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ON THE WATCH-TOWER

The Cry for Vengeance

THE news from China touches all hearts to profoundest pity for the victims; the furious indignation that follows on the pity in most hearts against the slayers—who need pity so much more!—is likely once again to hurry Europe into deeds on which all righteous men will look back with shame—as they look back now on the ferocious cruelty that blew men from the guns under the idea that thus body and soul were thought to perish, and that made Hindus lick, ere their execution, the blood-stained floor of Cawnpur, in order that they might deem themselves doomed to sink polluted into hell. The deadly pitilessness that would stretch over the gulf of death to torture its victims is one to which Europeans are prone in dealing with eastern races; and the men who give to the most cold-blooded murderer of their own race and creed a priest to console him on the scaffold seek to add to the death-penalty inflicted on men of other races and religions the awful despair consequent on the idea that the soul is doomed to torment. In order that Christendom may not again be shamed by this great wickedness, all "men of good will" should

do their utmost to discountenance and rebuke the savage suggestions already appearing in the European press, as to the vengeance to be wreaked on China.

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THAT the massacre of Ambassadors—whether of one or many—must be severely punished goes without saying. The sacredness of an envoy's person is exalted in the moral teachings of every nation, explicitly in eastern Scriptures as implicitly in western customs. The safety of the ambassador under all circumstances is a *sina quâ non* of peaceful intercourse between peoples. A nation cannot keep a standing army within another nation's borders in order to protect its representative. Over him must be thrown the shield of the comity of nations, and any weapon aimed at him must be broken into pieces. For the sake of the world's future the Pekin crime must be heavily punished ; it is a crime against the common interests of humanity. That retribution should strike those responsible for it is as much the duty of the world's Rulers, as is the punishment of crime by its law within the borders of a single State. Whether the responsibility be on recognised Empress or on rebel Prince, no rank should shield the culprit. This said, there is another side of the question which should not be overlooked.

The Sacredness of the Envoy

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FOR years past China has been treated as though she only existed for the use and benefit of Europe. Trade has been forced on her by war ; her ports have been stolen from her by threats ; the policy of Europe to her has been that of the footpad. In dealing with China, one European nation after another has trampled on the law of nations, and, believing that she was too weak to resist, they have plundered her in the most shameful way. If Kiel were taken from Germany, Cherbourg from France, Brindisi from Italy, as Port Arthur and other ports have been taken from China, these nations would feel themselves fully justified in going to war to defend their violated soil. Yet when China declares war on Russia and invades Siberia, the news is called "incredible," "astounding." The astounding thing would be if she did *not* do it, the moment she felt strong enough to attack. The different

Europe's Nemesis

countries have forced China to surrender to them parts of her empire, and have disputed with each other as to their several shares, and their "spheres of influence," as though China lay prostrate at their feet, a conquered land. They have treated China with contempt, and have overridden her on her own soil with the most high-handed insolence. And now they are as surprised and infuriated at the expression of her detestation, as a butcher would be if a sheep turned against him as he was drawing the knife across its throat.

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"Foreign Devils"

It may be well to remember that the slow growth in China of the feeling of hatred to the foreigner has been nourished and strengthened by the aggressive action of Christian missionaries, attacking and defaming Chinese religions, the religions which, for thousands of years, have justified their teachings by the practice of those who believed in them. A Christian, Bishop Cranston, recently returned from China and speaking in a New York pulpit, said that civilised nations must rule China. "It is worth any cost in money, it is worth any cost in bloodshed, if we can make the Chinese true and intelligent Christians." The soothing effect of such statements, when read in China, may be imagined, and the hatred of the people to the missionary may be understood. So also the convert to Christianity is looked on as a traitor to his country, and an ever-present danger. Say the Boxers:

> Gods assist the Boxers,
> Because the foreign devils disturb the Middle Kingdom,
> Urging the people to join their religion,
> To turn their backs on heaven,
> Venerate not the Gods, and forget the Ancestors.

