important part which the idea of the vortex plays in a number of mystery traditions when treating of the beginnings of things.

The Vortex Idea

The idea of the Spirit or Wind or Breath as the fashioning agent of chaos which induces the initial circular or spiral motion into the world-area, is so common in the ancient cosmogonies as to be almost universal. The Great Whirlpool or Vortex of the Orphic tradition and the spirally whirling chaos of the Hermetic are but two instances out of many. We are also equally familiar with the idea of the vortex-atoms, both from the speculations of physical science and also from the researches of our psychic investigators, and we are further persuaded of the striking analogy between the little world and great world; we are, therefore, prepared to pay particular attention to this idea whenever any manifestation of it is to be found in nature, and are always interested in any information on the subject. The following paragraph from *The Globe* of Dec. 29th, 1899, is, therefore, a note worth putting on record:

> In a paper to the Royal Society of New South Wales, Mr. H. C. Russell deals with waterspouts, which are common on the coast of that colony. He describes one 400 feet high and 50 feet in diameter. A waterspout is caused by a small whirlwind or tornado on the water. The wind lashes the surface of the water into spray, which rises round the vortex, not into it, as many suppose. If the whirlwind suddenly breaks up, the spray falls in a shower. Fish are sometimes caught up in the spray and dropped on the land.

* * *

THE following paragraph, which has found its way into a number

of papers, may be of interest to our ethnologically inclined readers.

One Lip

If true, the fact is certainly one of immense importance. The report was started by the Washington Correspondent of *The Chicago Record*, and we take it from *The New York Post* of December 23rd. It is fathered on "ex-representative Springer":

> A Creek Indian from Indian Territory, who was a member of the Rough Riders, reënlisted in the regular army at the close of the Spanish war and was sent to the Philippine Islands. While campaigning with his regiment in the southern part of the archipelago he found a tribe of Malays whose dialect was almost the same as the aboriginal language of the Creek nation. He could understand them and they could understand him without difficulty, and he was able to act as interpreter for his officers with a tribe he had never heard of before.

To show how widely this report has been noticed and the interest attaching to such a discovery, we notice that *The Hamburgischer Correspondent* of January 3rd, quoting from the *English Mechanic*, says that some Creek Indians, who were with the American troops in the Philippines, found a black-skinned Malay tribe on the Island of Luzon whose language was the same as their own. This interesting fact was reported to the War Minister and may lead to fresh light being thrown upon the wanderings of remote nations in the past.

* * *

THE same paper, on January 4th, speaks of a boy of three, Pepito Ariola, who is astonishing the Court of Madrid at the present time by his remarkable musical faculty. His tiny hands, that can barely span four keys, spring with wonderful certainty from note to note in Allegro as well as in Adagio movements. The Queen of Spain, who heard of the boy from the newspapers, invited him with his parents, and has promised to look after his further musical education. The Madrid press hopes that in him a second Mozart will be found. To us this youngster is of especial interest, as yet another out of so many examples of the bringing over of faculty from some not far distant birth.

Reminiscence

One of our scientific friends sends us the following interesting paragraphs:

The Divisibility of the "Elements"

In view of the occult teaching with regard to the *compound* nature of the so-called chemical "elements" and atoms, the following discussion at the Physics Section of the recent meeting of the British Association at Dover should be of interest to Theosophical students. I quote verbatim from the report given in *Nature*, the italics being mine throughout:

A paper was read by Prof. J. J. Thomson on the existence of masses *smaller than the atoms*. He stated that several lines of research lead to a determination of the ratio of the mass of an atom to the charge carried by the atom. Among these are electrolysis, the velocity of charged particles in a magnetic field, and the magnetic deflexion of Kathodic rays. It becomes, therefore, a matter for enquiry whether in the former experiments the atom carries a charge greater than that required by Faraday's laws, or whether the charge is carried by *a portion only of the atom*—in other words, whether *a small fraction of the mass of the atom is detachable*, which has associated with it a negative charge. [Experiments follow to determine this.] Prof. Thomson considers that electrification consists in the removal from the atom of a small corpuscle with which the negative charge is associated; the remaining large portion of the mass is positively charged. This view is supported by Prout's hypothesis that *the mass of an atom is not invariable*, and by the evidence derived by Lockyer and others from spectroscopic observations.

M. Broca described spectroscopic observations of a spark obtained between two platinum electrodes half a m.m. apart in a Crooke's vacuum tube; the spectra of the regions near the electrodes and the space between them *were not alike*.

Prof. Rücker drew attention to Schuster's experiments, in which the spectrum of *a substance not present in the material examined* sprang into being in the arc itself. He believed matter to be *a complicated collection of units themselves similar*.

Sir Norman Lockyer said that if we accept the view that elements of smallest atomic weights should appear first in the spectrum of a hot star we must assume the existence of *forms of calcium, magnesium, iron, and copper having atomic weights which are submultiples of those assigned to them in ordinary chemistry*. Further, the division of the spectra of certain elements into series of lines by Rydberg, Bunge, and Paschen, and others indicates that *the atoms of these elements are complexes;* we have, therefore, *no reason to suppose that the so-called atoms are not dissociable at high temperatures*.

SPIRITUAL DARKNESS

FEW of the perils which beset the path of the serious aspirant are more depressing in their nature, more fatal in their effects, than what is called spiritual darkness—the gloom which descends on the heart and brain, wrapping the whole nature in its sombre folds, blotting out all memories of past peace, all hopes of future progress. As a dense fog pervades a great city, stealing into every nook and corner, effacing every familiar land-mark, shutting off every vista, blurring into dimness even the brilliant lights, until, to the bewildered wayfarer, nothing seems left save himself and the stifling mephitic vapour that enfolds him, so is it when the fog of spiritual darkness comes down on the aspirant or the disciple. All his landmarks disappear, and the way vanishes in the gloom; his wonted lights are shorn of their lustre, and human beings are mere shadows that now and again push up against him out of the night and into the night again disappear. He is alone and lost; a sense of terrible isolation shuts him in, and no one shares his solitude. The human faces that smiled on him have vanished; the human voices that cheered him are silent; the human love that caressed him has grown chill. His "lovers and friends are put away from" him; and no words of comfort reach him across the deadly stillness. To move forward, when the ground on which the foot must be planted is invisible, feels as if he were stepping over a precipice, and a dull surging of waves at a far depth seems to threaten destruction, while their very distance below intensifies the nearer silence. Heaven is shut out as well as earth; sun, moon and stars have vanished, and no glimmer of their radiance pierces the gloom from above. He feels as though suspended in an abyss of nothingness, and as though he would shortly pass into that nothingness himself; his flame of life seems to flicker in the darkness, as though, in sympathy with the universal gloom, it would itself cease to shine.

The "horror of great darkness" is upon him, paralysing every energy, crushing every hope. God and man have deserted him —he is alone, alone.

The testimony of every great mystic proves that this picture is not overdrawn; there are no cries of human anguish more bitter than those which wail out from the pages on which noble and saintly souls have recorded their experiences on the Path. They had looked for peace, and combat surrounds them; for joy, and sorrow is their portion; for the Beatific Vision, and the darkness of the pit hems them in. That lesser souls have not faced the ordeal, and look unbelievingly on its possibility, putting their theories of what should be against the iron facts of what is—this proves nothing save that their hour is not yet come. The child cannot measure the man's struggle, nor the babe feel the anguish that pierces the breast which feeds it. To every age its proper fruitage, and while we can understand the experiences that lie behind us, none may grasp the nature of those that lie ahead. Let the undeveloped soul, if he will, scoff at the agony he cannot appreciate, depreciate the suffering he cannot yet feel, even deride as weakness the signs of an anguish whose lightest touch would shrivel up his own vaunted strength. Those growing into divine manhood know the reality of the darkness, and only those who know can judge.

At a very early stage of real apprenticeship to the higher life, darkness—less absolute than that above described, but sufficiently trying to the as yet undeveloped soul—will strain and test his powers. The earnest aspirant soon finds that fits of gloom, the cause of which he cannot discover, descend upon him and subject him to much distress. He is apt, in the over-sensitiveness which accompanies this stage of growth, to blame himself for these accesses of sadness, and to take himself sharply to task for the loss of the serenity which he has put before himself as his ideal. When the gloom is upon him, every surrounding object takes an unwonted and exaggerated shape. Small annoyances loom large, distorted by the mists that surround him, petty troubles grow into great shadows that overcloud the sun, and friction that in happier seasons would pass unnoticed now rasps every nerve and tortures every sensibility. He feels that he has

fallen from the place to which he had climbed by prolonged efforts, and that all his past struggles are wasted and their fruits rent away from his grasp. As has been well said: "It is wonderful how the Powers of the Dark seem to sweep away as it were in one gust all one's spiritual treasures, garnered with such pain and care after years of incessant study and experience." What wonder that the trembling and bewildered soul of the neophyte feels a touch almost of despair as the spoils of victory on many a hard-fought field crumble into ashes in his hands.

Let us examine into the causes of the darkness, for though, while it is upon us, all merely theoretical knowledge breaks down under our feet, yet that knowledge may help to clear it away more rapidly, when once it begins to lighten. Nothing but repeated practical experience can keep us as steady and as serene in the darkness as in the light, but theoretical knowledge has its place in the evolution of the mind.

We will take separately the cases of the aspirant and of the accepted disciple, for though the causes of the darkness which affects the former may also play their part in bringing down the night on the latter, there are additional causes at work where the accepted disciple is concerned.

First comes the well-known fact of the quickening of karma, once a man has set his face resolutely towards the portal of the Path. We need not dwell on this, for it has been often explained, and it plays a comparatively small part in the bringing down of the darkness. One element, however, perhaps less often alluded to, may be mentioned here. Pleasure and pain, connected with the emotions and passions, belong to the astral world and are experienced through the astral body; consequently a very large amount of karma belongs, by its very nature, to the astral plane, and is there exhausted. Bad karma can, therefore, be largely worked out by suffering, apart from events; the suffering which normally accompanies misfortunes, disasters of every description on the physical plane, has its habitat on the astral, and we suffer on the astral while we are passing through our troubles on the physical. Now this astral suffering can be disjoined from the physical events with which it is normally associated, and

can be passed through apart from those events. In the quickening of karma, this result is largely brought about, and some of the darkness experienced by the aspirant is due to this cause; he is working out his bad karma by enduring the suffering that belongs to events not yet ripe for manifestation on the physical plane; and if he observes his own life, he will find that, later on, he passes through events that would ordinarily be regarded as of the most distressing character with a calmness and indifference that surprise himself. The fact is that he has already borne the suffering normally attached to them, and he meets on the physical plane the mere shells and semblances, the empty forms, which are all that remain when the astral consciousness that normally vivifies these forms has been withdrawn. (Students may be reminded—though the subject is too large a one to be entered on here—that man's consciousness is astral, at the present stage of evolution.) The aspirant may therefore comfort himself when an apparently causeless gloom descends upon him, with the knowledge that he is exhausting some of his kârmic liabilities, and that the payment of kârmic debts is never demanded twice.

Secondly, the aspirant is seeking to purify and ultimately to destroy the personality. Pleasures increase and intensify the life of the personality, while pains diminish it. His own deliberate will has offered the personality as a sacrifice to the Lord of the Burning-ground, and if the sacrifice be accepted, the flame falls and devours it. What cause for sorrow is here? But the fire, as it burns up the dross of personality, setting free the pure gold of the life, must needs bring keen suffering to the life which is thus rapidly purged from elements that have for millenniums formed part of its being, mingling with all its activities. And here comes in the peril which makes spiritual darkness so fatal. Can the aspirant hold out while the dark fire burns up that which seems to be his very life? Can he bear the strain, live through the darkness, and be found, when it lifts, still at his post, weary and worn-out, perchance, but *there?* If he can, then a great peace will succeed the darkness, and in the peace he shall hear the song of life. New strength will flow in upon him, and he will be conscious of a deeper vision, of a firmer grasp on

truth; the darkness will prove but the mother of light, and he will have learned in it priceless lessons that will stand him in good stead in future trials. Alas! but too often courage breaks and endurance fails, and the darkness proves to be the darkness of a temporary tomb, and perhaps for the remainder of the incarnation, brings "ruin to many a noble soul that has not yet acquired strength enough to endure."

Thirdly, the darkness is often a glamour thrown over the aspirant by the destructive forces that play in the world. To the process of evolution destruction is as necessary as construction, disintegration as integration. That which apparently delays really strengthens, as death is but an aspect of birth. The occultist knows that every force in nature represents the working of an invisible Intelligence, and that this is as true of the destructive as of the constructive forces. And he knows that the destructive Intelligences—the Dark Powers, as they are often called—set themselves to beguile, entrap, and bewilder the aspirant the moment he has made sufficient progress beyond ordinary humanity to draw their attention, and render himself worthy of attack. Endeavouring to delay the higher evolution and to prolong the sovereignty of matter, they regard as their natural enemy anyone who steps out of the normal path and seeks to lead the spiritual life. These are the "powers of nature," so often mentioned in mystic books, who strive to hold back the aspiring soul. Their most favourite device of all, perhaps, is to cause discouragement and, if possible, to drive to despair, by enveloping the soul in darkness, and by making him feel forsaken and alone. Theirs the touch which gives the peculiar poignancy to the isolation; the thoughts that whisper of despair are but the echoes of their mockery. As progress is made on the Path, all the powers of nature must gradually be faced and conquered, and the facing and the conquering must be done alone. Alone? ah! not alone in reality; what shall separate us from the One Life which is our very Self, or from the love of the Masters who watch every step of the combatant? but alone so far as the intellect is concerned, which feels the "I" as standing unaided and forlorn.

When we study the life of the accepted disciple, we find at

work in it the causes which we have seen in the life of the aspirant, but a new cause also arises, which, as he advances, ever plays a more and more prominent part in his experience. As the shackles of his own karma fall off him, he becomes free to bear part of "the heavy karma of the world," and he also begins to face the greater destructive forces for the world's sake, standing between them and humanity and drawing on to himself as much as is practicable of their energies. The sin and the sorrow of the world, its pathetic ignorance, press upon him, and until he reaches the strong peace which has its sure root in perfect knowledge, he cannot escape, from time to time, the gloom which comes down upon him, as though the whole world's sorrow crushed his heart, and made it bleed at every pore with "helpless pity" for the blindness that breeds misery and the ignorance which is sin. Nor dare he strive to shake off this feeling of sorrow, since, by virtue of the more and more realised unity of his life with that of all men, his sorrow is theirs, and he shares by it in their karma and quickens their evolution. But he gradually learns to bear it with a peaceful satisfaction, deepening into a sense of profound inner joy, until the crushing power of it diminishes and finally disappears, and only an all-abounding compassion remains, so that the very sorrow becomes dearer than all the world calls joy, and the gloom is but a tender twilight, fairer and sweeter than the brilliance of the noonday sun.

Sharper and keener is the suffering that he faces when he "turns his back on the light and goes down alone into the darkness to meet and overcome the Powers of Evil." This is the work of the world's Saviours, and the hour comes for the disciple when this solemn and glorious duty devolves on him. He is trained for its more arduous struggles by gradually learning to draw into himself inharmonious and disruptive forces, so that they exhaust themselves in him, often tearing and rending him in the process, and are then sent forth, harmonised and rhythmical, forces for building up instead of forces that destroy. Disciples are the crucibles of nature, wherein compounds that are mischievous are dissociated, and are recombined into compounds that promote the general good. As the seething com-

pounds break up with explosive violence, the sensitive human crucible quivers under the terrible strain, and little wonder that, at times, it breaks, unable to endure. By such discipline, long-continued, the disciple strengthens his powers, and becomes fit to bear heavier burdens, fit to bear the gloom of the awful darkness in which he feels himself forsaken of God and man, in which he seems flung to the Dark Powers that they may work their will upon him, in which life is only torture, and the anodyne of loss of consciousness is craved. Then comes the subtle alluring temptation: "come down from the cross"; and he knows that nothing holds him stretched thereon save the nails of his own fixed purpose and indomitable will; at any moment he can bid the torment cease, if he be willing to escape at the cost of the world he has sacrificed himself to help. If he escape, the world must suffer; if he can bear the agony, the burden of humanity is a little lifted. "He saved others; himself he cannot save." The gibe of the unbeliever is the life-law of the Christ.

But at last, even this hope that was sustaining his fortitude is rent away from him, and the darkness of despair enfolds him, whispering that all the anguish is in vain, that he is beaten, overpowered, and all his hoped-for service to the world is but the "baseless vision of a dream." Never again shall he serve his Master in joyful obedience; never again shall weary souls be gladdened by the light he bears; he has taught others to tread the Path, but has himself fallen from it; he has preached on everlasting love, and behold! love itself has abandoned him and leaves him to sink into the abyss. Can he hold out through this? can he still bless the good, while evil triumphs over him? can he be content to perish, if that be his karma? can he still rejoice that the world shall be saved though he bear no part in the saving, and joy that love shall triumph though he be outcast from its embrace? If he cannot, then the darkness has stifled him, and the world has for a while lost a helper. If he can—then, with that uttermost surrender of the separated self, the darkness lifts; the eternal Self wells up within him; the Face of his Master shines out and he knows that He has been there all the time; in a moment of clear spiritual vision, he sees

through the rent veil the Holy of Holies, where abides "The Heart of Silence, the Hidden God," and the pinions of the white peace enfold him. Then brief rest in the calm stillness of the silent sealéd cave; the coming forth into a new and larger life, with deeper wisdom, firmer faith, stronger love; the greater power to serve humanity, the strength to endure still heavier strain. Above all he has learned something of the power of illusion, has caught a glimpse of the nature of Mâyâ, and has that to help him in all future darkness, the realised knowledge that it cannot wreck unless he himself yields to its delusive force. Such is the priceless fruit of spiritual darkness, and by such strain and such struggle the man evolves the God.

ANNIE BESANT.

IS MORALITY PURELY RELATIVE?

THE doctrine that morality is purely relative has some support from certain facts in sociology, and it presents of a question one aspect which contains demonstrable truth, yet there may well be doubt as to whether it does not arise from confusing two distinct things, and as to whether it is not disastrous to the very existence of morality itself.

If by this doctrine is meant that the claims of duty increase with power and privilege and opportunity, it is true. It is really the converse of the maxim that "Ability is the limit of obligation." From a man who is intelligent, educated, rich, influential, may be demanded a clear-sighted perception of right, and a copious service to the community which cannot be demanded of another who has no one of these possessions. The holder of the ten talents is asked for their outcome, just as the holder of the one talent is for its.

But if it is meant that there is no universal law of right binding upon all men as men and irrespective of development or instruction, no obligation pressed upon them by Nature as human beings, whether they recognise it or not, that law be-

comes operative only when and as men perceive it, we may well demur. For this is to say that it is the sight of law, not the existence of it, which creates the duty of obedience; that the measure of obligation is not in the inherent good of a prescript, but in the extent to which each individual detects it to be good.

Nothing of this kind exists in Nature. The law of gravitation is universal and unflinching. The little child who steps ignorantly over the precipice is maimed as certainly as the philosopher who stumbles into it. Malaria attacks equally the sage and his servant when they sleep within its influence. The dissolute youth, knowing nothing of physiology, and the dissolute adult who understands it, suffer the same penalties for their excesses.

Nor is such a principle recognised in human legislation. "Ignorance of the law excuses no man" is an established legal maxim. Otherwise there would be one code for the well-informed and another for the ill-informed, whereas law must press equally on all citizens. It is true that allowance as to penalties is often made when obvious fairness so requires, but not on the ground that any citizens are exempt from the obligation to know their duties.

And when we enter the distinctive sphere of morals, we perceive not merely that there is no proclamation of immunity to the ignorant violator of right, but that the whole operation of moral law proceeds on a distinctly contrary basis. Effects follow causes relentlessly, and with no inquiry as to antecedent information. A nation commits a national outrage: resistance and reprisals follow, and there furthermore follows that debasement of conscience, internal welfare, and internal security, which is one kârmic consequence of wrong. An individual needlessly attacks another; he is never safe from the danger of retaliation and suffering. Attached to murder, lying, fraud, violation of comity in any form, are certain penal consequences from which there is no release. We do not invariably see them manifested in the case of individuals, for the manifestation may not occur till a later incarnation, but history, both ancient and modern, gives as one of its most impressive lessons the decadence which overtakes nations when moral principle is defied and evil

becomes enthroned. In fact, it is through this inflexible kârmic tie between cause and effect that nations and men learn the consequence of wrong-doing and so avoid it.