To the Chinese, missionaries are disturbers of the peace, underminers of morality, blasphemers, insultors of ancestors. And they are also the stormy petrels that herald invasion and slaughter.

* * *

In addition to the invasion of the missionaries, there is the forcing of trade. Now, wherever trade has gone in the East, the

Why should China be Westernised?

army of conquest has followed it. It is all very well for Europe to talk about her wish to trade: the East knows that conquest follows trade, and China does not wish to be a second India. She is shrewd, and is not deceived by the smooth phrases of Europe. She is content with her own civilisation, which she thinks far superior to the European. The few travellers who have penetrated into the interior of China bear out her opinion, for they are unanimous in describing its happiness, the hospitality and gentleness of its people, the sweetness of its family life, the graciousness of its manners. Why should the Chinese wish the Jagatnath car of western civilisation to crush out this peaceful and happy civilisation? They have seen the ruin of character contact has brought about on the coasts, and they do not wish this to spread inland. And when they found that Europe was resolved to force her way in, despite everything, all that was best in them rose up in silent stern resistance. They set to work to import arms, to drill, to organise, to prepare to defend their country and their civilisation from conquest and ruin. The late outrageous exactions have brought them to the point where war seems preferable to slow bleeding to death at the hands of the foreigners.

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The Dragon Roused

THE enormous strength of China has been entirely left out of account in the arrogant demands of Europe for ports and "spheres." Because the Celestial was bland and silent, he was supposed to be cowed and submissive. That he might resent high-handed robbery did not enter into the plans of Europe, and that China was not an eel to be skinned but a dragon to be aroused was not suspected. Europe is the more furious, not only because of the unexpectedness of the resistance, but because she dimly feels that four hundred millions of people, fighting on their own soil and indifferent to death, are not foes easy to subdue. Were it not for the awful crime at Pekin—due to a rebellious mob, incited by ambitious and unscrupulous schemers, aiming at power—China's case at the bar of history would be crowned as

righteous. Her first duty is to purge herself of all complicity in that crime, and then she can justly fight for the integrity of her empire and the independence of her throne. Successful resistance on the part of China will be far better for Europe than her failure. For China prostrate, as the booty of Europe, means a European war. Anyone who has seen a troop of vultures round a corpse can form a vivid image of the Powers over China slain.

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Theosophists in Council

THE late meetings of the Theosophical Society in Paris and in London have been gatherings full of interest and significance. Theosophy has at last found firm standing-ground in France, and the large and closely attentive meetings held at the Congress show how widespread and how deep is the interest aroused. Equally encouraging were the smaller gatherings in the rooms of the Section, for here gathered the regular students, those who are pursuing true knowledge. The European Convention was noticeable for the large number of non-English delegates, and it was a pleasant thing to see representatives from the daughter Sections of Holland and France gathering round their parent. There are hopes that an Italian Section will soon be an established fact, the fourth fledgling to go out from the family nest. The question will soon come up whether the name "European" Section should not be dropped, as no longer representing the facts. Great Britain and Ireland can become a Section, now that the other countries are strong enough to run alone.

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The President-Founder

ALL Theosophists the world over will rejoice to hear that the venerable President-Founder seems to have renewed his youth, and he is showing a vigour and a sustained energy that most of those young enough to be his sons cannot rival. He reached London at 7 p.m. on July 4th, and by 9.30 was at 43, Tavistock Square, at the reception given in his honour by Mr. and Mrs. Mead. He presided over the many meetings with his usual geniality and business capacity, and received everywhere the warmest of

greetings. Many of his English friends and admirers will be glad to know that some small busts of the President have been received from Madras, and are on sale at the Theosophical Publishing Society's offices.