As matter of fact, it is not, then, true that moral law bears only on those who perceive it, and that it is other than all-pervading and all-inclusive. But the matter becomes even clearer when we enquire what would be the consequences of the doctrine that morality is relative and is not obligatory on every man because a man.

The first consequence would be that every ignorant evil-doer would be released from blame, and if from blame, then from punishment. To punish a person undeserving of punishment would be an outrage. Hence must come an entire abrogation of penal codes except as to the educated. But more than this, the existing system of human moral evolution must be set aside. Present arrangements provide that men learn the value and the inflexibility of law by repeatedly suffering the consequences of its violation. Blow after blow has to fall till is driven in the lesson that violence, lying, theft, murder, etc., are offences against the good order of the universe, and that self-preservation requires their abandonment. Moral perception is evolved through experiencing the inevitable results of an omnipresent law. Yet, if the doctrine of relative morality is correct, this must be abandoned, and the results fall only on those who can foresee them. Nor only that; for the actual system must be directly reversed. Men are not to gain knowledge through undergoing punishment for wrong; they must first have the knowledge, or they cannot be subjected to the punishment!

A second consequence would be the creation of a privileged class of criminals. Establish the rule that the moral law binds only those who perceive it, and you establish the fact that every man can do as he likes till he perceives his likings to be wrong. It is true that in that case he would *never* perceive them to be wrong, since he would never have the discipline which excites that perception; but that is not the point now. The point is, that ignorant evil-doers are to have instructed well-doers at their mercy. I am an honest and peaceable citizen, respecting the property and the rights of my neighbours. But one of those

neighbours is a habitual criminal, with no moral sense and no respect for the belongings of others. He desires my money, or my furniture, or my effects. On what ground can I resist, much more, punish him? If it is right for him to act out his existing nature, I must be wrong in combating him. Hence I hold my property only to the extent that he does not choose to steal it! Is a moral principle possible which would have that as its outcome?

A third consequence would be that essential moral distinctions would vanish. Right and wrong being terms purely relative to each individual, there is no inherent difference between them. Lying and theft and cruelty and murder are not necessarily evil, and therefore to be avoided; they only become evil when the individual thinks them to be evil, and need not be avoided till then. Truth, honesty, beneficence, justice are not virtues in themselves, and therefore to be cultivated; they are only such to him who thinks them such, and no one else is bound. In fact, why should anybody be adjured to do right and to refrain from wrong, for there is no real distinction. The moral standard being wholly individual, there can be no objective one; hence no obligation to any particular course, no actual moral law, no duty, and no sin.

The doctrine of relative morality involves, then, a subversion of the existing system of the universe; it involves the subjection of the deserving to the undeserving; and it involves the destruction of morality itself. Surely there must be some better theory, a theory which conserves Divine wisdom, human rights, and moral order.

All analogy suggests that there must be in the moral world laws as real as in the physical and the spiritual world, and not only as real, but as universal and as unbending. We may not be able to fully schedule them, nor to decide disputed points, nor to solve all perplexities in either their nature or their operation. But that is needless for present purposes. We may, for that end, select one law as illustrative, one which has the advantage, moreover, of summarising the whole moral code as between men —the law that *everyone else's rights are to be respected*. You see at once that its observance puts an end to every conceivable form

of aggression and injustice, and that only through this law is human progress possible. Now as every human being has his origin from the One Source and partakes of the qualities which impartially emanate therefrom, and as there can be no favouritism in Deity, it is evident that everyone has certain inherent rights as a man. But the possession of rights by any one means also the recognition of those rights by every other one, and thus comes about the law that each individual possesses certain rights which all other individuals are bound to respect. But if this is a universal fact there can be no exceptions to it, and, whatever may be the nature or extent of those rights, invasion of them cannot be tolerated on any plea—the plea of ignorance any more than any other plea. If I have a claim to personal liberty and the possession of my property so long as I do not interfere with the like claim of another, it is clear that another cannot justifiably attack either my liberty or my property, and equally clear that any defence of the attack because made in ignorance of the law would be void, because denying to me what he demanded for himself, and because that would base my rights not on my inherent prerogative, but on his intelligence.

In the origin of humanity, in the constitution of man, and in essential justice, we thus find basis for a moral law which shall be fair, uniform, universal, and inflexible. No one is exempt from it. This being so, we should expect to find that a universal law has universal penalty, and that they who will not voluntarily obey it are ultimately constrained to do so through successive experiences of disaster. And this is precisely the state of things as affirmed by the Theosophic philosophy, which includes karma and reincarnation as necessary factors in the process of evolution. Men who refuse spontaneous advance are goaded forward by painful pressure. Ignorance has thus to learn no less relentlessly than has obstinacy. Revelation of truth comes through experience, not through Divine disclosure. The lawless savage evolves into the law-abiding citizen, and a ruthless nation changes into one conservative of rights, only as each finds that a blow causes a return blow equal in force, and that immunity from evil is to be found in the non-commission of evil. Thus in morals, as in physics, the law exists first, and we

gradually become cognisant of it as we defy it and suffer from it.

I said that the doctrine of relative morality arises from the confusion of two distinct things. They are, the objective existence of moral law and the subjective perception of it. But this subjective perception does not create the law, it merely recognises it. The law exists first in point of time, the recognition of it comes later as the soul evolves. The law does not make the recognition, nor does the recognition make the law. Each is independent, neither produces the other, the two are not to be confounded. But when long experience of results brings about percipience of the inciting cause, then it is that willing conformity frees the soul from future ills, and gives it that security which can only come from hearty union with the scheme of things.

The eternal distinction between good and evil, right and wrong, is not impugned by the fact that we cannot always make it, or that the moral conceptions of different historic eras vary. So do conceptions in physics, in philosophy, and in religion. The actual truth ever persists behind them, and its temporary combination with human error is but a necessary incident in an evolving humanity. As we emerge more into the sunlight the great facts and laws of the moral world will become more patent, and we shall clearly see that they have real existence and are eternal as God. It is not they who shift, and change, and dissolve; it is our beclouded view of them which we mistake for the changeless reality. And when at last the clear-cut system stands disclosed, we shall wonder that we ever supposed wrong a phase of right, and evil a form of good.

ALEXANDER FULLERTON.

GOETHE'S WORLD-CONCEPT IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Das Wahre war schon lang gefunden,
Hat edle Geisterschaar verbunden,
Das alte Wahre fass es an.

GOETHE.

THE 150th anniversary of Goethe's birthday, which was celebrated on the 28th of August, 1899, in Berlin, Weimar, Frankfort on the Maine, Munich, Düsseldorf, and other cities, by representations of Goethe's dramas, pomps and torchlight processions, and everywhere in Germany by speeches, could not, in an age in which the press holds such an unprecedented position, be allowed to pass without creating a veritable flood of Goethe literature of all kinds.

The "Goethe" numbers dedicated to the great poet by the German periodicals were countless; countless, also, were the portraits of Goethe which the illustrated papers produced.

But not only in the poet's own country was his great significance to the whole cultured and intellectual world clearly shown, but also in Austria, Italy, France, England and elsewhere, honour to the great German poet met with wide public expression. Since, then, it may be said, the gaze of the whole cultured world has been fastened on the noble features of the poet of *Faust*, it might be timely to consider, in the pages of this REVIEW, the manner in which Goethe attempted an expression of the esoteric wisdom of life, in connection with which I would call attention to the excellent article of Miss Cust on the "End of *Faust*" in LUCIFER for April, 1897 (p. 115), which seems to have been written with the same intention as we have now in view.

If we, then, inquire as to Goethe's conception of the universe we shall do well to let him answer for himself. "For my-

self," he writes to Jakobi, on January 6th, 1813, "with the manifold tendencies of my being, I cannot be content with *one* way of thinking; as a poet and an artist I am a polytheist, but as an investigator of Nature I am a pantheist, and the one as decidedly as the other. If I seek a God for my personality as a civilised man, that is also already provided. The things of heaven and earth are so wide a region, that only the organs of all beings united together can grasp them."

Goethe here describes very succinctly the modern man of general culture who with his versatility cannot content himself "with one way of thinking," and this is surely true of every highly-evolved person. In this his public declaration of belief in his sixty-fourth year, there is no question of karma, reincarnation, metempsychosis or palingenesis, and one is almost tempted to believe that Goethe was not very clear himself on the subject of metempsychosis, if one remembers the expression found in his prose-sayings: "The most perfect metempsychosis is to see ourselves reappear in others."

It is certain that Goethe had only a very superficial acquaintance with Indian philosophy, to judge from the opinion he expressed in 1829—at the age of eighty—to his friend, F. P. Eckermann, which runs as follows:

"Indian philosophy has, if the English critic* is right, nothing very strange in it, rather it repeats in itself the epochs through which we all pass. We are sensualists as long as we are children; idealists when we are in love and when we invest the beloved object with qualities which it does not possess; love falls to pieces, and we doubt all constancy and become sceptics before we are aware of it; the rest of life is indifferent to us, we let it go by as it likes, and we finish with quietism, as does also Indian philosophy."†

Although we might conclude from these utterances that Goethe was ignorant of the esoteric teaching of Indian philosophy, yet we learn from his autobiography, *Aus meinem Leben, Dichtung und Wahrheit,* that in his youth he had eagerly studied the works of Helmont, Theophrastus Paracelsus

* It is not clear to which English writer Goethe here refers.

† Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe*, ii., p. 49 (Leipzig: Philip Reclam, junior).

and other earlier mystics, in the years between his University life at Leipzig and at Strassburg, and here he must have met with the theories of karma and reincarnation.

But all traces of these studies were destroyed by the subsequent period of "storm and stress."

We shall therefore certainly not be mistaken if we hold to the idea, that when Goethe either verbally, or in his letters, dramas or poems, expresses himself approvingly with regard to the "ancient wisdom," he is not drawing from any external source, since his genius had other sources than mere study whereby to raise itself to a higher grade of human knowledge of life. For he needed only to listen to the dictates of his own intuition.

It is frequently remarked in Germany with regard to the second part of *Faust*, that no one will ever find out all that Goethe has concealed in this his dramatic *chef d'œuvre*. But it is not only in the dramatic creations of a later period that the sense is thus wrapped in an apparently impenetrable depth of obscurity; the same may be said of his lyrical muse, and even of many passages in his prose writings. In his verbal utterances also, as they are faithfully recorded by Eckermann, he often employed, when it was a question of deep subjects or metaphysical problems, a quite individual and enigmatical terminology. But if we bring the light of theosophical or occult knowledge to bear upon these utterances of Goethe's mind, they suddenly become as clear as crystal.

We may now glance at those expressions of Goethe's in which the idea of reincarnation is only barely suggested and can only be recognised by those in whose minds the doctrine has already taken deep root. "Man must believe in immortality," said Goethe on February 4th, 1829, to Eckermann; "he has a right to it, it accords with his nature, and he may build on religious tradition; but if the philosopher tries to draw his proof of the immortality of the soul from a legend, such proof is very weak and does not count for much.*

"The conviction of our continued existence arises in me out

* He refers here to the philosopher Hegel, who utilised Christian legends as proofs of immortality.

of the conception of activity; for if I work unceasingly to the end of my life, nature owes it to me to give me another form of existence if my present one is not able any longer to hold my spirit."

And again:

"I do not doubt our continued existence, for nature cannot do without her Entelechy; but we are not immortal in the same way, and in order to manifest as such great Entelechy in the future, one must become such."

Entelechy is an Aristotelian expression, of which the meaning is that which makes a thing what it is.

In the above-mentioned use of the word Entelechy Goethe means the human individuality; he was therefore thinking of a return, a repeated manifestation of this individuality through re-incarnation. This is even more clearly seen, if we look at another of Goethe's remarks on the Entelechy idea, which runs:

"Every Entelechy is a part of Eternity, and the few years during which it is associated with the body do not age it. If this Entelechy is of an inferior type it will exercise but small power during its obscuration in the body, it is the body rather that will rule, and as it ages the Entelechy can do nothing to arrest the process. But if this Entelechy is of a powerful type, as is the case with all highly gifted natures, it will, by its vivifying permeation of the body, not only ennoble and strengthen the organism, but it will also strive by means of its spiritual supremacy to assert and to maintain its prerogative of eternal youth."

It is true that our scientists of to-day, who are always glad to enliven the inevitable dryness of their writings by the refreshing breath of Goethe's spirit, will take good care not to cite such utterances as those quoted above. For them these words are nothing more than the unmistakable symptoms of senility and the consequent tendency to mysticism. These opinions of the octogenarian Goethe are therefore no longer taken seriously by the advocates of natural science in the present day. They are no longer regarded as worthy of notice by an investigator of the calibre of Ernst Hæckel, for whom the doctrine of the immortality of the soul has long since become a dogma standing in

unreconcilable opposition to the most conclusive experiments of modern natural science.*

Indeed, according to Hæckel's firm conviction the definite renunciation of this—as he expresses it—athanistic illusion would be not only without pain for mankind, but on the contrary an inestimable positive gain.

At this point we must not forget that Hæckel, and with him the whole of the scientific world which accepts the monistic theory, know only the brain consciousness ; that they oppose only the immortality of the individual or personal soul and therefore touch only the dogmas of the Church and of Spiritualism with their objections. For us on the contrary the utterances of the octogenarian Goethe are not less precious than those of his thirtieth or fiftieth year, because we know that he himself possessed a powerful Entelechy of the type of which he so often spoke to Eckermann, an Entelechy to which we certainly cannot deny the privilege of eternal youth. Let us, therefore, listen further to the old man of eighty.

"You will find," says Goethe, on March 11th, 1828, to Eckermann, "that in his middle age a man often goes through a great change, and that as in his youth everything favours him and everything prospers with him, now suddenly everything changes and one misfortune and mishap follows upon another. But do you know how I explain this? The man must be again reduced to nothingness. Every exceptional man has a certain mission, which he is called to fulfil. When he has accomplished it, he is no longer needed in that particular form on earth and providence makes use of him for some other purpose. But as everything here below happens through natural causes, the Dæmons put one spoke after another in his wheel until at last he comes to a standstill. So it was with Napoleon, Byron, Raphael and many others."

From a theosophical standpoint this probably means that everyone, not only the extraordinary man, has in each earth-life a fixed task to fulfil—a task ordained by karma and fraught with subjective and objective obligations. This accomplished,

* Compare *Die Welträthsel, gemeinverständliche Studien über monistische Philosophie*, by Ernst Hæckel (Bonn : E. Strauss ; 1899.)

he quits the earthly stage, in order to be given a new task in a new life.

In a letter to Zelter, March 19th, 1827, Goethe expresses himself in the following way:

"Let us go on working, until we are called by the World-spirit, one before or after the other, to return to the ether. And may then the Ever-living One not deny us fresh activities analogous to those in which we have already been tested! If He also grants us of His fatherly goodness remembrances and impressions of the good and the true which we have already accomplished here, we shall then certainly only the more eagerly help to turn the wheels of the world-machine. The entelechic monad must necessarily be in a state of unceasing activity; if this becomes its second nature, then work will never be wanting for it throughout eternity."

In the quotations so far made from Goethe, we certainly do not find the idea of re-incarnation. If Goethe had really had the idea clearly in his mind he would undoubtedly have expressed it in so many words to his faithful Eckermann. We rather carry away the impression that Goethe was generally thinking of some future incarnation in another world.

But it is interesting that Goethe speaks of a return into the ether as if he took for granted that there had been an etheric —or as we should say to-day an astral—pre-existence.*

On the other hand, Goethe expresses himself quite unmistakably and plainly in some of his poems about the idea of re-incarnation on earth, as, for instance, in the song of the spirit over the waters:

Des Menschen Seele
Gleicht dem Wasser
Vom Himmel kommt es
Zum Himmel steigt es
Zur Erde muss es
Ewig wechselnd.

Though we may not quite agree with the word "eternal" *(ewig)*, and though in this simile, evolution, which is the object of

* Goethe is evidently using the term in its classical philosophical sense; the "æther" thus would connote the spiritual and not the "astral" regions.—G. R. S. M.

this descent and ascent of the soul, is not really expressed, yet Goethe was here really on the right track as regards the chief point.

In the same way, in a poem addressed to Frau von Stein on April 14th, 1776, the following passage occurs:

Sag was will das Schicksal uns bereiten?
Sag wie band es uns so rein, genau?
Ach, du warst in abgelebten Zeiten
Meine Schwester, oder meine Frau.

Compare: "I am certain," said Goethe to I. Falk, "that I have been here as I am now a thousand times before, and I hope to return again a thousand times."*

The poem which presents the greatest difficulties in the way of a correct interpretation to literary historians and students of Goethe is to be found in the *West-östlichen Divan* (Book I.) under the title: "Selige Sehnsucht." (Rogers' trans., London, 1890.

Since the mob would not approve it,
No one says but to the wise,
That which seeks a death by burning
Is the living thing I prize.

Where thou did'st beget, begotten
In the coolness of love's night,
Some strange feeling overcomes thee,
When the quiet lamp's alight.†

Thou no more remainest captive
In the shade of gloomy night,
But to higher union drawing,
Fresh desire doth thee excite.

For thee distance does not weary,
Enchanted, thou com'st flying fast,
And as moth for candle yearning,
Thou thyself art burnt at last.

And whilst this thou hast not with thee:
"Rise through death to higher birth,"
Thou art but a gloomy guest
On a dark and gloomy earth!

* *Goethe aus näherem persönlichen Umgang*, von I. Falk.

† In der Liebesnächte Kühlen,
Die dich zeugte, wo du zeugtest
Überfällt dich fremde Fühlung
Wenn die stille Kertze leuchtet.

The literary historian Heinrich Düntzer explains this poem as follows:

"This desire of the butterfly for the attainment of a higher life after dissolution is glorified by the poet as the highest aim of life.

"For it is the desire for higher evolution and for the exaltation of our life, the straining towards an endless progress, which first makes life really worth living."

A much deeper and certainly a much more correct explanation of this poem is given by Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden in the *Sphinx* (xiv., p. 191), in the following words:

"There does not appear to me that there is the slightest doubt that Goethe here presents simply and solely the self-reproduction of the child by means of the conjugal union of the parents, and that he teaches this as his esoteric opinion which should only be given to the wise, because the masses would not understand it, and therefore as usual would deride it, etc."

Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden then develops most lucidly this idea of the self-reproduction of the human individuality, and indeed it is only when we read the above poem in this sense and not otherwise that it becomes comprehensible.

But where do we find in Goethe the idea of karma? Obviously in many places. I will only quote some of the most important:

"As if goaded by invisible spirits, the sun-steeds of time bear onward the fragile chariot of our destiny; and nothing remains for us, but with calm self-possession, firmly to grasp the reins, and to steer the wheels now to the right, now to the left, here from the rocks and there from the abyss. Whither it goes, who knows? Hardly can he remember whence he came," says Egmont.

We find the idea of karma still more clearly and profoundly expressed in the Orphic Oracles, in the first stanza called "Dæmon."

Wie an dem Tag, der dich der Welt verliehen,
Die Sonne stand zum Grusse der Planeten,
Bist alsobald und fort und fort gediehen
Nach dem Gesetz, wonach du angetreten.

So musst du sein, dir kannst du nicht entfliehen—
So sagten schon Sibyllen, so Propheten,
Und keine Zeit und keine Macht zerstückelt
Geprägte Form, die lebend sich entwickelt.

The "impressed form" is the individual stamp of karma. The idea is even clearer in the fifth stanza, as the reader will find if he refers to it.

We must now hurry to a close. We have seen clearly from this theosophical study of Goethe that he has often expressed esoteric thoughts in his verbal and written utterances, in his letters, in his lyrical and dramatic poems, but most clearly in many of his lyrical poems. Here he is entirely under the influence of his poetical genius, one might almost say that it speaks through him, and the thoughts flow from his intuition with crystal clearness, often revealing esoteric truths, which, however, can only illuminate the minds of those who have already made these truths their own.

LUDWIG DEINHARD.

"THE TWO THEOLOGIES"

It must be that the light divine,
That on your soul is pleased to shine,
Is other than what falls on mine:

For you can fix and formalise
The Power on which you raise your eyes
And trace him in his palace-skies.

You can perceive and almost touch
His attributes, as such and such—
Almost familiar over much.

You can his thoughts and ends display,
In fair historical array,
From Adam to the judgment day.

I cannot think Him here or there—
I think Him ever everywhere—
Unfading light, unstifled air.

LORD HOUGHTON.