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Exit Atom

An atom of carbon has been from all eternity and will be to all eternity an atom of carbon, says Ludwig Büchner, in his famous *Force and Matter*. We learn from *La Nature* that M. Gustave Le Bon has been working for four years on what he calls "black light"—we wonder if he knows that "dark light" or "invisible light," is an ancient term among occultists. Among the very interesting discoveries he has made during his investigations is the fact that the so-called radiations of radio-active bodies—which cannot be polarised or refracted—are not etheric waves, but are probably emissions of matter resembling cathodic emanations. They traverse dense objects, affect sensitive plates, etc., and behave like electric currents. According to M. Le Bon they result from the disassociation, the breaking up, of chemical atoms, and these indefinitely minute particles represent "an ultimate form of matter entirely different from those hitherto revealed by chemistry." As such discoveries are made, scientists will begin to recognise gradations in density in the ether, and so another step will be taken towards the recovery of the old knowledge. Apart from this, Büchner's statement has long been disproved, not only by the famous experiments of Sir William Crookes, but also by the results of the employment of exceedingly low temperatures, under which the attributes of the chemical atom change in the most surprising way.

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Decadent Art

Mr. Samuel Smith, M.P., has published his speech in the House of Commons on "Plays and their Supervision," and the pamphlet should be given a wide circulation. He asserts that certain plays now before the London public are degrading and demoralising, supporting his position by quotations from the press, which certainly justify his strictures. There is a certain school among us, numbering men of intellect and power among its adherents, that

deliberately seeks the indelicate, the unclean, the indecently suggestive, often the repulsive and the foul, and defends itself under the plea of "naturalism," arguing that art should represent nature as it is. Authors of this type write as though only that which is repulsive is natural; but the fragrance of the rose is as natural as the odours of the manure-heap, and if the latter be chosen as scent it is the taste which is to be blamed, not "nature." As a matter of fact, nature, left to herself, always covers up the repulsive; she hides filth under grass and flowers, covers harsh rocks with soft lichen-hues, and conceals the rotting tree-trunk under climbing ivy. Art should be the handmaid of beauty and purity, clothing noble ideals in gracious forms, in order that they may attract and inspire. When society flocks to see on the stage scenes, the only *raison d'être* of which is their suggestion of immorality, the dramatist corrupts his audience, poisoning their thoughts. The mighty power of art is a magician's wand, and ill is it with the nation when her artists use their magic to defile the imagination instead of to purify the heart. A great tragedy of human passion may teach most noble lessons, purifying "the imagination by pity and terror;" but these scenes of petty drawing-room intrigues, of the small vices of the idle and the frivolous, can only soil the minds of those attracted by them and disgust the pure and strong. Where art is decadent national life is decaying, and it is a sad fate for a man of intellect to be merely a landmark of decay, his genius showing the phosphorescence of putrefaction instead of the white light of noble thought.

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Telepathy

A CURIOUS account comes from Morocco (*Daily Express*, July 18th) of a "Moorish seer," who informed the *Daily Express* correspondent of a number of facts that he claimed to know outside the ordinary methods of communication. Says the Moor:

"The British are more done than the others. The French are done, too. Do you know that they have taken their Consul away from Fez? (This is a fact, though not yet known in Europe. It occurred soon after the French grab at Igli.) This is because they are afraid. They know what is coming. You know my cousin in Fez killed an American protection man

the other day? (A fact.) Have the N'zranis [Christians] dared to do anything because of that? No! They know. They don't think we Moors know; but we do, though."

"Well, what else?" I asked, interested now.

"The Spanish Mission has just left Marrâkeesh for Tangier, by ship! A fact, as I found on my arrival here. But how my friend could possibly have ascertained it there in remote El Ksar, I cannot imagine.) That, too, is because the N'zranis fear. No mission has ever returned that way before. They dare not cross by land now."

"But, even so," I said; "troubles in Morocco are not going to wipe out all the Christians, you know, M'hamet."

"You are funny, you N'zranis," he said, with a sneer. "You believe no one's stories but your own, and you think no one knows anything except yourselves. Do you think we Moors are dead? Or is it that because we don't trouble ourselves with all your stupid telegraphs and smoke machines, you think we can't get news of the world? See here! In China, all your Bashadors (Ministers) and Mish'nries were killed the other day; every one of them."

"That's a guess," I said. "No one knows that yet."

[The horrible confirmation from Peking had not reached our correspondent in Tangier at time of writing.—Ed.]

"No one knows it, eh? That is your mistake; your N'zrani blindness. Every true Muslim knows it. Everyone knows it, except the N'zranis. They know so little, outside their machines."

"But how do you know it?"

"How do I know that the British have just been beaten again in South Africa, and two hundred prisoners taken? How do I know that new rifles to shoot ten times without loading are going all through Morocco now, and that our Customs people no longer try to stop it? Believers know much. There are many Believers in that China; many Sennussi men, too; as here, in El Ksar."

"But you have no telegraphs; how could you get the news from them?"

"B'ism Illah! We have our heads. There are ways; but they are ways that N'zranis cannot understand; and, not being their own stories, they don't believe in them."

I was a good deal astonished, on my arrival at Tangier, where we have the telegraph, to find a part of what this man had told me to be true. God send he may be wrong about Peking!

It seems quite possible that the Moor may have obtained his news by telepathic impressions; it is not the first time that the "uncivilised" have shown themselves able to do without instruments more than the "civilised" can do who are dependent on apparatus.

SPIRITUALITY AND PSYCHISM

A Paper read at the European Convention T.S.

Few things are more striking to those who visit different lands than the working and success of the Theosophical Society among people widely separated, not only in geographical position but in language, manners and customs. The earnestness with which pious souls in all parts of the world join hands in devoting themselves to its service and the cordial response its central ideas find in the hearts of people placed amidst outer surroundings so vastly varied, almost prove the cardinal theosophic teaching of the common origin of man. For these facts do lead one to the thought that underneath the variety of strata which constitute the outer forms in which men live and have their being, there is a deep and perennial spring, the waters of which permeate through all hearts and in all ages.

The spiritual truths of which the Theosophical Society is the latest exponent are as old as humanity itself and have their roots in the very centre of being, but they first blossom forth into concrete ideas that the intellect of man may handle, however imperfectly, in the genial soil and the spiritual atmosphere of the East. Hence it is that the East has ever been the fountain-head from which have flowed all the great religious systems of the world, and people in all ages have turned their faces to the East and its mysteries for the solution of the great problems of life and being. It is therefore only right and proper that the study of Oriental literature and religions should form an important part of the work of the Theosophical Society, for in them lie buried the sublime truths which modern Theosophy is attempting to bring back to life all over the world. Natural enough is it in me, then, to feel pride, as a Hindu, in the success of a movement that reflects glory on the wonderful legacy left us by our holy ancestors, and which we in our lethargy had allowed to rust away in comparative oblivion.

But apart from any feeling of personal gratification, I look upon the Theosophical Society as a direct link connecting the outer lifeless world of petty trivialities, magnified into serious undertakings by our short-sighted ignorance, with that beauteous world of Spirit wherein breathe life and joy eternal. It is a veritable life-boat to carry one, if devoted and resolute, across the high seas of materialism and delusion to the haven of rest and peace, and I often wonder that a great many more people do not enter this vessel of safety so close at hand. And yet there are many among us who know by actual experience what a comfort it is to have found a place of rest and security amidst the conflicting tenets of exoteric religions, the distracting doctrines of rival philosophical systems, and the harrowing worries of a soulless, colourless materialistic life. In the West, where the tide of materialism runs high and where the life of sense seems almost to have swallowed up the life of the Soul, the Theosophical Society is a blessing, the nature and extent of which will be better appreciated by the unborn generations who will enjoy the fruits of the unselfish labours of the present workers. But even in India, the home of spiritual aspirations, the one country in the world where for ages untold the spiritual fire has been kept aglow in spite of all outer changes which dimmed its brilliance indeed, but never succeeded in putting it out altogether; even in this sacred land the Theosophical Society has proved the salvation of the people. The difference that one notices in the national feeling of reverence for things spiritual during the last two decades is nothing short of a miracle. In spite of the light of sacred literature and holy traditions that might have proved a flaring beacon, my countrymen were slowly but surely drifting towards the rock of materialism, on which the wealth of their dearest and fondest spiritual possessions was going to be wrecked, until there appeared on the scene two remarkable figures that worked a miraculous change in the current of Indian national thought. One of these two striking individualities has cast off the body in which the world knew her, but has left enough of influence and power behind her to vivify the movement which was dearer to her than life itself. The other personality is happily still at the head of the movement, and to me it is a real pleasure to see the familiar figure of the

veteran Colonel, who has done so much towards the uplifting of India, presiding over this assembly to-day. Many are the hearts that bless him for his noble work, and pray that he may live long to continue it.