YOGA IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

LET the soul that would advance and not go back, take care into whose hands it commits itself, for as is the master so is the scholar, and as is the father so is the child.—*St. John of the Cross.*

THE ancient Egyptian abbot Piammon gave the following directions to some "foreigners" who came to his monastery:

"Whoever desires to obtain the skill of any art, unless with all care and vigilance he oblige himself to the studies and labours of that discipline which he desires to learn, and observes the precepts and institutions of the most complete masters of that art or science, he doth in vain, with vain desires, wish to be like them, whose care and industry he refuseth to emulate. . . . Wherefore, if the cause of God, as we believe, drew you to an emulation of our knowledge, you must, abdicating the prejudices of your education with all humility, observe whatever ye shall see your superiors do or prescribe. Nor let it move you, or withdraw and divert you from that imitation, although at present the reason or cause of anything or fact (which you see) be not manifest to you.

"For to those who think well and simply of all things, and do more study to imitate than examine what they see prescribed or done by the Ancients, *by their own experience* doth the knowledge of all things come to them.

"But *he* will never enter into the Reason of the Truth who begins to learn with questioning things, for the enemy will persuade him that that only is Holy which he in the error of his obstinacy thinks right and just." (Cass., coll. 18.)

Piammon was "a Presbyter or Priest of great grace and virtue, even to the doing of miracles"; and speaking of the earlier monastic discipline in one of his "Instructions," he says:

"But others, mindful of that ancient perfection, departing from their cities, and from the company of those who believed

the negligence of a more remiss life to be lawful for themselves or for the Church of God, began to reside in places without the cities and more secret (or retired), and to exercise privately and apart the things which they remembered to be instituted by the apostles generally throughout the whole Body of the Church. And so did that Discipline which we have mentioned of the Disciples who sequestered themselves from the contagion of the rest, come to a settlement. Who, in process of time being separate from the crowds of believers because they did abstain from marriage, and withdrew themselves from the company of their parents, were called Monachi, or Monazontes, for the strictness of their single and solitary life." (Cass., coll. 18, c. 4.)

St. John Chrysostom writing c. 390, shortly before Cassian, gives a most curious picture of these times:

"Should anyone come now to the deserts of Egypt he would see all the wilderness altogether more excellent than a paradise, and innumerable companies of angels shining in mortal bodies. For there is to be seen spread over all that region the Camp of Christ, and the admirable Royal Flock, and the conversation of the Heavenly Powers illustriously shining upon earth. And this you may see most splendid, not in men only but also in women. Heaven itself doth not so shine with various constellations of stars, as Egypt is beset and illustrated with innumerable convents of monks and virgins."

These were the settlements in the Thebaid among whom St. Basil the Great worked in the fourth century, organising a method which should unite the active and the contemplative lives in pursuance of the old traditions.

"We have," he says, "some doctrines committed to writing and some we have received transmitted to us in a secret manner from the traditions." (*De Spiritu Sanct.*, III. cxxvii.)

His Rule is now the sole Code of the Eastern Church; it consists of 203 questions asked and answered on the obligations of the solitary life. He insists particularly on the dangers of absolute solitude for the imperfect, the chief dangers being pride and uncharitableness. He lays stress on obedience, poverty and the perpetual duty of labour, and calls the monks "the workmen of Jesus Christ."

The discourses and conferences held in his day among these Egyptian recluses form the groundwork of all later works on the Science of the Soul,* or the Sancta Sophia (the Sacred Science of the Dominican Order), also called the Science of the Saints. We find here three distinct paths marked out and elaborated, corresponding to Karma-Yoga, Bhakti-Yoga and Gñâna-Yoga. They are the Purgative Way, purification by action, for beginners; the Illuminative Way, mental prayer for proficients, in which thought-control is most fully described; and lastly, the Unitive Way, for the perfect, which contains instructions on contemplation.

The Unitive Way is generally called the Ladder, the Holy Ladder or the Ladder of Perfection. There is a work by St. John Climacus, an Egyptian monk of 605 A.D., called *The Holy Ladder of Perfection*. He was the last of the Greek Fathers and one of the eminent solitaries of the desert, and has always been held in great veneration in the Eastern Church. It is curious that in this Church John the Baptist is so often spoken of as the "Prince of the Anchorites" or the "Prince of Monks."

St. John Climacus is very good reading, and his instructions are practical to a degree. He was a native of Palestine, and began his ascetic career as a youth under various masters. His *Holy Ladder* was translated and published in 1858. On it was probably modelled all or many of the later works, as, for instance, *The Mystic Ladder* of St. John of the Cross, the most venerated of all mystical works, but the least known to the public.

It is very harsh treatment to give extracts of a translation of such a work, but the following may give some idea of the contents, and his complete works are now to be had in English.

The Mystic Ladder

Love is the unitive virtue. The mystic ladder has ten degrees.

The first degree makes the soul languish to its great profit; it falls into the mystic fever. Its restlessness is great, yet nothing

* Ven. Father Louis de Ponte, S.J., *Meditations on the Mysteries, with a Treatise on Mental Prayer* (translated from the Spanish in 1852). See also Ven. Father F. A. Baker (of the Order of St. Benedict), *Sancta Sophia, or Directions for the Prayer of Contemplation* (1657).

earthly pleases; it has no desire of the things of the world. This is through the vehement heat which descends into it from above. It finds no comfort, support or pleasure anywhere. In consequence of this, it immediately begins to ascend the other steps of the ladder.

The second degree is the search. The soul searches unremittingly for God; all its thoughts, words and works are referred to Him. In eating, sleeping and waking all its anxieties are about Him.

In the third step the soul works, and is fervent and faints not. It attempts what is beyond its strength; it looks on great things as little, on many as few, and on length of time as a moment by reason of the burning fire that consumes it. It will serve seven years, and they seem but a few days by reason of the greatness of its love. Here the soul is in great pain by reason of the scantiness of its service; it looks upon itself as unprofitable, and on its whole life as worthless. Another wonderful effect is that it looks upon itself as the worst of all creatures.

The fourth degree is suffering without weariness. Love maketh all things light. "Love strong as death, and jealousy as hard as hell" (*Cant.*, viii. 6). All it cares for is to serve in some degree corresponding to the graces it has received.

In the fifth the soul longs after God with impatience. Every moment seems long, tedious and oppressive. . . . The steps following precede and prepare for the Beatific Vision. The soul is said to run lightly to God; it becomes so bold that no counsel can control it. It says: "I have found Him whom my soul loveth and I will not let Him go." They should be read in their entirety by those in sympathy with the author, but cannot be fairly treated in a few extracts.

The elaborate instructions regarding mind-control, "interior abnegations," how visions are to be treated, and at what point they should be abandoned and disregarded, and on the different stages of experiences which proficients will find they are going through before the perfect peace of pure contemplation can be obtained, on the great desolation—the night of the soul, preceded by the night of the memory, and culminating in the night of the

spirit, which is the darkest of all, these are enough to show how the author himself must have been taught and how far he must have ventured himself along the inner way.

The desertion of the soul in the night of the spirit is the greatest of all pains, but it comes before the great gifts and the soul is taught to endure without resistance—to acquiesce in all: "be in your desertions as passive as in raptures." The torpor is but transitory, The perfect soul established in union has ceased to suffer from this oblivion. Passing through it she acquires a new and divine facility for doing every duty.

Visions are not a proximate means of union with God, because the Divine wisdom to which the intellect is to be united admits of no such limitations or forms. It is in an obscure night that the soul finds God.

"But it is very important to be able to guide others through these visions along the road of union. . . If visions are dangerous why are they sent? They are full of dangers and perplexing to further progress. Yet it is an axiom of theology that 'God moves all things in harmony with their constitution.' He leads the soul through images natural and supernatural, as well as through reflections. God spiritualises the interior senses by certain supernatural visions, so that the senses are withdrawn from the desire of evil things. . . The will of a devout person rests chiefly on the invisible, he requires few images for his use. The chief thing to be regarded in images is devotion and faith, if these be absent the image will not be sufficient.

"If it is asked: Should interior visions be rejected even by a beginner? My answer is that with regard to meditations and natural reflections, through which the soul begins to seek God, it must not abandon the nourishment given by the interior senses to support itself until the time comes when it may do so. That time is in contemplation."

Here follows a long disquisition as to how visions are to be treated.

St. Theresa was for many years in distress and perplexity as to the real nature of her visions, trances, and other unusual experiences. She finally consulted Francis Borgia, the great

Jesuit, who decided that they were genuine gifts and advised her to give in to her mystical development. She gives a most delightfully ingenuous description of a rapture which she calls the "flight of the soul."

"Sometimes," she says, "the spirit seems to be hurried away with a violent speed. This at first causes great fear, and therefore I told you that the person on whom God intends to bestow these favours stands in need of great courage. Do you think it is a small thing to enjoy his senses perfectly and see his soul carried away (even the body too, with some) without knowing who carries it or how it is carried?

"The soul seems to go out of the body and yet the person is not dead; and then another light is shown to her very different from this here below. Whether these things take place in the body I cannot say—at least I would not swear it is in the body. In a word, I know not what I say: the truth is that with the same swiftness with which a bullet passes out of gun, so does a flight take place in the interior of the soul (I know no other name for it) which, though it makes no noise, still causes a movement so manifest, that in no manner can it be taken as the effect of fancy."

Catholic saints, it will be remembered, are by no means encouraged in such "fancies," and they are not allowed to discuss them except in real necessity, even then, they have to run the gauntlet of contempt and ridicule, often imposed on them deliberately to test their sincerity.

There is a most wholesome reserve about these things in the Church of Rome as well as about minor details of the discipline of the mystic, such as the particular mortifications decided upon by each one, the number of hours each one spends in spiritual reading or solitary meditation, and so forth.

"The prayer of the humble is heard," said St. Philip Neri, "but as for those who run after visions, dreams and the like, we must lay hold of them by the feet and pull them to the ground by force."

The voice of mystics in all lands is indeed one, and we may surely confess that we learn from the Western saints, "how divine a thing it is to suffer and be strong." Whether the science

be called occultism or holiness, the ancient truth remains, "that knowledge by suffering entereth," that those who seek the crown must pass by the way of the cross, of the denial of the objective, the rejection of the unreal, perishing personality. "In the Cross (that is in discrimination and indifference) is life, in the cross is strength of mind, in the cross is joy of spirit. Behold! in the cross all doth consist, for there is no other way unto life and unto true inward peace. Thou canst not escape it whithersoever thou runnest, for wheresoever thou goest thou carriest thyself, and shalt ever find thyself. Thou art deceived, thou art deceived if thou seek any other thing."

The "crushed worm" theory has been hastily relegated to contempt by some students, and there are many eager to rush into those sacred precincts where saints and sages have written as with their life-blood, the mystic phrase, "I, too, am God," but it may be that even in our day none will pass through that exceeding narrow entrance, until they are carried over it bound and blinded with pain. It may be that to-day, as yesterday, the greatest of magic feats is the constant patience of the saints.

A. L. B. HARDCASTLE.

THE VEIL OF GOD

GOD hath made all atoms in space mirrors, and fronted each one with his perfect face.

Would'st know where I found the Supreme?

One step beyond myself.

Behind the veil of self shines unseen the beauty of the Loved One.

Persian Aphorism.

APOLLONIUS OF TYANA, THE PHILOSOPHER AND REFORMER OF THE FIRST CENTURY

The Apollonius of Opinion

Apollonius of Tyana* was the most famous philosopher of the Græco-Roman world of the first century, and devoted his long life to the purification of the various cults of the Empire and to the instruction of the ministers and priests of its religions. With the exception of the Christ no more interesting personage appears upon the stage of Western history in these early years. Many and various and mutually contradictory are the opinions that have been held about Apollonius, for the account of his life which has come down to us is in the guise of a romantic story rather than in the form of a plain history. And this is perhaps to some extent to be expected, for Apollonius, besides his public teaching, had a life apart, a life into which even his favourite disciple does not enter. He journeys into the most distant lands, and is lost to the world for years; he enters the shrines of the most sacred temples and the inner circles of the most exclusive communities, and what he says or does therein remains a mystery or serves only as an opportunity for the weaving of some fantastic story by those who did not understand.

The following study will be simply an attempt to put before the reader a brief sketch of the problem which the records and traditions of the life of the famous Tyanæan present; but before we deal with the *Life of Apollonius*, written by Flavius Philostratus at the beginning of the third century, we must give the reader a brief account of the references to Apollonius among the classical writers and the Church Fathers, and a short sketch of the literature of the subject in more recent times, and of the

* Pronounced Tyăna, with the accent on the first syllable and the first *a* short.

varying fortunes of the war of opinion concerning his life in the last four centuries.

First then with regard to the references in classical and patristic authors. Lucian, the witty writer of the first half of the second century, makes the subject of one of his satires the pupil of a disciple of Apollonius, of one of those who were acquainted with "all the tragedy"* of his life. And Appuleius, a contemporary of Lucian, classes Apollonius with Moses and Zoroaster, and other famous Magi of antiquity.†

About the same period, in a work entitled *Quæstiones et Responsiones ad Orthodoxos*, formerly attributed to Justin Martyr, who flourished in the second quarter of the second century, we find the following interesting statement:

"Question 24: If God is the maker and master of creation, how do the consecrated objects‡ of Apollonius have power in the [various] orders of that creation? For, *as we see*, they check the fury of the waves and the power of the winds and the inroads of vermin and attacks of wild beasts."§

Dion Cassius in his history,‖ which he wrote A.D. 211-222, states that Caracalla (Emp. 211-216), honoured the memory of Apollonius with a chapel or monument (*heroum*).

It was just at this time (216) that Philostratus composed his *Life of Apollonius*, at the request of Domna Julia, Caracalla's mother, and it is with this document principally that we shall have to deal in the sequel.

Lampridius, who flourished about the middle of the third century, further informs us that Alexander Severus (Emp. 222-235), placed the statue of Apollonius in his *lararium* together with those of Christ, Abraham and Orpheus.¶

Vopiscus, writing in the last decade of the third century, tells us that Aurelian (Emp. 270-275) vowed a temple to

* *Alexander sive Pseudomantis*, vi. The general reader is advised to omit the notes; they are intended for students.

† *De Magia*, xc. (ed. Hildebrand, 1842, ii. 614).

‡ τελέσματα, "a consecrated object, turned by the Arabs into *telsam* (*talisman*)"; see Liddell and Scott's *Lexicon*, *sub voc.*

§ Justin Martyr, *Opera*, ed. Otto (2nd ed.; Jena, 1849), iii. 32.

‖ Lib., lxxvii. 18.

¶ *Life of Alexander Severus*, xxix.

Apollonius, of whom he had seen a vision when besieging Tyana. Vopiscus speaks of the Tyanæan as "a sage of the most wide-spread renown and authority, an ancient philosopher, and a true friend of the Gods," nay, as a manifestation of deity. "For what among men," exclaims the historian, "was more holy, what more worthy of reverence, what more venerable, what more god-like than he? He, it was, who gave life to the dead. He, it was, who did and said so many things beyond the power of men."* So enthusiastic is Vopiscus about the Tyanæan, that he promises, if he lives, to write a short account of his life in Latin, so that his deeds and words may be on the tongue of all, for as yet the only accounts are in Greek.† Vopiscus, however, did not fulfil his promise, but we learn that about this date both Soterichus‡ and Nichomachus wrote *Lives* of our philosopher, and shortly afterwards Tascius Victorianus, working on the papers of Nichomachus,§ also composed a *Life*. None of these *Lives*, however, have reached us.

It was just at this period also, namely in the last years of the third century and the first years of the fourth, that Porphyry and Iamblichus composed their treatises on Pythagoras and his school; both mention Apollonius as one of their authorities, and it is probable that the first 30 §§ of Iamblichus are taken from Apollonius.‖

We now come to an incident which hurled the character of Apollonius into the arena of Christian polemics, where it has been tossed about until the present day. Hierocles, successively governor of Palmyra, Bithynia and Alexandria, and a philosopher, about the year 305 wrote a criticism of the claims of the Christians, in two books, called *A Truthful Address to the Christians*, or more shortly, *The Truth-lover*.¶ He seems to have

* *Life of Aurelian*, xxiv.

† "*Quæ qui velit nosse, græcos legat libros qui de ejus vita conscripti sunt.*" These accounts were probably the books of Maximus, Moeragenes and Philostratus.

‡ An Egyptian epic poet, who wrote several poetical histories in Greek; he flourished in the last decade of the third century.

§ Sidonius Apollinaris, *Epp.*, viii. 3. See also Legrand d'Aussy, *Vie d'Apollonius de Tyane* (Paris; 1807), p. xlvii.

‖ Porphyry, *De Vita Pythagoræ*, § ii., ed. Kiessling (Leipzig; 1816). Iamblichus, *De Vita Pythagorica*, cap. xxv., ed. Kiess. (Leip.; 1813); see especially K.'s note, pp. 11 *sqq*. See also Porphyry, Frag., *De Styge*, p. 285, ed. Holst.

¶ Λόγος φιλαλήθης πρὸς τοὺς Χριστιανοὺς or ὁ Φιλαλήθης.

based himself for the most part on the previous works of Celsus and Porphyry,* but introduced a new subject of controversy by opposing the wonderful works of Apollonius to the claims of the Christians to exclusive right in "miracles" as proof of the divinity of their Master. In this part of his treatise Hierocles used Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius*.

To this pertinent criticism of Hierocles Eusebius of Cæsarea immediately replied in a treatise still extant, entitled *Contra Hieroclem*.† Eusebius admits that Apollonius was a wise and virtuous man, but denies that there is sufficient proof that the wonderful things ascribed to him ever took place; and even if they did take place, they were the work of "dæmons" and not of God. The treatise of Eusebius is interesting; he severely scrutinises the statements in Philostratus, and shews himself possessed of a first-rate critical faculty. Had he only used the same faculty on the documents of the Church, of which he was the first historian, posterity would have owed him an eternal debt of gratitude. But Eusebius, like so many other apologists, could only see one side; justice, when anything touching Christianity was called into question, was a stranger to his mind, and he would have considered it blasphemy to use his critical faculty on the documents which relate the "miracles" of Jesus. Still the problem of "miracle" was the same, as Hierocles pointed out, and remains the same to this day.

After the controversy reincarnated again in the sixteenth century, and when the hypothesis of the "Devil" as the prime-mover in all "miracles" but those of the Church lost its hold with the progress of scientific thought, the nature of the wonders related in the *Life* of Apollonius was still so great a difficulty that it gave rise to a new hypothesis of plagiarism. The life of Apollonius was a Pagan plagiarism of the life of Jesus. But Eusebius and the Fathers who followed him had no suspicion of

* See Duchesne on the recently discovered works of Macarius Magnes (Paris; 1877).

† The most convenient text is by Gaisford (Oxford; 1852). *Eusebii Pamphili contra Hieroclem;* it is also printed in a number of editions of Philostratus. There are two translations in Latin, one in Italian, one in Danish, all bound up with Philostratus' *Vita*, and one in French printed apart (*Discours d'Eusèbe Evêque de Cesarée touchant les Miracles attribuez par les Payens à Apollonius de Tyane*, tr. by Cousin. Paris; 1584, 12°, 135 pp.).

this; they lived in times when such an assertion could have been easily refuted. There is not a word in Philostratus to show he had any acquaintance with the life of Jesus, and fascinating as Baur's "tendency-writing" theory is to many, we can only say that as a plagiarist of the Gospel-story Philostratus is a conspicuous failure. Philostratus writes the history of a good and wise man, a man with a mission of teaching, clothed in the wonder-stories preserved in the memory and embellished by the imagination of fond posterity, but not the drama of incarnate Deity as the fulfilment of world-prophecy.

Lactantius, writing about 315, also attacked the treatise of Hierocles, who seems to have put forward some very pertinent criticisms; for the Church Father says that he enumerates so many of their Christian inner teachings (*intima*) that sometimes he would seem to have at one time undergone the same training (*disciplina*). But it is in vain, says Lactantius, that Hierocles endeavours to show that Apollonius performed similar or even greater deeds (*vel paria vel etiam majora*) than Jesus, for Christians do not believe that Christ is God because he did wonderful things, but because all the things wrought in him were those which were announced by the prophets.* And in taking this ground Lactantius saw far more clearly than Eusebius the weakness of the proof from "miracle."