What the Theosophical Society has done for India is marvellous, but its work in the West will prove even a greater wonder; and it is hoped that a day will come when it will bring the nations of the West to a keener perception of the reality of the spiritual world, in the light of which the glare of the material world will pale. The work will naturally be slower than in India, because in the latter case it consisted in merely directing the attention of the people to what was already familiar to them, although neglected, whereas in the West it means the instilling of unfamiliar truths into minds not fitted either by heredity or study to an easy recognition of spiritual verities. And precisely because the ground to be traversed by the western nations is comparatively new and untried, it behoves them to take each step with thought and care. It would show practical wisdom in them to profit by the long and accumulated experience of eastern nations that have been over the ground before, and are therefore familiar with the various precipices and pits where it is perilously easy to fall.

My decision to say a few words in this Convention has been greatly influenced by the hope of my being able to warn you against a danger that lies ahead, and which may be averted if its nature be thoroughly understood. In my travels in Europe and America I have been struck by the wide and deep interest that has been aroused of late in matters spiritual, but, like the thorn by the side of the rose, I have noticed lurking in the minds of people a great leaning towards the production and witnessing of psychical phenomena. This constant endeavour to bring about conditions that would favour startling results is the natural adjunct to the weakness in human nature that makes people grasp at fruits before they are ripe, and it seems to me to be peculiarly characteristic of the feverish rush of the present day civilisation that people should ever attempt to discover short cuts to distinction, without developing the patience to work steadily for the timely fruition of their efforts. It is not, there-

fore, to be wondered at that some, in their pursuit of the true goal, which is Divine, should be tempted away into the bye-paths of psychical rubbish.

We are all aware of the broad distinction between the spiritual and the astral planes, and it is hardly necessary to remind you that all the so-called "phenomena" pertain to the astral plane, bearing little affinity to the spiritual. It is true that the spiritual world is not easily comprehensible, and that its realities are difficult to grasp for minds accustomed to work in material grooves. It is also true that the astral plane being more closely allied to the physical, it is much easier for people to get into conscious touch with the details of this plane, and to translate them in terms of everyday experience on the physical plane. But those who have set before themselves the ideal of serving God and man by attaining purity and perfection, should not be allured by the false glamour of acquiring easily a few powers not possessed by their neighbours, so as to look big in their eyes, not to speak of the numberless unknown dangers that beset the path of one who strays into the mâyâvic regions of the astral plane without the guiding light of true spiritual insight. Truly such a person is like a frail boat cast on a stormy sea without mast or rudder.

I do not deny that these powers, like all others, may be, and are, used for the helping of man, but in order that they may be so used effectively, they must form corollaries to the powers of the soul, which are the ripe fruits of wisdom acquired by lives of self-sacrifice and purity. Hence it is that in India, the land replete with the experience of ages, all effort towards the acquirement of Siddhis, or psychic powers, is strongly discouraged. The possibility of the acquisition of certain abnormal powers by curious practices and by rule of thumb, so to say, has always been recognised—nay, there exist even to-day, men whose pride it is to have acquired these so-called miraculous powers, much to the wonder and awe of the ignorant masses. For human nature is much the same everywhere, and the craving for stray powers follows the genuine pursuit after spiritual knowledge as the shadow the sunshine, although it must be admitted that the pendulum of error never

swung in India to the extent of confounding Palmistry with Yoga, as has been done in a notable instance in London. In spite of the manifold abuses of the term "Yoga," the main idea of its pertaining to the purification of the inner self and the controlling of the various activities of the mind has never been lost sight of. Leaving out of account the class of vagrant ascetics who inflict on themselves all manner of self-torture in the hope of being considered holy, it has ever been recognised that a true Yogî is one who has studied the inner laws of being and moulds his life according to the dictates of the God within, having acquired a perfect control over the various organs of sense, as also over what is called the Râja (King) of senses—the mind. For it is the mind of man that vitalises all the organs and regulates the formation of the personality, or the conscious self. Truly is it written in our sacred works that true Yoga consists in the controlling of the mind, for mind is the centre of thoughts, and thoughts are the forces that mould the inner structure of man, which will be saintly or vicious according as our thoughts are pure or unholy. And not only is the inner body so affected, but even the outer or the physical body bears impress of the thoughts that regulate the life of an individual. For who does not know the distinction between even the outer appearance of a holy man whose life is spent in serving his God and fellow-men, and the villain who lives by inflicting miseries on his brethren and wallows in self-indulgence. Nor is the effect of thought confined to one plane alone, for the various bodies which a man is likely to get in future incarnations will also be moulded by the thoughts which have dominated the present one. Those of us who are familiar with the theosophic teaching of the various bodies constituting a human being and the planes of matter corresponding to these bodies, will understand readily that thought, being a living force, must draw towards itself, in the building of the bodies, particles of matter that bear affinity to it in point of character, attracting at the same time similar elementals or nature-spirits that help on the grand work of the building up of man as a composite being. Nor must it be supposed that this powerful influence of thought is confined to the four principles of man that are, so to speak, directly subordinate to it, for it also

spreads and colours the principles that overshadow it from above. It is a sacrificial fire, the smoke of which ascends on high and makes its obeisance to the God that is within us.

Let us, therefore, take heed how we dally with this all-powerful energy in our being, and let us never forget that in making our thoughts holy and unselfish, so as to bring our whole nature into obedience to the God within, lies the root of all true Yoga and all true religion. He—the Divinity in man—is ever present in the innermost depths of our hearts, and even in periods of blackest darkness and woe He forsaketh us not. It is we who, by starting discordant thought-vibrations, prevent His rapturous melodies being caught up in our nature. The flute of Shrî Kṛishṇa is never silent, but its mellifluous strains find no responsive heart-strings to be awakened into divine music. What greater duty, what greater worship, then, than to direct our thoughts with steady and persistent effort towards the attunement of our conscious self with the "still small voice" that comes from within? And it is evident that towards this end it is not necessary to make any frantic or quixotic efforts that would break one away from the ordinary life of the world. It is not only unnecessary, but positively harmful, that one should force a shadowy contact with the astral plane by silly efforts of crystal-gazing, table-tapping and the like; for the astral plane is crowded with beings both beneficent and malevolent, and unless a person has succeeded in rendering his thoughts absolutely pure, and in moulding his outer life also on lines of stainless purity, he is likely to attract the demoniac elementals. And, lacking the wisdom that comes from inward growth, he would fall an easy victim to these powerful nature-forces with whom he unconsciously brought himself into dangerous relations. Nor is it at all necessary that one should fly from the ordinary pursuits of the outer life in which karma has placed one, and should betake oneself to the solitudes of a forest, for it is obvious that strength is gained by struggle, not by flight. Periods, or even lives, of rest and quiet in solitary retreats are indeed helpful towards the acquirement of a foretaste of the calm and joy that pervade the soul of a truly evolved human being, but it must be borne in mind that these recesses are meant to give one the strength to

combat, and are not to be sought after for perpetual indulgence. The hero who would fain attain the greatest of all victories, the conquest of self, must take no thought of his own happiness, but should ever be ready to fight against the numberless trials and tribulations that beset one in the life of the world, and which go on thickening and multiplying as one gains in strength and determination to withstand and trample on them. And in the very thick of the fight he acquires strength to combat, patience to suffer, gentleness to forbear, calmness to remain unmoved, and above all, an ever-expanding and deepening love for his brethren. In the very depths of his heart he finds the woes of the world reflected, and in his attempts to help and comfort he loses sight of his own sufferings. Nay, he takes the stab of pain on his feeling heart, using it as a shield to screen his weaker and less-gifted brethren.