Arnobius, the teacher of Lactantius, however, writing at the end of the third century, before the controversy, in referring to Apollonius simply classes him among Magi, such as Zoroaster and others mentioned in the passage of Appuleius to which we have already referred.†

But even after the controversy there is a wide difference of opinion among the Fathers, for although at the end of the fourth century John Chrysostom with great bitterness calls Apollonius a deceiver and evil-doer, and declares that the whole of the incidents in his life are unqualified fiction,‡ Jerome, on the contrary, at

* *Sed quia vidimus in eo facta esse omnia quæ nobis annuntiata sunt vaticinio prophetarum.* Lactantius, *Divinæ Institutiones*, v. 2, 3; ed. Fritsche (Leipzig; 1842), pp. 233-236.

† Arnobius, *Adversus Nationes*, i. 52; ed. Hildebrand (Halle; 1844), p. 86. The Church Father, however, with that exclusiveness peculiar to the Judæo-Christian view, omits Moses from the list of Magi.

‡ John Chrysostom, *Adversus Judæos*, v. 3 (p. 631); *De Laudibus Sancti Pauli Apost. Homil.*, iv. (p. 493, D.; ed. Montfauc.).

the very same date, takes almost a favourable view, for, after perusing Philostratus, he writes that Apollonius found everywhere something to learn and something whereby he might become a better man.* At the beginning of the fifth century Augustine, while ridiculing any attempt at comparison between Apollonius and Christ, says that the character of the Tyanæan was "far superior" to that ascribed to Jove, in respect of virtue.†

About the same date also we find Isidorus of Pelusium, who died in 450, bluntly denying that there is any truth in the claim made by "certain," whom he does not further specify, that Apollonius of Tyana "consecrated many spots in many parts of the world, for the safety of the inhabitants."‡ It is instructive to compare the denial of Isodorus with the passage we have already quoted from Pseudo-Justin. The writer of *Questions and Answers to the Orthodox* in the second century could not dispose of the question by a blunt denial; he had to admit it and argue the case on other grounds—namely, the agency of the Devil. Nor can the argument of the Fathers, that Apollonius used magic to bring about his results, while the untaught Christians could perform healing wonders by a single word,§ be accepted as valid by the unprejudiced critic, for there is no evidence to support the contention that Apollonius employed such methods for his wonder-workings; on the contrary, both Apollonius himself and his biographer Philostratus strenuously repudiate the charge of magic brought against him.

On the other hand, a few years later, Sidonius Apollinaris, Bishop of Claremont, speaks in the highest terms of Apollonius. Sidonius translated the *Life* of Apollonius into Latin for Leon, the councillor of King Euric, and in writing to his friend he says: "Read the life of a man who (religion apart) resembles you in many things; a man sought out by the rich, yet who never sought for riches; who loved wisdom and despised gold; a man frugal in the midst of feastings, clad in linen in the midst of those

* Hieronymus, *Ep. ad Paullinum*, 53 (text ap. Kayser, Præf., ix.).

† August., *Epp.*, cxxxviii. Text quoted by Legrand d'Aussy, *op. cit.*, p. 294.

‡ Isidorus Pelusiota, *Epp.*, p. 138; ed. J. Billius (Paris; 1585).

§ See Arnobius, *loc. cit.*

clothed in purple, austre in the midst of luxury. . . In fine, to speak plainly, perchance no historian will find in ancient times a philosopher whose life is equal to that of Apollonius."*

Thus we see that even among the Church Fathers opinions were divided, while among the philosophers themselves the praise of Apollonius was unstinted.

For Ammianus Marcellinus, "the last subject of Rome who composed a profane history in the Latin language," and the friend of Julian the philosopher-emperor, refers to the Tyanæan as "that most renowned philosopher";† while a few years later Eunapius, the pupil of Chrysanthius, one of the teachers of Julian, writing in the last years of the fourth century, says that Apollonius was more than a philosopher; he was "a middle term, as it were, between gods and men."‡ Not only was Apollonius an adherent of the Pythagorean philosophy, but "he fully exemplified the more divine and practical side in it." In fact Philostratus should have called his biography "The Sojourning of a God among Men."§ This seemingly wildly exaggerated estimate may perhaps receive explanation in the fact that Eunapius belonged to a school which knew the nature of the attainments ascribed to Apollonius.

Indeed, "as late as the fifth century we find one Volusian, a proconsul of Africa, descended from an old Roman family and still strongly attached to the religion of his ancestors, almost worshipping Apollonius of Tyana as a supernatural being."‖

Even after the downfall of philosophy we find Cassiodorus, who spent the last years of his long life in a monastery, speaking

* Sidonius Apollinaris, *Epp.*, viii. 3. Also Fabricius, *Bibliotheca Græca*, pp. 549, 565 (ed. Harles). The work of Sidonius on Apollonius is unfortunately lost.

† *Amplissimus ille philosophus* (xxiii. 7). See also xxi. 14; xxiii. 19.

‡ τι θεῶν τε καὶ ἀνθρώπου μέσον, meaning thereby one who has reached the grade of being superior to man, but not yet equal to the gods. This was called by the Greeks the "dæmonian" order. But the word "dæmon," owing to sectarian bitterness, has long been degraded from its former high estate, and the original idea is now signified in popular language by the term "angel." Compare Plato, *Symposium*, xxiii., πᾶν τὸ δαιμόνιον μεταξύ ἐστι θεοῦ τε καὶ θνητοῦ, "all that is dæmonian is between God and man."

§ Eunapius, *Vitæ Philosophorum*, Procœmium, vi.; ed. Boissonade (Amsterdam; 1822) p. 3.

‖ Réville, *Apollonius of Tyana* (tr. from the French), p. 56 (London; 1866). I have, however, not been able to discover on what authority this statement is made.

of Apollonius as the "renowned philosopher."* So also among Byzantine writers, the monk George Syncellus, in the eighth century, refers several times to our philosopher, and not only without the slightest adverse criticism, but declares that he was the first and most remarkable of all the illustrious people who appeared under the Empire.† Tzetzes also, the critic and grammarian, calls Apollonius "all-wise and a fore-knower of all things."‡

And though the monk Xiphilinus, in the eleventh century, in a note to his abridgment of the history of Dion Cassius, calls Apollonius a clever juggler and magician,§ nevertheless Cedrenus in the same century bestows on Apollonius the not uncomplimentary title of an "adept Pythagorean philosopher,"‖ and relates several instances of the efficacy of his powers in Byzantium. In fact, if we can believe Nicetas, as late as the thirteenth century there were at Byzantium certain bronze doors, formerly consecrated by Apollonius, which had to be melted down because they had become an object of superstition even for the Christians themselves.¶

Had the work of Philostratus disappeared with the rest of the *Lives*, the above would be all that we should have known about Apollonius.** Little enough, it is true, concerning so distinguished a character, yet ample enough to show that the large majority of the suffrages of antiquity were on the side of our philosopher.

We will now turn to the texts, and translations, and general literature of the subject in more recent times. Apollonius returned to the memory of the world, after the oblivion of the dark ages, with evil auspices. From the very beginning the old

* *Insignis philosophus ;* see his *Chronicon*, written down to the year 519.

† In his *Chronographia*. See Legrand d'Aussy, *op. cit.*, p. 313.

‡ *Chiliades*, ii. 60.

§ *Hic præstigiator fuerit solers et magus*, cited by Legrand d'Aussy, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

‖ φιλόσοφος Πυθαγόρειος στοιχειωματικός– Cedrenus, *Compendium Historiarum*, i. 346, ed. Bekker. The word which I have rendered by "adept," signifies one "who has power over the elements."

¶ Legrand d'Aussy, *op. cit.*, p. 308.

** If we except the disputed *Letters* and a few quotations from one of Apollonius' lost writings.

Hierocles-Eusebius controversy was revived, and the whole subject was at once taken out of the calm region of philosophy and history and hurled once more into the stormy arena of religious bitterness and prejudice. For long Aldus hesitated to print the text of Philostratus, and only finally did so (in 1501) with the text of Eusebius as an appendix, so that, as he piously phrases it, "the antidote might accompany the poison." Together with it appeared a Latin translation by the Florentine Rinucci.*

In addition to the Latin version the sixteenth century also produced an Italian† and French translation.‡

The *editio princeps* of Aldus was superseded a century later by the edition of Morel,§ which in its turn was followed a century still later by that of Olearius.‖ Nearly a century and a half later again the text of Olearius was superseded by that of Kayser (the first critical text), whose work in its last edition contains the latest critical apparatus.¶ All information with regard to the MSS. will be found in Kayser's Latin Prefaces.

We shall now attempt some idea of the general literature on the subject, so that the reader may be able to note some of the varying fortunes of the war of opinion in the bibliographical details. And if the reader should be impatient of the matter and eager to get to something of greater interest, he should at least sympathise with the writer, who has been compelled to look through the works of the present century and

* *Philostratus de Vita Apollonii Tyanei Libri Octo*, tr. by A. Rinuccinus, *Eusebius contra Hieroclem*, tr. by Z. Acciolus (Venice; 1501-04, fol.). Rinucci's translation was improved by Beroaldus and printed at Lyons (1504?) and again at Cologne, 1534.

† F. Baldelli, *Filostrato Lemnio della Vita di Apollonio Tianeo* (Florence; 1549, 8°),

‡ B. de Vignère, *Philostrate de la Vie d'Apollonius* (Paris; 1596, 1599, 1611). Blaise de Vignère's translation was subsequently corrected by Frédéric Morel and later by Thomas Artus, Sieur d'Embry, with bombastic notes in which he bitterly attacks the wonder-workings of Apollonius.

A French translation was also made by Th. Sibilet about 1560, but never published; the MS. was in the Bibliothèque Imperiale. See Miller, *Journal des Savants*, 1849, p. 625, quoted by Chassang, *op. infr. cit.*, p. iv.

§ F. Morellus, *Philostrati Lemnii Opera*, Gr. and Lat. (Paris; 1608).

‖ G. Olearius, *Philostratorum quæ supersunt Omnia*, Gr. and Lat. (Leipzig; 1709).

¶ C. L. Kayser, *Flavii Philostrati quæ supersunt*, etc. (Zürich; 1844, 4°). In 1849 A. Westermann also edited a text, *Philostratorum et Callistrati Opera*, in Didot's "Scriptorum Græcorum Bibliotheca" (Paris; 1849, 8°). But Kayser brought out a new edition in 1853 (?) and again a third, with additional information in the Preface, in the "Bibliotheca Teubneriana" (Leipzig; 1870).

a good round dozen of those of the previous centuries, before he could venture on an opinion of his own with a clear conscience.

Sectarian prejudice against Apollonius characterises nearly every opinion prior to the present century.* Of books distinctly dedicated to the subject the works of the Abbé Dupin† and de Tillemont‡ are bitter attacks on the Philosopher of Tyana in defence of the monopoly of Christian miracles; while those of the Abbé Houtteville§ and Lüderwald‖ are less violent, though on the same lines. A pseudonymous writer, however, of the eighteenth century, strikes out a somewhat different line by classing together the miracles of the Jesuits and other Monastic Orders with those of Apollonius, and dubbing them all spurious, while maintaining the sole authenticity of those of Jesus.¶

Nevertheless, Bacon and Voltaire speak of Apollonius in the highest terms,** and even a century before the latter the English Deist, Charles Blount,†† raised his voice against the universal obloquy poured upon the character of the Tyanæan; his work, however, was speedily suppressed.

In the midst of this war of miracles in the eighteenth

* For a general summary of opinions prior to 1807, of writers who mention Apollonius incidentally, see Legrand d'Aussy, *op. cit.*, ii., pp. 313-327.

† *L'Histoire d'Apollone de Tyane convaincue de Fausseté et d'Imposture* (Paris; 1705).

‡ *An Account of the Life of Apollonius Tyaneus* (London; 1702), tr. out of the French, from vol. ii. of Lenain de Tillemont's *Histoire des Empereurs* (2nd ed., Paris; 1720): to which is added "Some Observations upon Apollonius." De Tillemont's view is that Apollonius was sent by the Devil to destroy the work of the Saviour.

§ *A Critical and Historical Discourse upon the Method of the Principal Authors who wrote for and against Christianity from its Beginning* (London; 1739), tr. from the French of M. l'Abbé Houtteville; to which is added a "Dissertation on the Life of Apollonius Tyanæus, with some Observations on the Platonists of the Latter School," pp. 213-254.

‖ *Anti-Hierocles oder Jesus Christus und Apollonius von Tyana in ihrer grossen Ungleichheit*, dargestellt v. J. B. Lüderwald (Halle; 1793).

¶ Phileleutherus Helvetius, *De Miraculis quæ Pythagoræ, Apollonio Tyanensi, Francisco Asisio, Dominico, et Ignatio Lojolæ tribuuntur Libellus* (Draci; 1734).

** See Legrand d'Aussy, *op. cit.*, ii., p. 314, where the texts are given.

†† *The Two First Books of Philostratus concerning the Life of Apollonius Tyaneus* (London; 1680, fol.). Blount's notes (generally ascribed to Lord Herbert) raised such an outcry that the book was condemned in 1693, and few copies are in existence. Blount's notes were, however, translated into French a century later, in the days of Encyclopædism, and appended to a French translation of the *Vita*, under the title, *Vie d'Apollonius de Tyane par Philostrate avec les Commentaires donnés en Anglois par Charles Blount sur les deux Premiers Livres de cet Ouvrage* (Amsterdam; 1779, 4 vols., 8°), with an ironical dedication to Pope Clement XIV., signed "Philalethes."

century it is pleasant to remark the short treatise of Herzog, who endeavours to give a sketch of the philosophy and religious life of Apollonius,* but, alas! there were no followers of so liberal an example in this century of strife.

So far then for the earlier literature of the subject. Frankly none of it is worth reading; the problem could not be calmly considered in such a period. It started on the false ground of the Hierocles-Eusebius controversy, which was but an incident (for wonder-working is common to all great teachers and not peculiar to Apollonius or Jesus), and was embittered by the rise of Encyclopædism and the rationalism of the Revolution period. Not that the miracle-controversy ceased even in the present century; it does not, however, any longer obscure the whole horizon, and the sun of a calmer judgment may be seen breaking through the mist.

In order to make the rest of our summary clearer we append at the end of this article the titles of the works which have appeared since the beginning of the present century, in chronological order.

A glance over this list will show that the present century has produced an English (Berwick's), an Italian (Lancetti's), a French (Chassang's), and two German translations (Jacobs' and Baltzer's).† The Rev. E. Berwick's translation is the only English version; in his Preface the author, while asserting the falsity of the miraculous element in the *Life*, says that the rest of the work deserves careful attention. No harm will accrue to the Christian religion by its perusal, for there are no allusions to the Life of Christ in it, and the miracles are based on those ascribed to Pythagoras.

This is certainly a healthier standpoint than that of the traditional theological controversy, which, unfortunately, however, was revived again by the great authority of Baur, who saw in a number of the early documents of the Christian era (notably

* *Philosophiam Practicam Apollonii Tyanæi in Sciagraphia*, exponit M. Io. Christianus Herzog (Leipzig; 1709); an academical oration of 20 pp.

† Philostratus is a difficult author to translate, nevertheless Chassang and Baltzer have succeeded very well with him; Berwick also is readable, but in most places gives us a paraphrase rather than a translation and frequently mistakes the meaning. Chassang's and Beltzer's are by far the best translations.

the *Acts*) tendency-writings of but slight historical content, representing the changing fortunes of schools and parties and not the actual histories of individuals. The Life of Apollonius was one of these tendency-writings; its object was to put forward a view opposed to Christianity in favour of philosophy. Baur thus divorced the whole subject from its historical standpoint and attributed to Philostratus an elaborate scheme of which he was entirely innocent. Baur's view was largely adopted by Zeller in his *Philosophie der Griechen* (v. 140), and by Réville in Holland.

This "Christusbild" theory (carried by a few extremists to the point of denying that Apollonius ever existed) has had a great vogue among writers on the subject, especially compilers of encyclopædia articles; it is at any rate a wider issue than the traditional miracle-wrangle, which was again revived in all its ancient narrowness by Newman, who only uses Apollonius as an excuse for a dissertation on orthodox miracles, to which he devotes eighteen pages out of the twenty-five of his treatise. Noack also follows Baur, and to some extent Pettersch though he takes the subject on to the ground of philosophy; while Möckeberg, pastor of St. Nicolai in Hamburg, though striving to be fair to Apollonius, ends his chatty dissertation with an outburst of orthodox praises of Jesus.

The development of the Jesus-Apollonius-miracle controversy into the Jesus-against-Apollonius and even Christ-against-Anti-Christ battle, fought out with relays of lusty champions on the one side against a feeble protest at best on the other, is a painful spectacle to contemplate. How sadly must Jesus and Apollonius have looked upon, and still look upon, this bitter and useless strife over their saintly persons. Why should posterity set their memories one against the other? Did they oppose one another in life? Did even their biographers do so after their deaths? Why then could not the controversy have ceased with Eusebius? for Lactantius frankly admits the point brought forward by Hierocles (to exemplify which Hierocles only referred to Apollonius as one instance out of many)—that "miracles" do not prove divinity. We rest our claims, says Lactantius, *not* on

miracles, but on the fulfilment of prophecy.* Had this more sensible position been revived instead of that of Eusebius, the problem of Apollonius would have been considered in its natural historical environment four hundred years ago, and much ink and paper would have been saved.

With the progress of the critical method, however, opinion has at length partly recovered its balance, and it is pleasant to be able to turn to works which have rescued the subject from theological obscurantism and placed it in the open field of historical and critical research. The two volumes of the independent thinker, Legrand d'Aussy, which appeared at the very beginning of the century, are, for the time, remarkably free from prejudice, and are a praiseworthy attempt at historical impartiality, but criticism was still young at this period. Kayser, though he does not go thoroughly into the matter, decides that the account of Philostratus is purely a "*fabularis narratio*," but is well opposed by I. Müller, who contends for a strong element of history as a background. But by far the best sifting of the sources is that of Jessen.† Priaulx's study deals solely with the Indian episode and is of no critical value for the estimation of the sources. Of all previous studies, however, the works of Chassang and Baltzer are the most generally intelligent, for both writers are aware of the possibilities of psychic science, though mostly from the insufficient standpoint of spiritistic phenomena.

As for Tredwell's somewhat pretentious volume which, being in English, is accessible to the general reader, it is largely reactionary, and is used as a cover for adverse criticism of the Christian origins from a Secularist standpoint which denies at the outset the possibility of "miracle" in any meaning of the word. Tredwell's work is implicitly a "Gegenbild Christi," and as such takes up an entirely erroneous standpoint. A mass of well-known numismatological and other matter, which is entirely

* This would have at least restored Apollonius to his natural environment and confined the question of the divinity of Jesus to its proper Judæo-Christian ground.

† I am unable to offer any opinion on Nielsen's book, from ignorance of Danish, but it has all the appearance of a careful, scholarly treatise with abundance of references.

irrelevant, but which seems to be new and surprising to the author, is introduced, and a map is prefixed to the title-page purporting to give the itineraries of Apollonius, but having little reference to the text of Philostratus. Indeed, nowhere does Tredwell show that he is working on the text itself, and the subject in his hands is but an excuse for a rambling dissertation on the first century in general from his own standpoint.

This is all regrettable, for with the exception of Berwick's translation, which is almost unprocurable, we have nothing of value in English for the general reader,* except Sinnett's short sketch, which is descriptive rather than critical or explanatory.

So far then for the history of the Apollonius of opinion; we will now turn to the Apollonius of Philostratus and attempt to discover the traces of the man as he was in history, and the nature of his life and work.

Appendix

F. Jacobs, *Observationes in . . . Philostrati Vitam Apollonii* (Jena; 1804). purely philological, for the correction of the text.

P. J. B. Legrand d'Aussy, *Vie d'Apollonius de Tyane* (Paris; 1807, 2 vols.).

G. J. Bekker, *Specimen Variarum Lectionum . . . in Philost. Vitæ App. Librum primum* (1808); purely philological.

E. Berwick, *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, translated from the Greek of Philostratus, with Notes and Illustrations (London; 1809).

V. Lancetti, *Le Opere dei due Filostrati*, Italian trs. (Milano; 1828-31); in "Coll. degli Ant. Storici Greci volgarizzati."

F. Jacobs, *Philostratus: Leben des Apollonius von Tyana* in the series "Griechische Prosaiker," German trs. (Stuttgart; 1829-32), vols. xlviii., lxvi., cvi., cxi., each containing two books; a very clumsy arrangement.

F. C. Baur, *Apollonius von Tyana und Christus oder das Verhältniss des Pythagoreismus zum Christenthum* (Tübingen; 1832); reprinted from the *Tübinger Zeitschrift für Theologie*.

Second edition by E. Zeller (Leipzig; 1876), in *Drei Abhandlungen zur Geschichte der Alten Philosophie und ihres Verhältnisses zum Christhenthum*.