It is a destiny full of suffering, full of the intensest pain, but it is the only one worth aspiring for and living for, as it is the only one that leads to glory and to the feet of the Divine Master, whom only such are really fit to serve as would gladly bestow blessings out of the blood of their hearts. This is the path, steep and thorny, that is pointed out to you to follow. Let such as have the will and strength step in, for in the end they will find peace unutterable, joy divine, and the God of their worship in His splendour. It is steep enough to try the strength of the strongest and is yet not too steep for the weakest to draw out his strength in. For the difficulty is but proportionate to the strength and the opposing forces attack with redoubled energy only when strength has been gained by determined fight. The weakest amongst us might therefore take heart, for by a merciful dispensation of Providence trials are not numerous in the beginning, and what is more, after the very first steps have been taken, one begins to get glimpses of the Divine Light, faint and distant, it is true, but nevertheless so peace-giving and joy-inspiring that the neophyte mounts up step by step without losing heart for want of encouragement.

Perhaps I ought to add one word of consolation for those too whom the dream of abnormal powers persistently allures. All that the psychic sees and craves for—aye, much more—is

revealed to the ken of the enlightened seer, not in the ignis-fatuus gleam that flits across the psychic's vision, but in the bright sunshine of calm and mature knowledge where every chance of a false step is eliminated, and the power to control all the tremendous forces at work in the astral plane has been gained. But in this path powers come not to satisfy idle curiosity or to serve the purpose of self-aggrandisement, but only for the helping of fellow-beings; and blessed is the person to whom such gifts are given without his craving for them, so that he may lay them as a sacrifice at the altar of the God within, his own eyes ever turned to the feet of the Lord, to serve whom forms the sole object and aspiration of his life. For such a one fall is impossible; for truly is it said in our scriptures: "Those who mount dizzy heights by austere practices, fancying themselves liberated but being really unenlightened because lacking in devotion to Thee, O lotus-eyed One! fall into a chasm, not having loved Thy feet. Never so, however, Thy own, O Mâdhava, stray away from the Path, being tied to Thee by bonds of affection; and guarded by Thee they walk fearlessly, their feet on the heads of all enemies."

GYANENDRANATH CHAKRAVARTI.

TO MY TEACHER

IF I should come at last to stand within
The Portals of the Temple; if my feet
Faint not nor falter, nor my heart entreat
The Silence for some echo of earth's din:
If, in the ways of sorrow and of sin,
It may be mine to turn the bitter, sweet;
Hearing through all things the Divine Heart beat
Knowing that good and evil are one kin!
Then—when at last I see the Radiance shine
From out that Holiest whence no soul returns,
I will be known in Presences Divine
By my great love whose very whiteness burns,
And when I fuse with the Immortal Flame
Even to the Heart of ALL will bear your name.

E. M. G.

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

(CONCLUDED FROM p. 440)

In spite of the artificial literary dress that is given to the longer discourses of Apollonius, they contain many noble thoughts, as we may see from the following quotations from the conversation of our philosopher with his friend Demetrius, who was endeavouring to dissuade him from braving Domitian at Rome.

The law, said Apollonius, obliges us to die for liberty, and nature ordains that we should die for our parents, our friends, or our children. All men are bound by these duties. But a higher duty is laid upon the sage; he must die for his principles and the truth he holds dearer than life. It is not the law that lays this choice upon him, it is not nature; it is the strength and courage of his own soul. Though fire or sword threaten him, it will not overcome his resolution or force from him the slightest falsehood; but he will guard the secrets of others' lives and all that has been entrusted to his honour as religiously as the secrets of initiation. And I know more than other men, for I know that of all that I know, I know some things for the good, some for the wise, some for myself, some for the Gods, but naught for tyrants.