Kayser and Westermann's editions as above referred to.

J. H. Newmann, "Apollonius Tyanæus—Miracles," in Smedley's *Encyclopædia Metropolitana* (London; 1845), x., pp. 619-644.

L. Noack, "Apollonius von Tyana ein Christusbild des Heidenthums," in his magazine *Psyche: Populärwissenschaftliche Zeitschrift für die Kentniss des menschlichen Seelen- und Geistes-lebens* (Leipzig; 1858), Bd. i., Heft ii., pp. 1-24.

* Reville's *Pagan Christ* is quite a misrepresentation of the subject, and the standpoint of Newman's treatise renders it an anachronism at the end of the nineteenth century.

I. P. E. Müller, *Commentatio qua de Philostrati in componenda Memoria Apoll. Tyan. fide quæritur*, I.-III. (Onoldi et Landavii; 1858-1860).

E. Müller, *War Apollonius von Tyana ein Weiser oder ein Betrüger oder ein Schwärmer und Fanatiker?* Ein Culturhistorische Untersuchung (Breslau; 1861, 4°), 56 pp.

A. Chassang, *Apollonius de Tyane*, sa Vie, ses Voyages, ses Prodiges, par Philostrate, et ses Lettres, trad. du grec. avec Introd., Notes et Eclaircissements (Paris; 1862), with the additional title, *Le Merveilleux dans l'Antiquité*.

A. Réville, *Apollonius the Pagan Christ of the Third Century* (London; 1866), tr. from the French. The original is not in the British Museum.

O. de B. Priaulx, *The Indian Travels of Apollonius of Tyana*, etc. (London; 1873), pp. 1-62.

C. Mönckeberg, *Apollonius von Tyana*, ein Weihnachtsgabe (Hamburg; 1877), 57 pp.

C. H. Pettersch, *Apollonius von Tyana der Heiden Heiland*, ein philosophische Studie (Reichenberg; 1879), 23 pp.

C. L. Nielsen, *Apollonios fra Tyana og Filostrats Beskrivelse af hans Levnet* (Copenhagen; 1879); the Appendix (pp. 167 *sqq.*) contains a Danish tr. of Eusebius *Contra Hieroclem.*

E. Baltzer, *Apollonius von Tyana*, aus den Griech. übersetzt u. erläutert (Rudolstadt i/ Th.; 1883).

J. Jessen, *Apollonius von Tyana und sein Biograph Philostratus* (Hamburg; 1885, 4°), 36 pp.

D. M. Tredwell, *A Sketch of the Life of Apollonius of Tyana or the first Ten Decades of our Era* (New York; 1886).

A. P. Sinnett, "Apollonius of Tyana," in the *Transactions* (No. 32) of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society (London; 1898), pp. 32.

The reader may also consult the articles in the usual Dictionaries and Encyclopædias, none of which, however, demand special mention. P. Cassel's learned paper in the *Vossische Zeitung* of Nov. 24th, 1878, I have not been able to see.

G. R. S. Mead.

Wisdom matures but slowly; her fruits shall not quickly be gathered. If my life has not been as that of Paulus Æmilius, there shall be no comfort for me in the thoughts whereby he was consoled, not though every sage in the world were to come and repeat them to me. The angels that dry our tears bear the form and the features of all we have said and thought—above all, of what we have done, prior to the hour of misfortune.—*Wisdom and Destiny*, p. 111, by Maurice Maeterlinck.

INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE KARMA

(CONCLUDED FROM p. 467)

WE left off, last month, with the picture of the savage tribe, as we see it for the most part around us now, and as history has described it to us for as far back as anything is clearly known of it; an assemblage of human beings, of low development indeed, but the frame of society which holds them together adapted to a condition lower still. But we must not let ourselves be misled by a word. That older shape which they are outgrowing has features which quite naturally give it in their confused recollections the air of a past Golden Age, and the first steps of progress from it almost universally take in popular imagination the character of a Fall of Man. The life in common, such as the brutes lead, has to be broken up, and the instrument —at this particular stage the indispensable and necessary instrument—is selfishness. Whatever tends to separate one member of the tribe from his fellows—selfish ambition, selfish greed, selfish lust, or even selfish desire to "save one's soul"—is, at this point, working along with Nature, and not against her. The independent, self-determined *man*—the sovereign ruler over himself and his circumstances—the ideal we cherish in our own hearts and which so few, even amongst ourselves, succeed in reaching, is the produce of life after life of strong, energetic, resolute *desire*, and that desire set upon objects which cannot be shared with the rest of the tribe or family. At this period morality (in the ordinary sense) does not exist, and cannot be implanted from without; as is shown by the experiences of so many explorers and missionaries in savage lands. Nor is it to be desired, strange as the statement may seem; to *civilise* a savage really means to stop his appointed course of development, not to help him forward. Were it not that the phase of "civilisation" to which the rum-dealer and the mission-

ary introduce him furnishes him with so many new and more effective motives and means of taking his selfish pleasure at the expense of others, this would be evident enough. The only completely successful Christianising of the savage, that of the Jesuit Missions amongst the Pueblo-Indians in South America, vanished at the first touch of the fierce Portuguese slave-dealers of San Paulo; in later times the trader and his "fire-water" do the same work, but somewhat less speedily.

Thus the development of the individual is only attained by the complete ruin of the old order. From its first appearance the common life is of necessity one of decadence. No new life can enter, and generation after generation more and more of the wisdom of the elders is forgotten; the leaders of the tribe live more and more for their own ruthless pleasure, regardless of the traditions; what had once been a well-organised community becomes a mere "dark habitation full of cruelty"; the slave-raider comes in to finish the devastation of war; whole countries are laid desolate without habitation or sign of life. But mark this! All this is in the order of Nature; not one of these lives is lost (as we foolishly phrase it), nor is a pang of all the suffering wasted. If the white man's gunpowder and fire-water enter into the history, they do but hasten the necessary process of destruction; the ground is thus cleared for the return of the souls which animated those ruined bodies, better men into a new and better form of society, and thus the world moves on. Over and over in every land the same thing recurs in ever new shape. In Greece, in Rome, in Italy, in England, the great families keep together and rule by the virtues of the older times when the family was everything and the individual nothing; there results a stern grandeur of overwhelming power which even now dazzles the eyes of such men as Carlyle and F. Nietzsche; but each time the movement of the world is too strong for them in the long run. Sooner or later selfishness for the tribe or the family is broken up by the still more energetic selfishness for the solitary self—an ugly thing to look at, in truth, but working out for good in the end. When the Romans, under their kings, are ripe for self-government, Tarquin sets lustful eyes on Lucrece and *that* form is broken up; when the great families begin to

hang too heavily on the growing Roman state, one of the greatest produces an Appius Claudius the Decemvir, a survival of what would have been reckoned as normal fifty years before, but now his greedy clutch at the soldier's pretty child, Virginia, is the signal for the sweeping away of the rule of the patricians for evermore. The whole of Roman history is thus, when rightly regarded, nothing but the clearing away, one by one, of the last remnants of the animal common life, and the slow development of the individual man. We may note in passing that we have here the explanation and, as it seems to me, the justification of the share which Christianity unquestionably had in the general break-up of the old order. The lesson which Nature had then to teach mankind in the Western world was just the one we have to teach now—that each man lives for himself—is his own creator in the past, his own judge for the future ; that no one can answer for another's soul ; that all family, tribal and even national connections fall away from the soul which once has learnt its own dignity as a separate Self. This lesson is just what the young Christianity, in its way, taught, and taught well ; I think there is no need to look farther for the secret of its success. It was working at that time along with Nature, as we ourselves learn to do, and it carried with it the momentum of Nature's resistless force. That in the coming centuries the inertia of the old order, which it should have replaced, was too strong for it, and gradually drew it back till by insensible degrees it has come to stand against the world's development instead of leading the movement, is the history—so far—of every such attempt. Care is taken, as the German proverb has it, that the trees shall not grow into the sky ; not yet, but the time will come !

The world's history from the time of the utter break-up of the Roman Empire is a complete justification of my thesis that the world—macrocosm or microcosm—advances, not in any straightforward order of development—as it were in triumphal procession, but only through fierce and long-continued struggle, often beaten back, the old enemies time after time returning in new forms to win once more their long-forgotten victories. Under the incursions of the barbarians it might have seemed

that the destruction of the old order was complete; central government had vanished, and nothing was left but individuals, as disorganised and incapable of resistance or cohesion as the sands of the sea-shore. One might have thought that there no longer stood anything in the way of a new descent of the Spirit for the foundation of a new world of unselfishness, of mutual love and mutual help—the Golden Age! Are we desperately to abuse the wickedness of human nature, or to speak evil of the Powers who rule the world, if a thousand years have passed since then, and have left us still in the wilderness—far from the Promised Land? Is all that has passed since then mere loss, pure waste of human life and suffering, something which might and should have been spared us?

Our answer to the question is simple enough. The Golden Age comes not by institutions or governments, and cannot be decreed by Adept Rulers or inspired by any Divine Providence. Man must grow up into it; and so slow is that growth that even yet, at the opening of the twentieth century A.D., we are far from being out of our childhood. The objects of the world's movement are now, as ever, two-fold—one the breaking-up of the old and worn-out groupings which no longer respond to the actual needs of our present time; and, second, the preparation of the new groupings—the new forms of society which shall serve as the vehicles of the new life and power which are ready for us as soon as we are ready for them.

It is this second object which the world has as yet failed to reach, but towards which all the struggles of the last millennium are slowly working. Looking back upon our past we may, it seems to me, take comfort in the thought that the roughest and cruellest part of the world's education is passed and ended, at least for some considerable portion of mankind. There are still, it is true, savages who can only learn by blood and iron; nor is it only in what are known as savage countries these are to be found. There are savages by arrested development; there are also savages by degeneration; we cannot but admit with sorrow that races which have at one time been capable of the highest aspirations and have led the world's advance, may fall to the lower level and cause untold loss and suffering to those who

refuse to be dragged back in their company. But all this is passing—the moral sense of the world is rising—rising beyond the forms of religion and morality which profess to contain the last word of human progress, blind to the fact that already they are left behind by it; if we have not yet reached the Golden Age, at all events we are a thousand years nearer to it. And what is a thousand years to *us*, who have the æonian eternity in which to reach our goal?

Our view thus joins hands with all the parties at the present time busying themselves with the future of the world. We agree with the Socialist—nay, with the Nihilist, that when the long struggle is over and the new and better order has completely taken the place of the old, nothing resembling the present system of government, either regal or democratic —nothing like the present plan of society with its desperate struggle for the means of existence, its ranks and castes measured solely by success in the fight for wealth and its utter carelessness of the millions who have been trodden under foot by their luckier rivals—can be expected or desired to remain in existence. The moral sense of humanity at large is already so far developed, that this is seen and openly proclaimed by many, and dimly felt by all, even the most bigoted of conservatives; the power is growing which will in time irresistibly sweep all this, founded as it is on the gospel of selfishness, utterly away. But (and here we part company) we are not yet at the point where the mere destruction of the old will bring us to the new and better. Selfishness has not yet done its work; and until humanity at large stands many steps higher on the ladder of evolution than it does at present, the undertaking to remodel society on the altruistic ideal *may*, haply, be found to be fighting against God—like the modern religion, a drawing backwards instead of forwards.

Is this a hard saying, and do some of my readers, at first hearing, themselves feel inclined to "draw back and walk no more with me"? I cannot wonder if such be the case, and this from two very opposite points of view. To the Socialist militant I would reply with the example of the French Revolution of a hundred years ago. Can they hope for a more complete de-

struction of the old fabric than was there effected, or for more unselfish devotion to the welfare of society than that with which the work was at first undertaken? And yet how few years had passed before the Red Terror was succeeded by the White—the Saviours of Society having been found upon trial far more ruinous to the nation than its old tyrants; and in thirty years a De Tocqueville could plausibly defend the apparent paradox that government and society alike were going on exactly in the old way—habits, modes of thought and action utterly unchanged by all the Blood and Fire which was to have made all things new. But how could it have been otherwise? The *men* were unchanged—all that were left. Marat's demand was too modest—to make a new nation needed, then and there, not his poor thirty thousand heads, but those of all then in life—men, women, and children—nothing less! And even then—"hatred ceaseth not by hatred; only by love!"

But to those of my readers who have learned so much of the Secret of the Ages as to know that through unselfish love lies the only way out of all the confusion and misery of the world around us, I owe an explanation—possibly an apology for a word which may so much as seem to depreciate their ideal. Explanation and apology both lie in the fact I am trying in this paper to emphasise—that the majority of mankind are yet far from being the independent individualities they must become before perfect unselfishness can furnish a sufficiently energetic motive for their actions. At this present stage, in short, selfishness is still the only motive power which can be relied upon to bring them on—the segregation from their fellows must become *more* complete before the gradual refinement of their vehicles can raise them to the *higher* unselfishness of which the common life of the animals is a representation, a suggestion, upon their lower plane. They are as yet subject to family, race, national karma, because they yet, to a large extent, think, feel, and act from the community thought and feeling which they unconsciously share. Family, tribe, nation, are still (as I view the matter) actual entities which exist and incur karma of their own, in spite of the gradual thinning out of the links which hold their members together. Every desire which one of these members cherishes for some-

thing which he cannot enjoy in common with the rest (be that something good or evil in itself) is a weakening of this link—a step towards individuation. For a long time to come selfishness (of course refined and elevated as we rise) must be the motive power for their advance, and to attain perfect unselfishness at this stage would simply mean total eclipse; just as we are told that the *premature* attainment of Moksha would bring—not absorption into the Divine, but unconsciousness, complete, long-continued, and utterly useless. There is an image by which I sometimes seem to clear this matter up in my own mind which I will venture to give here, though I fear that I have nothing to show in corroboration. I fancy to myself the progress of mankind as a line of railway upon which a train travels, and this power of selfishness—the individuating force—as the engine which draws it—say, an electric engine, *charged* so as to draw it so many miles and no more. The "critical period" of each man's life, of which we used to hear so much; the time when he comes to the "middle of his fifth round" (for this is surely a different date for each, and not one fixed for all by the calendar) would be the time when the motive power which has brought him so far has died out, as in the course of nature it must do; and the question which then decides whether he remains stuck at that point, with no means of farther advance, one of the "failures" of this evolution; or, as we often put it, attains immortality, is simply the question whether his higher ego has succeeded in making the lower so far sensitive to its presence as that the higher and nobler motives, which are the only ones *it* can feel, are actually able to take the place of the vanished aims of the mere desire-nature and propel the lower to the necessary action. Whether there be any foundation for this way of looking at things or no, even if it be a mere parable, it certainly has a parable's lesson for us. Time after time, in one life after another, until we come at last to the actually final judgment, we shall come to feel that the lower desires have exhausted themselves; that there is no longer anything in this outer world for which we care. If this comes to us as hopeless *ennui*, desperate clinging to the pleasures which no longer please, as those who say, "Let us eat and

drink for to-morrow we die," *then* at our life's end we are one step nearer the abyss into which the "failures" drop for their æonic "annihilation." Such a life as this is, however, not unfrequently (as we read in the lives of so many saints) the backward step from which the soul springs forwards to the unselfish life; there is a series of lives more hopeless still as regards the future. It is the life of the ordinary respectable, *good* people who live around us, who refrain from the coarser vices, go regularly to church or chapel, subscribe to their benevolent societies, and find their joy in thanking God that they are not as others are. Verily, as the Master said, "they have their reward"; but when they "have had their day and cease to be" their good belongs to the sect, the society whose common feeling, and not any separate life of their own, has actuated them; and life may recur after life and find them still harmless, still self-satisfied, but standing still, when their only chance is to go forward. To fall into open vice would often be, for such natures, an advance instead of a fall; for such a man (as is said) to "forfeit his place in society" might well be the first step in "making a man" of him instead of a mere human animal. Here lies the justification of many popular instincts as to the "sowing of wild oats" and the like, which are grievous abominations in the eyes of the vulgar moralist, who can see no further than this present world; but this too is a hard saying; and, as St. Paul says, "I spare you!" Only I will remind you that in such matters "God seeth not as man seeth." That a human being should pass quietly and harmlessly through one of his many lives is something, but not much; that out of a life's wildest dissipation or cruellest suffering some gain shall come to the immortal soul is everything—the only thing for which he has lived at all. And more; the certainty that to this long and confused series of lives there will come a fixed limit at which it must be finally settled whether the soul has failed or succeeded—whether it can go on with its fellows or can *not*, is a spur to exertion which but few of us can entirely do without. For a long time to come most of us will think far too much by the common thought, desire according to the common lust, live by the common life of our personal surroundings; and it is good to be sometimes re-

minded of the time when all this must be ended—under pain of total failure.

For a useful likeness under which we may sum up the bearings of this subject we may perhaps without impropriety avail ourselves of one which has been recently used amongst us, avowedly as a picture which holds a deeper truth than its mere words express. We may think of the common life of the animal as the reflection cast upon the lower plane by the higher common life, to be reached as we pass beyond the stage of self-regarding separation from our fellows which makes us men, to the higher life which shall make us gods. The mere community of *instincts* which is the base of most of that which is known amongst us as "public opinion" and the like is, in itself, of the animal only. As these instincts, from being merely *blind* instincts, take the shape of the common hopes and longings of the desire-natures of human beings, as yet one almost indistinguishable from another, we have an advance. When the root of the common action is raised to the lower *mind* we have the differences of true *men*—in one sense completely differentiated, and yet unconsciously held together by such bonds as (for example) those of nationality, so that two precisely similar minds will come to quite different conclusions on the same state of facts simply because one inhabits a body on one side of the English Channel and one on the other.

But the common life of the higher planes, where the true Self lives, is something quite different, and excludes all such distinctions. In old times the man who had risen to this life, above all matters of the physical plane, was called a Philosopher; but that word, as now used, connotes something exceedingly different, and to use it would mislead. To say a "Theosophist" would be ambiguous—for there are Theosophists and Theosophists. The word Adept is often loosely used in the writings of H. P. B. to express very nearly the meaning required; but this new life is somehow conceived of—blindly *sensed*, as one might say, though not *seen*, far below that stage. I have said we must not aim at it till our separate individual existence has been so filled with life and illustrated by long experience as to be *worth* re-uniting with the All from whence it set out so long ago; but

for all that the thought of it is and must be our greatest consolation from the first moment we avert our eyes from the world around us to lift them up unto the hills, from whence cometh our strength. How could we possibly endure the isolation in which the strength of our soul has to grow and ripen before we are fit for the use of the Masters—They who, in due time, will "set the solitary in companies"—unless from time to time we could surround ourselves in spirit with our comrades in the great battle and feel ourselves in our place in their ranks, *one* with them in the great Life which fills us, *one* in the vast knowledge which lies at our feet, daily opening wider about us; and (deepest of all) *one* in the great Hope we all share, we who (in the Apostle's words) "know not yet what we shall be," but yet are fully, entirely assured that in the end "we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

ARTHUR A. WELLS.

THE WELSH ISIS AND THE BARDIC TRADITION

THE Welsh Isis, the goddess Ceridwen, Caridwin, Keridwin, or Kêd, is a divinity whose very existence has been doubted. It has now been proved that such a deity was worshipped by the ancient Welsh, but it is still a vexed question as to whether anything authentic is known as to the nature of her rites. The question hinges chiefly upon the authenticity of the Iolo MSS., and the system which has been called the "Neo-Druidic imposture," the "wild imaginations of the mediæval bards."

Briefly put, the question is this: Had the Welsh Druids a connected system of philosophy, as the words of Lucan, translated by Matthew Arnold, seem to imply*—a system with secret

* "To you only is given knowledge or ignorance, whichever it be, of the gods and the powers of heavens. From you we learn that the bourne of man's ghost is not the senseless grave, not the pale realm of the monarch below; in another world his spirit survives still; death, if your law be true, is but the passage to enduring life."—*Celtic Literature*, p. 42.

teaching and initiatory rites for the worthy; and was such learning preserved by their pupils, the Bards, and handed down by them through the centuries wherein they were believed to be orthodox Christians—handed down, to have general attention drawn to it by Iolo Morganwy?

I will, however, first of all give, in as few words as possible, a sketch of the history of Welsh literature, and the nature of the teaching and legends, together with a few of the opinions held by those who have commentated upon them.

If we consult the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (9th ed., art. "Celtic Literature"), which pronounces its judgment with great authority, we learn that there are many Welsh MSS., but few of them are ancient; they have been compiled at different periods by ignorant scribes. There are, roughly speaking, five ancient books of Wales: (*a*) *Paraphrase of the Gospels of Juvencus;* (*b*) *The Black Book of Carmarthen* (date 1154); (*c*) *The Book of Taliessin* (date 1300); (*d*) *Book of Aneurin* (twelfth century); (*e*) *The Red Book of Hergest,* from which the *Mabinogion* is taken (date 1300-1400).

The Bards, to whom these poems are attributed, flourished at an earlier period, but these are said to be the approximate dates of the MSS.

In 1801-3 there was published the *Myvyrian Archiology of Wales;* this was a collection of poems attributed to ancient Bards; the said poems were collected by three men, who were enthusiasts for the literary repute of the Welsh. The chief contributor to the collection was Mr. Williams, a stonemason, and a very remarkable man, whose statements received the support and credence of some of the most learned Welsh students and archæologists of his day.

He was, to give him the Bardic name to which he laid claim, Iolo Morganwy. He stated that ancient Bardic learning had been preserved throughout the Middle Ages, and produced the poems of the *Myvyrian Archiology* as evidence; but their authenticity and his interpretations have alike been questioned. On them the Rev. Mr. Davies has built what has been called "his amazing system of Neo-Druidism," a system, indeed, with which Theosophists will not be prepared to agree. Iolo Morganwy

maintained that there had existed four Chairs of the Bards, and one still existed, namely, the Chair of Glamorgan; he declared further that the succession of Bards could be traced back to 1300. It is certain that Mr. E. Jones in his *Welsh Bards* (p. 60, n. 10) adduces much evidence of attempts to preserve Bardic learning past the reign of Elizabeth.

Let us, however, leave the question of the Iolo MSS. for a while, and proceed with the consideration of the statements of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. "Welsh literature," says the article from which I quote, "really began with the eleventh century; the authenticity of poems attributed to men who undoubtedly lived in the fifth and sixth centuries is doubtful." But, says Skene, in his careful analysis of the *Four Ancient Books of Wales* (p. 184) that there were such men as Taliessin and Aneurin is certain; that the poems bearing their names do not possess the orthography of that age is equally certain, but this implies no more than that we do not possess transcripts made at the time. Aneurin's *Y Gododin* has the best claim to be considered genuine; those attributed to Taliessin* appear to belong to the twelfth century.

Five poems which are attributed to men who lived between the sixth and eleventh centuries (the so-called barren period of Welsh literature) are incorporated in *The Black Book;* in two of these the name of Ceridwen is mentioned. A few of the poems which appeared in the *Myvyrian Archiology* are also found in the four ancient books; for example, the *Avellenau*, or Apple Tree of Merddin, an Iolo MS., is also found in *The Black Book;* the "Mead Song" of Taliessin is found in *The Book of Taliessin*, it is moreover an "Iolo" poem.

The *Hanes Taliessin*, which emanated from the Chair of Glamorgan, or from Iolo Morganwy, is attributed to the seventeenth century. Iolo lived at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, at which time he laid this Bardic lore before the public. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* declares the "Neo-Druidic speculations" of Iolo, Davies, and the mediæval Bards to be fables, but admits that there are mythological allusions in Welsh poems.

* Probably Taliessin did not commit his poems to writing; he entrusted them to the Bardic memory, in the sixth century. They were written in the twelfth.

Let us now turn to the fuller consideration of the views of Skene, who says that the MSS. in question were copied and re-copied, and owed their origin to an oral tradition.

I pause to comment on this admission. If we may trust ancient authorities, the Druids were learned men. They committed nothing to writing. The Bards were admittedly their pupils; the training of the Bardic memory affords some evidence of the fact that the learning committed to their care was not to be written down. The Bards certainly flourished long after the establishment of Christianity; they flourished exceedingly in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Many learned writers have "with perverted ingenuity and misplaced learning," says Skene, laboured to prove that the Bards, while outwardly orthodox, handed down an inner teaching, a tradition of esotericism. It was this tenet that Iolo advanced and supported.

It seems to me to be not improbable that the oral tradition handed down through the Bards, and written in the seventeenth, or even in the nineteenth century, is more likely to have been preserved in its purity than the oral tradition preserved by the people, and handed down through Christian monks, who had not received the Bardic training. Tradition preserved by the latter method forms the basis of the "authentic" MSS., which were admittedly copied and re-copied, and were preserved in religious houses until the monks were turned adrift in the reign of Henry VIII.

Probably none of these traditions are entirely reliable, and in the case of the learning which was preserved by the Bards, the Druidic key to their poems, the knowledge that would render their symbolism entirely intelligible, is missing.

On the whole the "Neo-Druidic imposture" is probably of the greater importance, because it is at least a tenable hypothesis that the later Bards and Iolo Morganwy spoke truly, and had preserved the stream of oral teaching comparatively pure.

Possibly, for some reason unknown to us, a large amount of the tradition, hitherto preserved orally, was for the first time committed to writing in the twelfth, fourteenth and seventeenth centuries. So that we have the Bardic tradition in its purest

form in the *Hanes Taliessin*, and in the assertions of Iolo, rather than in *The Four Ancient Books of Wales*.

Mr. Nutt says: "The unprejudiced reader fresh from the consideration of such tales as those of Tuan MacCairill and the Two Swineherds,* cannot fail to recognise in the *Hanes Taliessin* a kindred story involving the same elements, though undoubtedly far younger in actual redaction. This may have taken place at the end of the sixteenth century, the traditional date of Hopkin ap Phillip, to whom it is ascribed. But if so, one can only say that Hopkin was a skilful archaiciser. I should be more inclined to place its composition in the late fourteenth century."†

This refers to the prose tale of Taliessin, the *Hanes Taliessin*, which I shall quote later; the antiquity of this prose form has been doubted.

Mr. Nutt says: "The prose texts are intended to condense the tradition, so that it can be conveniently memorised by the bard; the poems are examples of the use to which he puts this learning."‡

Mr. Skene treats the question of the Welsh Ancient Books very fairly; he does not believe them to contain any system of Druidism, nevertheless he does not close his eyes to the fact that they contain a mystical meaning. The true value of the poems is, he says, a problem yet unsolved. "Nor," he continues, "do I think that their authors wrote, and the compilers of these ancient MSS. took the pains to transcribe, century after century, what was a mere farrago of nonsense, and of no historical or literary value. I think these poems have a meaning."§

It is certain that there was a period between the sixth and the twelfth centuries, during which no poems were written, or if written, they perished. After the twelfth century, a mass of literature existed in Wales. About the year 1080 the two Welsh princes, Rhys ap Tewdwr, from Armorica, and Gruffyd ap Cynan, returned from Ireland. After their return there was a great outburst of literature in Wales; between 1080 and 1400 there were seventy-nine Bards.

* These are Irish.

† *Voyage of Bran*, ii. 86-7 (London; 1897).

‡ *Ibid.*, ii. 90, note.

§ *Four Ancient Books of Wales*, p. 16.

Mr. Campbell, in dealing with the subject of the Ossian controversy, vindicates MacPherson from the charge of having stolen his poems from those of Oisin, an Irish Bard of the third century, by pointing out that the tales upon which the Ossianic poems are founded are genuine folk-tales extant among the Highlanders. Much which is to be found in Ossian, existed in Gaelic before MacPherson was born.* The Welsh *Mabinogion*, written in the fifteenth century, is similar to many popular tales told in Gaelic in the present day.

These facts indicate the existence of a common oral tradition upon which the poems are founded; and Mr. Campbell has, after much study, arrived at the conclusion that these tales owe their origin to "ideas which were originally the offspring of the minds of men in the East."†

The importance attached by the Bards to the preservation of the oral tradition is insisted upon strongly by the author of *The Welsh Bards* (p. 4).‡ He says: "The disciple of the Druidical Bards, during a novitiate of twenty years, learnt an immense number of verses, in which they preserved the principles of their religious and civil polity by uninterrupted tradition for many centuries. Though the use of letters was familiar to them, they did not deem it lawful to commit their verses to writing, for the sake of strengthening their intellectual faculties, and of keeping their mysterious knowledge from the contemplation of the vulgar."

Not only is there this common basis of tradition, but a practice which still lingers among the peasantry all over Europe shows a former worship of the Corn Goddess, Isis, Demeter, or Ceridwen. The "corn mother" harvest rites are very much alike in every country in Europe; therefore we may feel a tolerable certainty that they owe their origin to a worship, or symbolism, which did not differ greatly in the various countries wherein it was practised.

Let me now turn for a while to the consideration of the symbols, attributes and worship of the Welsh Isis. In a former

* See Campbell's *Popular Tales*, iv. 3.

† *Ibid.*, iv. 300.

‡ E. Jones, who was steeped in the lore of his country.

brief article in this REVIEW, I gave the story of Gwion the Little. This tale I must briefly recapitulate, summarising from Lady Charlotte Guest's translation of the *Mabinogion*. The story is from *Hanes Taliessin*.*

There was a man named Tegid Voel, or Bald Serenity, who lived in a lake. His wife was Ceridwen, by whom he had a son, Avagddu, or Black Accumulation (chaos ?), and a daughter, Creirwy, called the Man-maid, and the Token of the Egg.† Ceridwen, anxious to endow her son with wisdom, boils for him the cauldron of arts and sciences, employing the rites of the Phérault, the legendary wise men of Wales. Gwion the Little, and a blind man, Mordu, were set, one to stir the cauldron, the other to kindle the fire. At the end of a year, three drops sprang from the cauldron and fell on the hand of Gwion; putting his hand to his mouth, he found himself to be endowed with knowledge. He fled from Ceridwen's anger, and the goddess pursued him. He changed himself into a hare, she chased him as a greyhound. He leaped into the river and became a fish, she became transformed into an otter. He turned himself into "a beast of the air," she chased him still, as a hawk. Finally he transformed himself into a grain, in a heap of wheat; she, becoming a black hen, swallowed him. She bore him in her womb for nine months, when he was re-born as Taliessin, the Radiant-front, the Thrice-born. She placed him on the sea, in a coracle, and he became the prince of the Bards.

It appears to me that here we have a creation myth, an allegory of the evolution of the human soul, and a hint at initiatory rites, such as were practised in the temples of antiquity. To this question I will return later.

The Egyptian goddess Isis had two children, the dual Horus, and Isis was the great Mother Nature, from whose womb all forms proceed, and who was the queen of initiatory rites.‡

* This MS. cannot be traced further back than the sixteenth century, but as aforesaid Mr. Nutt places its probable date in the fourteenth. But its incidents occur in the *Book of Taliessin*, ascribed to Taliessin, who lived in the sixth century; some of the poems in this Book may go back to the eighth century.

† Massey connects Tegid Voel with Ptah, the Egyptian god, lord of waters, who is sometimes represented as bald. Ptah blows from his mouth an egg. Creirwy is symbolised by an egg.—*Book of the Beginnings*. London; 1881.

‡ In *The Book of the Beginnings* it is stated that the Iris, or Flag, was the Lotus of the Druids. This is interesting if true, because the flower symbolises a Trinity, and springs like the Lotus from earth and water.

Let us see what further symbolism we can find, to indicate that Ceridwen, the Isis of the Bards, had a like office. Corn was sacred to Isis and Osiris, and corn was represented on many ancient British coins; Cuhelyn, a Bard of the eighth century, speaks of Ceridwen as goddess of various seeds. Ceridwen is identical with Kêd; the "ship of Kêd," celebrated in one of the Welsh Triads, is called *hwch*; now *hwch* means sow, and we have some evidence that in Wales, as in Ireland, there was a symbolism of the sow and the boar, in connection with magic arts, and creative processes of nature in the evolution of worlds. We know of the Indian boar symbolism; pigs are said to have been sacrificed at Eleusis, and Herodotus says they were sacrificed to Osiris; now whether these were or were not actual sacrifices, the statement furnishes evidence that the pig was used in Egypt as a symbol.

Welsh Bards called diviners sows. The swineherd's art in Ireland, was, as I have tried to show in a previous article, the art of the magician. The first and second of the "mighty swineherds" of Britain were Pwyll, and Pryderi, his son.* Gwydion ap Don, "of toiling spirits," who made a woman from blossoms, is also said to have "brought pigs from the south." In Welsh legend there is a magic Druidic sow, introduced into Wales by Coll, who also brings wheat and barley. This sow is called the Great Mother; she is brought to Britain great with young, and from her proceed wheat, bees (a Welsh symbol of an initiate), barley, rye, pigs, the cub of a wolf, an eaglet, and a kitten, which becomes the Paluc cat. The Paluc cat is an emblem of the sun, born from the womb of the Universal Mother.

The ark or ship of Ceridwen is said to have been stored with corn, and borne aloft by serpents above the waters.† These "serpents" were symbols of liberated souls, and the corn the garnered fruits of a chain of worlds, a scheme of evolution, or even of a whole solar system. The waters are probably the waters of chaos. Upright stones, cromlechs, caves and kist-vaens were sacred to Ceridwen and Creirwy.‡

* The Rev. E. Davies gives the meaning of these names as Pwyll, Reason; Pryderi, Deep Thought.

† See *Naology*, by the Rev. J. Dudley, M.A. London; 1846.

‡ Creirwy corresponds with Proserpine (Core), as her mother Ceridwen with Ceres.

The author of *Naology* advances an interesting speculation with regard to an upright stone called the Rudston. This stone is twenty-four feet above and twenty-four feet below the ground; the author thinks it was once forty-eight feet high, and the three divisions of twenty-four feet symbolised three regions of space.* The same symbolism is said to be indicated by the three legs of Man, the crest of the island of that name. Mr. Dudley advances the belief that Mannus or Mann was a god, and the three legs symbolised the three steps of Vishnu. Mannannan was certainly a demi-god of the Ancient Irish, and he is represented as having a wife, Fann—a hint at duality.

The egg was as aforesaid the emblem of Creirwy, who is spoken of as the "Man-maid"; and the oval egg-like form of Stonehenge opens to the point of sunrise at the summer solstice. Myfyr Morganwy, in a letter addressed to Gerald Massey, the author of *The Book of the Beginnings*, states that the rocking stones were sacred to Keridwin.† He asserts further that the Druidic seven or sith stone resting upon the ark stone, or kistvaen of Keridwin, symbolised the beam of the sun on the ark stone. "The seven from the sun," proceeds the Arch-Druid of Wales, "caused Keridwin to bring forth beings"; the beam /|\ represented the Trinity, and "the thrice-functioned Hu the interpreter, viceroy of the Eternal." According to Skene the three beams were the three shouts which rendered the name of the Deity as Iau the younger.

But there is another and equally interesting legend with regard to the Druidic beams. It is to be found in Lady Charlotte Guest's translation of the *Mabinogion;* I believe that Lady Charlotte's authority is Iolo Morganwy.‡ The legend runs thus: Einigan Gawr, an ancient Bardic seer, saw three rays of light in which were all knowledge and wisdom. He formed three ash rods in imitation of them; those who saw the rods deified them, and Einigan grieved, broke the rods, and died. In a year and a day Menw saw three rods growing from the mouth

* The physical, astral, and mental planes, if this theory be correct; the phenomenal worlds sacred to Ceridwen, as presiding over the form side of manifestation.

† Myfyr Morganwy adopts this spelling of the name of the Welsh goddess.

‡ The *Abergavenny Prize Essay on the Genuineness of the Coelbren Y Beirdd or Bardic Alphabet*, by T. Williams (Ab Iolo). Llandovery; 1840.

of Einigan, and on the rods were written all knowledge and science. And Menw took them and learned all their wisdom, and taught them; all save the name of God, which has originated the Bardic secret, and blessed is he who possesses it. The Bardic symbol is /|\, and these lines contain all the elements of the Bardic alphabet.

I shall have to refer later to the symbolical "quadrangular enclosure" of Ceridwen, but the caves and kistvaens were, I believe, connected with ceremonies which might perhaps be called exoteric initiatory rites. For example, the Rev. J. Dudley states that in some of the cromlechs examined by him are traces of the kistvaens in which candidates were enclosed as mystically dead and buried. To this ceremony Taliessin refers, when he says: "I have died, I have revived, and conspicuous with my ivy branch I have been a leader, and by my bounty I became poor."* Mr. Dudley refers to the sow and pig symbolism employed in connection with the worship of Ceridwen; he points out the significant fact that the Celtic word for pig also means little chest. According to the same author, the symbols found in these chests or kistvaens are little pyramids, cakes with many knobs upon them, and poppy heads.†

It is remarked by Dr. G. Oliver,‡ that all the ancient British deities melt into two: Hu and Ceridwen (Osiris and Isis). In some of the poems attributed to the Welsh Bards, Hu is extolled as "smallest of the small . . . . yet he is the greatest and Lord over us; we sincerely believe in our God of mystery."§ Mr. Davies believes that Dylan, who is mentioned in some of the Bardic poems, is identical with Hu, and that both are identical with the Biblical patriarch Noah. He also bestows upon Noah the name Dwyvan, a form of Dylan, and he gives a curious and interesting explanation of the meaning of the word, thus:

* *Hanes Taliessin.* It will be remembered that ivy was sacred to Osiris and Dionysus.

† I am not aware whether Mr. Dudley's statement in this matter is correct. If so it is interesting, for the Irish Barn break cakes are made with nine knobs, and poppy seed is used in the East.

‡ *The History of Initiation*, by G. Oliver, D.D. London; 1829.

§ Lines of Rhys Brydydd.

"Dwy, cause, origin. Dwyvan, the high or lofty cause, the father of mankind.

"Dwy-vach, the lesser cause, the mother of mankind (Ceridwen)."

Perhaps I shall better illustrate the attributes of Ceridwen, by turning to the consideration of some of the curious poems attributed to Taliessin, Merddin, and Aneurin, in which are allusions to, and lamentations over, a lost or hidden learning. Before doing this it will be better to allude to the *Barddas*, a treatise on the system of the ancient Bards, which was possessed by Iolo Morganwy, and is rejected as spurious by most of the modern authorities.* I will, therefore, make this treatise, and the poems, the subject of a second article; in which I will also set forth some of the arguments adduced to disprove the authenticity of the Bardic tradition.

I. Hooper.

* The *Barddas* is considered to be spurious as the work of Bards of the seventeenth century or earlier. I do not think it has ever been asserted that Iolo wrote it. It is said to have been last transcribed by E. Davydd in 1690. His MS. is said to have been in the library at Llan Haran in Glamorganshire. See Sharon Turner's *Vindication*, 1803.

ANCIENT CHALDÆA

ANOTHER ancient civilization which has interested us, in its way, almost as much as that of Peru, was one that arose in the far distant past in the part of Asia which was afterwards called Babylonia or Chaldæa. One curious point these two great empires of old seem to have in common—that each of them in the period of its decadence, many centuries later than the glorious prime at which it is most profitable to study them, was conquered by people much lower in the scale of civilization, who nevertheless attempted to adopt as far as they could the customs, civil and religious, of the effete race which they had subdued. Just as the Peru discovered by Pizarro was in almost every respect a pale copy of the older Peru which I have tried to describe, so the Babylonia known to the student of archæology is in many ways a kind of degenerate reflection of an earlier and greater empire.

In many ways, I say, but perhaps not in all. It is possible that at the zenith of its glory the later kingdom may have surpassed its predecessor in military power, in the extent of its territories or its commerce; but in simplicity of life, in earnest devotion to the tenets of the remarkable religion which they followed, and in real knowledge of the facts of nature, there seems little doubt that the older race had the advantage.

Perhaps there could hardly be a greater contrast between any two countries than we find between Peru and Babylonia. In the former the remarkable system of government was the most prominent feature, and religion seemed to form a comparatively small part of the life of the people—indeed, the civil functions of the priests as educators, as doctors, and as agents in the vast scheme of provision for old age, loomed much more largely in the mind's eye than their occasional work of praise or preaching in connection with the temple services. In Chaldæa, on the

other hand, the system of government was in no way exceptional; the chief factor of life there was emphatically religion, for no undertaking of any sort was ever begun without special reference to it. Indeed, the religion of the people seems to have permeated and dominated their life to an extent equalled perhaps only among the Brâhmans of India.

It will be remembered that among the Peruvians the religious cult was a simple but extremely beautiful form of sun-worship, or rather worship of the spirit of the sun; its tenets were few and clear, and its chief characteristic was its all-pervading spirit of joyousness. In Chaldæa the faith was sterner and more mystical, and the ritual far more complicated. It was not the sun alone that was reverenced there, but all the host of heaven, and the religion was in fact an exceedingly elaborate scheme of worship of the great star-angels, including within it, as a practical guide to daily life, a very comprehensive and carefully worked out system of astrology.

Let us postpone for the moment the description of their magnificent temples and their gorgeous ritual, and consider first the relation of this strange religion to the life of the people. To understand its effect we must try to comprehend their view of astrology, and I think we shall find it on the whole an eminently common-sense view—one which might be adopted with great advantage by professors of the art at the present day.

The absurd idea that it is possible for the physical planets themselves to have any influence over human affairs was of course never held by any of the priests or teachers, nor even, so far as we can see, by the most ignorant of the common people at the early period of which we are now speaking. The theory given to the priests was an exceedingly elaborate mathematical one, probably handed down to them through an unbroken line of tradition from earlier teachers who had direct and first-hand knowledge of the great facts of nature. The broad idea of their scheme is not difficult to grasp, but it seems impossible in our three dimensions to construct any mathematical figure which will satisfy the requirements of their hypothesis in all its details —at least with the knowledge at present at our disposal.

The entire solar system, then, in all its vast complexity, was

regarded as simply one great Being, and all its parts as partial expressions of Him. All its physical constituents—the sun with his wonderful corona, all the planets with their satellites, their oceans, their atmospheres, and the various ethers surrounding them—all these collectively made up His physical body, the expression of Him on the physical plane. In the same way the collective astral worlds (not only the astral planes belonging to these physical planets, but also the purely astral planets of all the chains of the system—such, for example, as planets B and F of our own chain) would make up His astral body, and the collective worlds of the mental plane would be His mental body—the vehicle through which He manifested Himself upon that particular plane.

So far the idea is clear, and corresponds closely with what we have ourselves been taught with regard to the great Logos of our system. Now let it be supposed that in these "bodies" of His on their various planes there are certain different classes or types of matter fairly equally distributed over the whole system. These types do not at all correspond to our usual division into sub-planes—a division which is made according to the degree of density of the matter, so that on the physical plane, for example, we get the solid, liquid, gaseous and etheric conditions of matter. On the contrary, they constitute a totally distinct series of cross-divisions, each containing matter in all these different conditions, so that if we denote the various types by numbers, we should have solid, liquid and gaseous matter of the first type, solid, liquid and gaseous matter of the second type, and so on all the way through.

This was held to be the case on all planes, but for the sake of clearness let us for the moment confine our thought to one plane only. Perhaps the idea is easiest to follow with regard to the astral. It has often been explained that in the astral body of a man matter belonging to each of the sub-planes is to be found, and that the proportion between the denser and the finer kinds shows how far that body is capable of responding to coarser or more refined desires, and so is to some extent an indication of the degree to which he has evolved himself. Similarly in every astral body there is matter of each of these types or cross-

divisions, and in this case the proportion between them will show the disposition of the man—whether he is excitable or serene, sanguine or phlegmatic, patient or irritable, and so on.

Now the theory was that each of these types of matter in the astral body of the Logos, and in particular the mass of elemental essence functioning through each type, was to some extent a separate vehicle—almost a separate entity—having its own special affinities, and capable of vibrating under influences which might probably evoke no response from the other types. The types differed among themselves, because the matter composing them had originally come forth through different centres or chakras of the Logos, and the matter of each type was still in the closest sympathy with the centre to which it belonged, so that the slightest alteration of any kind in the condition of that centre would instantly be reflected in some way or other in all the matter of the corresponding type.

Since every man had within himself matter of all these types, it is obvious that any modification in or action of any one of these great centres must to some degree affect all beings in the system, and the extent to which any particular person would be so affected would depend upon the proportion of the type of matter influenced which he happened to have in his astral body. That is to say, we should find different types of men as well as of matter, and by reason of their constitution, by the very composition of their astral bodies, some of them would be more susceptible to one influence, some to another.

It was further stated that the whole solar system, when looked at from a sufficiently high plane, was seen to consist of these great centres, each surrounded by an enormous sphere of influence, indicating the limits within which the force which poured out through it was especially active. Each of these centres appeared to have a sort of orderly periodic change or motion of its own, corresponding perhaps on some infinitely higher level to the regular beating of the physical human heart. But since some of these periodic changes were much more rapid than others, a curious and very complicated series of effects was produced, and it was observed that the movement of the physical planets in their relation to one another

furnished a clue to the arrangement of these great spheres at any given moment. It was even held that in the gradual condensation of the original glowing nebula from which the system was formed, the location of the physical planets was determined by the formation of vortices at certain points of intersection of these spheres with one another and with a given plane.

Now it was explained that the influences belonging to these spheres differed widely in quality, and that one way in which this difference showed itself was in their action upon the elemental essence both in man and around him. Be it ever remembered that this influence was supposed to be exerted on *all* planes, not only upon the astral, though we are just now confining our attention to that for simplicity's sake. The influences, it was said, might have, and indeed must have, other and more important lines of action not at present known to us; but this at least forced itself upon the notice of the observer, that each such sphere produced its own special effect upon the manifold varieties of the elemental essence.

One, for example, would greatly stimulate the activity and vitality of those kinds of essence which especially appertained to the centre through which it came, while apparently checking and controlling others; the influence of another sphere would be strong over quite a different set of essences, which belonged to its centre, while apparently not affecting the previous set in the least. There were found to be all sorts of combinations and permutations of these influences, the action of one of them being in some cases greatly intensified, and in others almost neutralized, by the presence of another.

It will inevitably be asked here whether our Chaldæan priests were fatalists—whether having discovered and calculated the exact effect of these influences on the various types of human beings, they believed that these results were inevitable, and that man's will was powerless to resist them. Their answer to this latter question was always most emphatic; the influences had certainly no power to dominate man's will in the slightest degree; all they could do was in some cases to make it easier or more difficult for that will to act along certain lines. Since the astral and mental bodies of man are practically composed of this

living and vivified matter which we now call elemental essence, any unusual excitation of any of the classes of that essence, or a sudden increase in its activity, must undoubtedly affect to some extent either his emotions or his mind, or both; and it is also obvious that these influences would work very differently on different men, because of the varieties of essence entering into their composition.

But it was most clearly stated that in no case could a man be swept away by them into any course of action without the consent of his will, though he might evidently be helped or hindered by them in any effort that he chanced to be making. The priests taught that the really strong man had little need to trouble himself as to the influences which happened to be in the ascendant, but that for all ordinary people it was usually worth while to know at what moment this or that force could most advantageously be applied.

They explained carefully that the influences were in themselves no more good or evil than any other of the forces of nature; as we should say now, like electricity or any other great natural force, they might be helpful or hurtful, according to the use that was made of them. And just as we should say that certain experiments would be more likely to be successful if undertaken when the air was heavily charged with electricity, while certain others under such conditions would most probably fail, so they said that an effort involving the use of the forces of our mental or emotional nature would more or less readily achieve its object according to the influences which predominated when it was made.

It was always understood, therefore, that these factors might be put aside as *une quantité négligeable* by the man of iron determination or the student of real occultism; but since the majority of the human race still allow themselves to be the helpless sport of the forces of desire, and have not yet developed anything worth calling a will of their own, it was considered that their feebleness permitted these influences to assume an importance to which they had intrinsically no claim.

The fact of a particular influence being in operation can never make it *necessary* that an event should occur, but it makes

it more *likely* to occur. For instance, by means of what is called in modern astrology a Martian influence certain vibrations of the astral essence are set up which tend in the direction of passion. So it might safely be predicted of a man who had by nature tendencies of a passionate and sensual nature, that when that influence was prominently in action he would probably commit some crime connected with passion or sensuality; not in the least that he would be *forced* into such crime, but only that a condition would come into existence in which it would be more difficult for him to maintain his balance. For the action upon him is of a double character; not only is the essence *within* him stirred into greater activity, but the corresponding matter of the plane outside is also quickened, and that again reacts upon him.

An example frequently given was that a certain variety of influence may occasionally bring about a condition of affairs in which all forms of nervous excitement are considerably intensified, and there is consequently a general sense of irritability abroad. Under such circumstances disputes would arise far more readily than usual, even on the most trifling pretexts, and the large number of people who are always on the verge of losing their temper would relinquish all control of themselves on even less than ordinary provocation.

It might even sometimes happen, it was said, that such influences, playing on the smouldering discontent of ignorant jealousy, might fan it into an outburst of popular frenzy from which widespread disaster might ensue. And the warning given thousands of years ago is no less necessary now, for it was just in this way that the Parisians in 1870 were moved to rush about the streets crying "À Berlin!" and just so also has arisen many a time the fiendish yell of "Deen! deen!" which so easily arouses the mad fanaticism of a murderous Mohammedan crowd.

The astrology of these Chaldæan priests therefore devoted itself chiefly to the calculation of the position and action of these spheres of influence, so that its principal function was rather to form a rule of life than to predict the future; or at least such predictions as it gave would be rather of tendencies than of special events, while the astrology of our own day appears to devote itself largely to the latter line of prophecy.

There can be no doubt, however, that the Chaldæans were right in affirming the power of a man's will to modify the destiny marked out for him by his karma. Karma may throw a man into certain surroundings or bring him under certain influences, but it can never force him to commit a crime, though it may so place him that it requires great determination on his part to avoid that crime. Therefore it seems to me that all astrology could do, then or now, would be to warn the man of the circumstances under which at such and such a time he would find himself, and that any definite prophecy of his action under those circumstances could theoretically only be based upon probabilities —even though I fully recognize how nearly those probabilities become certainties in the case of the ordinary will-less man in the street.

The calculations of these priests of the old time nevertheless enabled them to draw up a sort of official almanac each year by which the whole life of the race was very largely regulated. They decided the times at which all agricultural operations could most safely be undertaken; they proclaimed the fit moment for arranging the breeding of animals and plants. They were the doctors as well as the teachers of the race, and they knew exactly under what collocation of influences their various remedies could be most efficiently administered.

They divided their followers into classes, assigning each to what I suppose would now be called his particular planet, and their calendar was full of warnings addressed to these different classes; as, for example, "On the seventh day those who worship Mars should be especially on the watch against causeless irritation;" or, "From the twelfth to the fifteenth days there is unusual danger of rashness in matters connected with the affections, especially for the worshippers of Venus," and so on. That these warnings were of great use to the bulk of their people we cannot doubt, strange as such an elaborate system of provision against minor contingencies appears to us at the present day.

C. W. LEADBEATER.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITIES

India

We have to go to press so early in order to get our American edition delivered in the United States by the fifteenth of the month that it is impossible to be quite up to date in our report of activities. For instance, we ought to be able to furnish our readers with a report of the Annual Meeting at Adyar with this issue, but are only able to state generally that everything has gone well, and that Mrs. Besant's lectures (this year on the most interesting subject of Avatâras) were followed by greater crowds than ever, among whom were the Governor of Madras and his staff and also Lady Havelock.

The first two lectures were devoted to a general exposition of the nature of an Avatâra, the third dealt with the ten typical Avatâras of Indian tradition, and the last treated especially of Shrî Kṛishṇa. Upwards of 1,500 people were present by invitation to hear the lectures at Adyar, and the hall was crammed to suffocation.

Europe

The event of the month is the installation of the European Sectional Offices in their new quarters, 28, Albemarle Street, W. This is a desirable movement from every point of view, and the position at length chosen after so much careful search combines quiet (although in the heart of this great city) with easy accessibility.

A large and very handsomely decorated room on the first floor, lighted by electricity and holding over a hundred people, is to be devoted to lectures and to the meetings of various lodges. A panelled smaller room at the back offers advantages for general social purposes. The library is a large and handsome room on the second floor. The office of the General Secretary and a cheerful conversation and smoking room are on the same floor. The Lending Library also finds its home here. Above is the general office of the Section, and in addition rooms for the caretaker, and a kitchen.

The inaugural lecture was delivered by Mr. Mead on January 9th, "The Background of the Mystery-Tradition," the introduction to

his course of four lectures on "The Mysteries among the Greeks," the three remaining lectures being devoted to "The Political Mysteries —The Eleusinia," "The Private Mysteries—The Orphic Life," and "The Philosophical Mysteries—Pythagoras." Mr. Mead is also giving a set of drawing-room lectures on the "Hermetic Mysteries as an Important Factor in the Genesis of Christianity." The first three lectures in the new room were all given by Mr. Mead, for his name stood first on the list of Sunday evening lectures, January 14th, "The Beginning of Things;" and on January 18th, for the first meeting of the Blavatsky Lodge in its new room, Mr. Mead gave a most interesting lecture "From the Sayings and Sermons of Apollonius of Tyana."

During February Mr. Leadbeater is delivering an interesting course of lectures on his special subjects, on Tuesdays, at 5 p.m., at Albemarle Street. In January Mr. Leadbeater presided at the usual quarterly meeting of the Northern Federation and visited many of the Lodges.

The London Lodge, which hitherto has preferred to remain an independent body, has now joined the sectional organisation in order to support the new move to Albemarle Street.

The Copenhagen Branch Eirene during its one year of existence has had public meetings at which the works of Mrs. Besant, Mr. Leadbeater and Mr. Richard Eriksen have been read. At its private meetings these books have been studied and a few original lectures have also been given.

The number of members is steadily increasing, and in the provinces the corespondence circle is in full working order. Questions are sent in and are answered by Mr. Larsen, assisted by several members, in a sort of magazine, which also contains short original lectures, and in the future will have translations from the English. The old Copenhagen Branch also continues active, and Theosophy is slowly gaining ground in Denmark.

America

"In the American Section three new branches have been chartered within the last three months—at Lincoln, Neb., at Pierre, S.D., and Dayton, Ohio. There are at present four lecturers in the field.

"Miss Walsh, of San Francisco, has been travelling through the East since September, doing excellent work. She is now in Washington, but will soon return to Boston, where she has already spent some time, and where she will remain several

weeks. Theosophy, when once understood, ought to flourish in Boston, and we look for the growth of a strong centre there.

"Mrs. M. L. Brainard, of Chicago, has been travelling in Nebraska and Dakota. She formed the branches at Lincoln and Pierre, and is now working in Duluth with good prospects of starting a branch there.

"Mr. Titus of Toronto has been visiting branches in Michigan and is now spending a short time in Chicago lecturing and teaching. As one result of his work in Michigan, eleven members were added to the branch at Saginaw. He will soon go westward, visiting many points in Illinois, Iowa and Nebraska. Mr. Titus' simple, logical presentation of Theosophical truth always attracts, and he is particularly happy in discussing questions without arousing antagonism.

"Dr. Bailey of San Francisco has just started on a tour of the branches in the north-west. He will probably go as far as Vancouver, B.C.

"In Montana, Mrs. H. A. Squires is doing good work. At Butte, where she is spending the winter, the branch has grown from a membership of seven to thirty-five. A 'Golden Chain' circle has been started, and some work is being done in outlying towns.

"There are now eight 'Lotus Circles' or 'Golden Chain' classes in the American Section.

"The Chicago Branch held its annual election in December, when Mr. Ransom H. Randall was elected President. The branch is doing good work, having six closed study classes during the week, two open meetings, Sunday and Wednesday evenings, and the 'Golden Chain Circle,' Sunday afternoon.

"The San Francisco Branch has just moved into fine new headquarters. A description says there is a large platform at one end of the hall with a big organ on it, the seal of the Society, and two other emblems in stained glass above, the whole framed in an arch with 'There is no Religion higher than Truth,' in blue and gold around it. There is a small room in the rear of the platform, and they will also have another private room and the *Mercury* office in the same building. *The Theosophic Messenger*, under the editorship of Mr. Walters, is proving helpful to members and interesting to outsiders.

"At Mt. Pleasant, Vancouver, the branch has also moved into new quarters in a fine building in the centre of the town.

"The branch at St. Paul, Minn., has enrolled ten new members within a few months.

"From all over the section reports come showing increased interest and earnest work. There are also many indications that the feeling of the general public towards Theosophy is becoming more friendly."—D. B. B.

New Zealand

THE Auckland Branch held its annnal meeting on November 3rd. The report was fairly satisfactory; there had been a slight increase in membership, and the finances were in a good condition. The movement in Auckland was prospering and the public interest increasing. Mr. S. Stuart was re-elected President.

The Wellington Branch held its annual meeting on the same day, November 3rd. The report showed that the branch had gained a much firmer footing during the year, and the results of the work done were such as to give new hope for the future. There had been an increase in the membership of the branch; finances on the whole were satisfactory, and there had been a considerable distribution of literature. Mrs. Richmond wae re-elected President.

Mrs. Draffin continues her suburban lectures in Auckland, and, on the whole, with success. In Dunedin Mr. A. W. Maurais lectured recently on "Idol Worship," and in Wellington Mrs. Richmond has lectured on "Invisible Helpers" and "The Ladder of Life."

The various branch activities continue as usual, public and class meetings are fairly well attended.

WE have just received a copy of the first number of *The New Zealand Theosophical Magazine*, and wish it every success. It contains some twenty pages, is published monthly, and is priced at 1*d*. We regret to say, however, that the receipt of the first number was not altogether a *pleasant* surprise. What on earth has induced the editors to calmly misappropriate our original LUCIFER cover is beyond our comprehension. The best of motives, we have no doubt, dictated the taking of such a step; but it is a very great mistake and must not be repeated.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

The "Shaṅkara" Commentary on the Upaniṣhads

The Upaniṣhads (3 vols.). Vols. I. and II. translated by S. Sîtârâma Shâstrin, B.A. Vol. III., Part i., translated by Gaṅgânâtha Jhâ, M.A. (Madras: V. C. Sheṣhâchârri, B.A., B.L., M.R.A.S.; 1898-99.)

Some eighteen months ago (June, 1898) we gave a welcome notice in this Review of the first instalment of this well got-up series of translations. What we then said applied chiefly to the small volume containing the Îsha-Upaniṣhad with the commentary of Shaṅkara. We then expressed a hope that the series would prove a very useful one, "not so much for the translation of the text as for that of the commentary."

This hope, however, we regret to say has not been quite realised. For we find that although the first two volumes containing five of the smaller Upaniṣhads—Îsha, Kena, Muṇḍaka, Kaṭha and Prashna—are readable, the third, containing half of the Chhândogya, is not only not readable English, but is full of errors. As for the English, we are prepared to make every possible allowance, for we know well how extremely difficult it is to translate Shaṅkara's commentary and make it read well in a foreign tongue. But this does not excuse the translator for giving a confused or erroneous impression of what the original writer had to say. To make this clear let us take a few specimens of the translation and show what we mean. On page 2 we read:

> Having said this, it is again said that one who believes in the true doctrine of non-duality is neither burnt nor bound, just like one who is not a thief, and for such a one there is a cessation of metempsychic troubles, liberation. Therefore the doctrine of the secondless self is not compatible with Action. Because, inasmuch as it serves to destroy all distinction of action, agent and result—the knowledge, brought about by such passages as "ever existent, one and secondless, the self is all this," cannot possibly be suppressed by any notions.

Now we should like to know what sense the reader unacquainted with the original can make out of this.

What the commentator means to say is this: Just as a man, who is not a thief, but is falsely accused, will remain unharmed when passing through the ordeal of holding a red-hot axe, because he is well established in truth and has firm conviction in it; in the self-same way, one who is well established in truth, which is the absolute Unity of all, remains unaffected by the sorrows and sufferings of the world; he has realised Liberation and is free from all goings-forth (saṁsâra). And what the Upaniṣhads teach is this Science of the Unity of all things which brings to an end all sufferings and their causes. This being the aim and object of the Upaniṣhads, there can be no place for rituals which the advocates of the latter would fain have us believe to be indispensable under all circumstances and should be practised even by the man of wisdom who has reached Liberation. Such a thing, namely, an inseparable combination of Wisdom and Ritual, says Shaṅkara, is not and cannot be the teaching of the Upaniṣhads, which, teaching the Wisdom of Unity, excludes all Rituals, because they are by their very nature incompatible with Wisdom. For Rituals (Actions) must imply a knowledge of separateness in the form of work, worker and the object to be worked for. These are absolutely necessary conditions for all Ritual, whereas Wisdom, teaching Unity, does away with all such distinctions and thus makes Ritual an impossibility. This Wisdom, or knowledge of Unity is to be realised from such statements of the Upaniṣhads as "That which Is, is one only, without a second," "The Self alone is all this," and so on. This conception of Unity once realised there is nothing, no other idea in man, which can oppose this Knowledge of Unity and make Ritual possible.

We doubt very much if readers depending entirely on the translation will ever get this meaning of Shaṅkara.

Again on pages 3 and 4:

> And in connection with this doctrine of non-duality, are laid down various meditations that serve to accomplish certain desirable ends:—these meditations having their ends approximate to Liberation, appertaining as they do to Brahma slightly modified from the Secondless, such as those consisting of the mind and of the Prâṇas, etc. And inasmuch as these meditations have their end in prosperity of Actions, they are connected with factors of Action. But still there is a similarity between these meditations (and the knowledge of the one self). On account of the identity of

the doctrine of these, and of the similarity consisting in the fact of both of these belonging to the function of the mind, that is to say, just as the knowledge of non-duality is a function of the mind, so are also these meditations functions of the mind, and as such there is a similarity. "What then, is the difference between the meditations and the knowledge of non-duality?" We explain: etc.

The writer of the commentary, however, says somewhat as follows:

"Now in this discussion of the Science of the Absolute [which alone, as we have shown, is the subject-matter of the Upaniṣhads] certain forms of meditation are [also] mentioned. [These are of three kinds, namely]:

"(*a*) Those serving as means of prosperity (such as Chh. Up. iii, 15, 2.)

"(*b*) Those having for their object the Supreme (Brahman) as slightly modified (*i.e.*, conditioned) from the Absolute, [and thus] leading very near to the conditionless Freedom (lit. Aloneness, Kaivalya), such as, 'He of the nature of the Mind and with the vital energies (prâṇa) as His body,' etc. (Chh. Up. iii. 14, 2)

"(*c*) Those leading to the success of the Ritual (and thus) forming part of the same (such as the udgîtha-upâsanâ)

"[And these forms of meditation are mentioned in this discussion of the Science of the Absolute, not because they are any indispensable parts of the Science, but] because of the fact that they are both [*i.e.*, the Science and the Meditations] similar [to a certain extent] with regard to [their both being] mysteries and modes of the mind. [That they are both mysteries, we need hardly mention. With regard to their other common characteristic, it is known that] just as the knowledge of the Absolute is but a mode of the mind, so are also the different meditations forms of mental modality. Thus there is a similarity [between the two]."

["Well, if you admit that there is a similarity between the two and thus explain away the presence in the Upaniṣhads of the forms of meditation as only secondary, but neither primary nor as the main theses of the Upaniṣhads, if you admit all this, why, then you really come to our position. For what you express in a roundabout way, is really an admission, although not a candid one, that the Science of the Absolute and the Meditations are one; for according to your own statement they are both mysteries and both modes of the mind.

"Certainly not. For although there is a similarity between the two, there is also a difference."]

" What, then, is that difference ?"

" That we explain," etc.

On page 145, we read:

. . . And this branch of Duty belongs to the Tâpasa, or the " Parivrâṭ," who is still leading the life of the Householder. . . .

Parivrâṭ still leading the life of the Householder! The original is simply " Âshrama-dharma-mâtra-saṁsthaḥ," and means nothing more or less than the Parivrâṭ who observes *merely* the rules of the Sannyâsa order, as opposed to those who are Sannyâsins not merely by the observance of the rules, but by being established in Brahman.

Page 146:

In this connection the laying down of the duties of the different states of the Householder (!) is with a view to add to the glory of meditation upon the Praṇava (Om)—and not as leading to the results belonging particularly to the latter. Because if it be taken to be for the sake of adding glory to meditation of the Praṇava, and also as leading to the results thereof, then there would be a split of the sentence.

Whereas the commentary tells us that:

" In this connection the results of [observing] the rules of the [four] stages of life (*i.e.*, Âshramas) [on the part of the twice-born] are put forth [only] with a view to glorify the worship of the Great Utterance (Praṇava); and not for the purpose of prescribing the results of [following] those [duties of the four stages]. For [to say that they are mentioned both] for the praise of the Praṇava-worship as well as for prescribing the results of [following] the duties of the Âshramas, this would involve a division of the sentence [which is illogical]."

Page 154:

" Then should he (!) perform Actions."

This well-known Shruti is quoted by the commentator from the Bṛih. Up., I. iv. 17, and the reading is: " Atha karma kurvîya." It means: Then would *I* work (after I have got wife and wealth).

Page 168:

" This sun, etc."—shows the context of the coming Adyâya.

We wish it did; then the commentator would not have to take so much pains to shew it. As a matter of fact what the commentary says is this:

"That Sun in truth, etc.," is the beginning of a new chapter, and the connection of it with the preceding chapter is as follows.

And then this much-hidden connection is shewn, although it required great skill to do so.

These quotations are enough to shew that the commentary on the Chhândogya needs retranslating. We regret very much to make this painful statement. But we hope our friends, the translator and the publisher, will agree with us that we ought not to send out to the world renderings of famous works in a fashion which serves only to lower them in the estimation of the thoughtful reader.

As regards the first two volumes, the remarks we made in our first notice are generally applicable. And as a general essay on the whole of Shaṅkara's commentaries on the Upaniṣhads is in contemplation, further remarks are reserved until the rest of the volumes are seen.

J. C. C.

A New Book by Mrs. Besant

Some Problems of Life. By Annie Besant. (London: The Theosophical Publishing Society; 1900. Price 1*s.* 6*d.*)

Mrs. Besant's latest book consists of a series of articles which appeared in these pages some eighteen months or so ago, under the titles: "Problems of Ethics"; "Problems of Sociology"; "Problems of Religion"; and "Some Difficulties of the Inner Life." The subjects are well chosen and well treated. They are well chosen, for it is just these problems which "exercise the brains and wring the hearts of thoughtful people" as our colleague says; they are well-treated, for the essays are undogmatic. Mrs. Besant says: "There is no idea in my mind so ambitious as that of solving these problems: I only seek to offer to my fellow-students some thoughts that have been helpful to myself and may also be serviceable to others."

It is often asked what is the attitude of Theosophy to this or that movement; are Theosophists Socialists, or Spiritualists, or Secularists, or Buddhists, or Agnostics, or Roman Catholics, or Christian Scientists, etc., etc. The answer to this question is admirably set forth in our colleague's "Foreword," in the following words:

"Theosophy, from its very nature, cannot form a new religion, a new church, or even a sect separate and apart. It is a unifier, not a divider; an explainer, not an antagonist. Whenever a Theosophist is aggressive, combative, denunciatory, he is failing in his high

mission, for the 'wisdom that cometh from above is first pure, then peaceable.' He is bound to be tolerant even with the intolerant, knowing that no evil can be destroyed save by its opposite good. Hence in seeking solutions for life's problems he does not vehemently assail the solutions already suggested, but seeks to distil from each any truth that it may contain. In all the schools of thought around us, ethical, sociological, scientific and religious, some aspect of the truth is being set forth, and the fact that its exponents regard it as the whole truth does not lessen the intrinsic value of the particular fragment they present. Any view which has been held by large numbers of people, for long periods, over wide areas, recurring time after time, showing a perennial life, has in it some truth which preserves it; it is the duty of the Theosophist to seek for this truth and to bring it to light, freeing it from the errors which have enveloped it."

This is the catholic and eclectic standard of Theosophy, which unless a man preserve faithfully, he has no right to the title of Theosophist.

G. R. S. M.

A Most Important Background of the Origins

A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, in Judaism, and in Christianity; or Hebrew, Jewish, and Christian Eschatology from Pre-prophetic Times till the Close of the New Testament Canon: Being the Jowett Lectures for 1898-1899. By R. H. Charles, D.D. (London: Adam and Charles Black; 1899. Price 16*s*.)

No better authority on this subject exists than the Professor of Biblical Greek of Trinity College, Dublin. Dr. Charles has by his editions of such famous pseudepigraphs as *The Apocalypse of Baruch*, *The Assumption of Moses*, *The Book of Enoch*, *The Ethiopic Version of the Hebrew Book of Jubilees*, and *The Book of the Secrets of Enoch*, not to speak of his admirable articles on Eschatology in the two great monuments of English Biblical criticism which are in the course of publication, *The Encyclopædia Biblica*, and Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, made himself thoroughly master of what has hitherto been a most obscure and unsatisfactory department of criticism. It is of course not to be expected that the general public will become acquainted at first hand with Dr. Charles' scholarly work—for them it is too scientific, and they have neither the patience nor the training to understand its scope and value. But the student of the evolution of dogma and the careful surveyor of the background of Christian origins knows

that perhaps the most important factor he has to deal with for a comprehension of the *popular* side of the origins is precisely this mass of apocalyptic literature. Now apocalyptic may be defined as the apology for unfulfilled prophecy.

In course of time the pious Hebrew had left on his hands a huge mass of unfulfilled prophecy, manifestly and repeatedly unfulfilled in every particular. It was necessary, therefore, to seek some method of interpretation whereby this useless paper should be converted into currency again. Accordingly the foresayings that were originally intended for the daily vicissitudes of a small and obscure tribe were taken as applying to the destinies of great nations and to the world-drama itself. Days were taken to mean thousands of years, weeks were interpreted as meaning huge periods; every conceivable device was adopted to make the prophecies come true somehow by trying to adapt the ever-growing knowledge of the world and its history acquired by the evolving Jew to the wild prophesying of his forebears, and so making some part of their foresayings true, while leaving the fulfilment of the rest to the immediate future. Unfortunately, the pious believer was invariably disappointed in his hope, and hence his calculations and forebodings were for centuries revised over and over again in the desperate hope that they would come right some day. When the Jew abandoned this pious pastime in despair, the Christian took up the running, and we have thousands and thousands of conservative and reactionary souls to-day who continue the amusement even at the end of the nineteenth century.

Now if the Hebrew fanatic was so far out in his foretelling of mundane events, it is hardly to be expected that his ideas on the future life should commend themselves to the experience of more thoughtful souls in our own day; and yet it is just these crude Hebrew ideas that have left the deepest impress on the popular Christian mind. And this has been so from the very beginning. And so when Professor Charles comes to treat of New Testament eschatology, we find him boldly writing:

"In the first place, we shall not be surprised if the eschatology of the latter [the N. T.] should, to some extent, present similar incongruous phenomena as the Old Testament and subsequent Jewish literature. And, in the next, we shall be prepared to deal honestly with any such inconsistencies. So far, therefore, from attempting, as in the past, to explain them away or to bring them into harmony with doctrines that in reality make their acceptance impossible, we

shall frankly acknowledge their existence, and assign to them their full historical value. That their existence, however, in the New Testament Canon can give them no claim on the acceptance of the Church, follows from their inherent discordance with the Christian fundamental doctrines of God and Christ; for such discordance condemns them as survivals of an earlier and lower stage of religious belief.

"That certain Judaistic conceptions of a mechanical and unethical character have passed into the New Testament must be recognised. But since these possess no organic relation to the fundamental doctrines of Christ, and indeed at times betray a character wholly irreconcilable therewith, they have naturally no true *rationale* in Christianity. In Christianity there is a survival of alien Judaistic elements, just as in the Hebrew religion there were for centuries large survivals of Semitic heathenism [but why 'heathenism' when the most sublime doctrines were contemporaneously taught by the surrounding Heathens?] That Judaism should cherish many beliefs of a mechanical or even unethical character ought not to be surprising, seeing that it was false to the fundamental doctrine of monotheism, of which, nevertheless, it claimed to be the true exponent; for if monotheism were true, then Judaistic particularism was false, and God was the God and Saviour of the Gentile also. As an instance of such survivals we may adduce the generally accepted doctrine of Hades, which is truly Judaistic. Just as the Hebrew view of Sheol, which was essentially heathen [?], gave way to the Judaistic view, which was partially moral, so this in turn must yield to the fully moralised and Christian conception of Hades as a place not of mechanical fixity of character, but of moral movement and progress in the direction either of light or darkness [which is the Roman Catholic view and entirely non-Protestant]. The doctrine of eternal damnation also is a Judaistic survival of a still more grossly immoral character" (pp. 310, 311).

But if again, as Professor Charles writes, "monotheism attains at last to its full rights in Christianity; for monotheism and universalism are correlative terms" (p. 334), why in the name of reason should the Jews of all people in the world be so persistently held up to us as the exceptional and foreordained "monotheists" of the whole earth—seeing that they were the *one exception* of the nations of antiquity in this respect?

Again, we are told that as in the case of all previous Hebrew interpreters of prophecy they were all deceived in their expectations, so also the Christ Himself was mistaken in thinking that the

"parusia" (advent) was to be within the generation in which He lived. Dr. Charles writes: "We must, accordingly, admit this expectation of Christ was falsified" (p. 331). We must here leave the Professor to his orthodox critics, and do not think he will ward off many blows by his explanation that the Christ "by His unique and perfect communion with God possessed an independent and authoritative judgment in things essentially spiritual and religious, but not in other spheres" (p. 332). The horns of the dilemma are equally disastrous to the orthodox; for either the Christ did not know what He was talking about, or a host of sayings attributed to Him by the Synoptic writers were not His. For ourselves we cheerfully accept the latter alternative, for our orthodoxy is large enough to embrace the patent fact that the Synoptics are late and human documents and very far from the real record of the sayings and doings of the great Master. G. R. S. M.

We have also reviews in type on: *The Oneida Community*, by Allan Estlake; *Science and Faith*, by Dr. Paul Topinard; *The Sâmkhya Kârikâ*, Satish Chandra Bannerji; *The Jonah Legend*, by W. Simpson; *Symbolism of East and West*, by Mrs. Murray-Aynsley; *The Evolution of General Ideas*, by Professor Ribot; *The Square of Sevens* by Robt. Antrobus; *Solomon and Solomonic Literature*, by Moncure D. Conway; and *The Mystic Guide in the Gospel according to S. John*, by H. A. V.

Magazines and Pamphlets.

Colonel Olcott is especially interesting in his "Old Diary Leaves" for the December *Theosophist*. A very busy and eventful time is being entered upon, which saw the foundation of the Blavatsky Lodge by a number of the members of the older London Lodge grouped round Mme. Blavatsky. The Colonel of course was far away from the more active scenes in which his co-worker took the most energetic part, but he had troubles enough in his own centre, as he always frankly recounts. Mr. Fullerton's brief visit and sudden departure is referred to. The perpetual quiet of Adyar was too much for nerves soothed by the eternal roar of a great city, and Mr. Fullerton had to return in haste before more serious consequences should ensue. A meeting with the then Hon. George Curzon, now Viceroy, and his visit to the Adyar Library, form an interesting item. The paper on the astral light is concluded. Spectral appearances, the predictions of astrologers, the phenomena of spiritualism, are all traced to this source. A Hindu contributor deals shortly but in an able manner

with the early history of Ceylon. A. Schwarz follows with the first part of an elaborate essay on the Theosophical view of the relation of man to God, illustrated with what one can only call a genealogical tree—a diagram showing the descent of life from Parabrahm through the Logoi and the various planes. A. E. Webb deals with heredity, contrasting the Theosophical with the Weismann theory. At least it is to be presumed that Weismann is referred to, though the name is always spelled Wiesman—probably a printer's error.

In *The Prashnottara* for December, the Hindu Catechism which appeared in its pages some time back gives rise to a question and a very lengthy answer on the nature of a Brâhman. The writer of the catechism dealt with the subject only from an ideal point of view, and left out the social side. The present question and answer relate to this side of the subject, and the writer upholds the view that the position of a Brâhman has always been a matter of birth and that the castes were rigidly limited by descent. Mrs. Besant's conversations still proceed. The development of the ego by selfish desires is treated of in the present issue.

The Hindu Heritage is a new Indian magazine, the first issue of which is dated November, 1899. Its purpose, according to the editor's introduction, is to expound Hinduism on the lines of the teachings of Râmakrishna, the famous ascetic who died a few years ago, and to prove that his teachings are according to the ancient tradition.

We have also to acknowledge the receipt from India of *The Light of Truth; The Journal of the Mahâ-Bodhi Society; The Guide*, a small monthly pamphlet published in Bombay for the Mohammedan religion; *The Sanmârga Bodhinî;* and *The Ârya Bâla Bodhinî.*

The Vâhan for January is perhaps of more than usual interest. Activities form a goodly portion of its contents, and are of a very promising character. The "Enquirer" opens with a question, dealt with by C. W. L., on life in devachan. This, the answerer emphatically asserts, is more real than the life on earth, and states that the ego in its own real nature can manifest through an indefinite number of forms, which may be built up by friends in their devachanic visions. A curious question on love, and the reason of its frequent lack of reciprocity, elicits two replies. G. R. S. M. treats of the development through suffering, and contrasts the Jewish and the Greek ideals of life as typical of the gloomy and the joyful methods of progress. The three Logoi give material for a second contribution by C. W. L., who also supplies two short answers; and a particularly

good reply by A. A. W. takes up the one of the many problems in karma which anxious questioners are so ready to put, and which the most willing answerers find so difficult to deal with. This question refers to the statement that an evil action may be an involuntary result of long-continued thought in the same direction, and ends with one of the most curious speculations on this matter which we have seen: "May we not suppose that a wrong committed which brings no sort of pleasure in its commission is in itself half the debt paid for that act?"—which is a very pretty puzzle!

La Revue Théosophique Française continues its admirable series of translations, and also concludes Dr. Pascal's article on "Faith, Doubt, and Certainty." A. Duquesne contributes a paper on illusion, the first part only of which is contained in the present number. The relative and the absolute are considered, and the gradual extension of consciousness through what is figured as a spiral line of progress is well expounded.

Theosophy in Australasia for November notifies the long-expected arrival of Dr. Marques, the new General Secretary of the Australian Section, and looks forward with hope to the increased stimulus which may be expected from his efforts. A circular from Dr. Marques to the members of the Section is reproduced, in which methods of practical work are outlined. The new Secretary also contributes an article on the future work of the Society. The pages of the magazine are varied by a short story, entitled "Method in Madness," of a spiritualistic character. The Higher and Lower Self of man provide matter for further discussion, the same subject having been dealt with some time ago in the same Magazine.

Herr Deinhard's letter in *Der Vâhan* for December shows that our German members are undecided whether or not it would be well to form a German Section during the visit they hope shortly to receive from the President-Founder. Translations of questions and answers from the English *Vâhan*, and of Mr. Leadbeater's *Christian Creed*, are continued. The current number of THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW is carefully noticed at length, and other reviews and notices complete a very good number.

Our Dutch *Theosophia* contains a translation of a poem by Sir Edwin Arnold, "From Worm to Prince." The poem is itself an English rendering of Sanskrit verses from the *Mahâbhârata*. A lecture on India, delivered at a meeting of the Amsterdam Branch, in November, is also given and Mrs. Windust writes a short paper on

the then appropriate topic of Christmas. The translations are all continued.

Señor Soria's lengthy papers on "Pre-Christian Science," in *Sophia*, came to a conclusion in the December issue, and in his last chapter the author summarises the primary rules by which all natural forms can, he states, be produced from the tetrahedron as a basis. The rules are of peculiar interest to anyone of a geometrical build of mind, but are too technical to be reproduced here by themselves, as they require much explanation. Mr. Leadbeater's article on clairvoyance and Mrs. Besant's paper on the place of politics in national life, are both brought to a conclusion. In the January number the editor opens with remarks on the beginning of the eighth year of the life of *Sophia*, and draws comparisons between the present movement and that of nineteen hundred years ago, from which modern Christianity has sprung. Señor José Mélian contributes a metaphysical article on free-will, and points out that the idea or feeling is intuitive and not rational and is the fundamental impulse towards progress. There is thus a conflict between the sentiment which affirms and the reason which denies the freedom of the will. Neither free-will nor fate are to be regarded as absolutes, but merely as two complementary aspects of the one real. Señor V. Diaz Pérez supplies some most interesting notes on Philippine mythology.

Teosofia from Rome completes its second year with its December number, now before us. The three translated articles, by Mrs. Besant, Mr. Leadbeater, and Dr. Pascal, are continued from the previous issue, and besides these and activities, the magazine contains a very brief contribution by Signor Calvari of a devotional kind, and an abbreviated question and answer from an early copy of *The Vâhan*.

Mrs. Besant on spirituality supplies material for the translation opening the November number of *Philadelphia*, our Argentine periodical. Translations, as usual, occupy most of the space, a large variety of authors being drawn upon. E. P. N. contributes a short paper on the pelican as a religious emblem, basing it mainly upon *The Secret Doctrine*.

We have also to acknowledge the receipt of *Light; Modern Astrology; Mind; Notes and Queries; Star of the Magi; Humanity*, the official journal of the Humanitarian League; *The Arena; L'Écho de l'Au-delà et d'Ici-bas; La Lutte vers l'Idéal; The Prophet*, a very curious production, the organ of "The Brotherhood of the Eternal Covenant," U.S.A.

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