Again, I think that a wise man does nothing alone or by himself; no thought of his so secret but that he has himself as witness to it. And whether the famous saying "know thyself" be from Apollo or from some sage who learnt to know himself and proclaimed it as a good for all, I think the wise man who knows himself and has his own spirit in constant comradeship, to fight at his right hand, will neither cringe at what the vulgar fear, nor dare to do what most men do without the slightest shame (vii. 15).

* See the previous papers on the subject from February onwards.

In the above we have the true philosopher's contempt for death, and also the calm knowledge of the initiate, of the comforter and adviser of others to whom the secrets of their lives have been confessed, that no tortures can ever unseal his lips. Here, too, we have the full knowledge of what consciousness is, of the impossibility of hiding the smallest trace of evil in the inner world; and also the dazzling brilliancy of a higher ethic which makes the habitual conduct of the crowd appear surprising—the "that which they do not with shame."

From his Letters

Apollonius seems to have written many letters to emperors, kings, philosophers, communities and states, although he was by no means a "voluminous correspondent"; in fact, the style of his short notes is exceedingly concise, and they were composed, as Philostratus says, "after the manner of the Lacedæmonian scytale"* (iv. 27 and vii. 35).

It is evident that Philostratus had access to letters attributed to Apollonius, for he quotes a number of them,† and there seems no reason to doubt their authenticity. Whence he obtained them he does not inform us, unless it be that they were the collection made by Hadrian at Antium (viii. 20).

That the reader may be able to judge of the style of Apollonius we append one or two specimens of these letters, or rather notes, for they are too short to deserve the title of epistles. Here is one to the magistrates of Sparta:

"Apollonius to the Ephors greeting!

"It is possible for men not to make mistakes, but it requires noble men to acknowledge they have made them."

All of which Apollonius gets into just half as many words in Greek. Here, again, is an interchange of notes between the two

* This was a staff or baton, used as a cypher for writing dispatches. "A strip of leather was rolled slantwise round it, on which the dispatches were written lengthwise, so that when unrolled they were unintelligible; commanders abroad had a staff of like thickness, round which they rolled their papers, and so were able to read the dispatches." (Liddell and Scott's *Lexicon, sub voc.*) Hence scytale came to mean generally a Spartan dispatch, which was characteristically laconic in its brevity.

† See i. 7, 15, 24, 32; iii. 51; iv. 5, 22, 26, 27, 46; v. 2, 10, 39, 40, 41; vi. 18, 27, 29, 31, 33; viii. 7, 20, 27, 28.

greatest philosophers of the time, both of whom suffered imprisonment and were in constant danger of death.

"Apollonius to Musonius, the philosopher, greeting!

"I want to go to you, to share speech and roof with you, to be of some service to you. If you still believe that Hercules once rescued Theseus from Hades, write what you would have. Farewell!"

"Musonius to Apollonius, the philosopher, greeting!

"Good merit shall be stored for you for your good thoughts; what is in store for me is one who waits his trial and proves his innocence. Farewell."

"Apollonius to Musonius, greeting!

"Socrates refused to be got out of prison by his friends and went before the judges. He was put to death. Farewell."

"Musonius to Apollonius, the philosopher, greeting!

"Socrates was put to death because he made no preparation for his defence. I shall do so. Farewell!"

However, Musonius, the Stoic, was sent to penal servitude by Nero.

Here is a note to the Cynic Demetrius, another of our philosopher's most devoted friends.

"Apollonius, the philosopher, to Demetrius, the Dog,* greeting!

"I give thee to Titus, the emperor, to teach him the way of kingship, and do you in turn give me to speak him true; and be to him all things but anger. Farewell!"

In addition to the notes quoted in the text of Philostratus, there is a collection of ninety-five letters, mostly brief notes, the text of which is printed in most editions.† Nearly all the critics are of opinion that they are not genuine, but Jowett‡ and others think that some of them may very well be genuine.

Here is a specimen or two of these letters. Writing to Euphrates, his great enemy, that is to say the champion of pure rationalistic ethic against the science of sacred things, he says:

* *I.e.*, Cynic.

† Chassang (*op. cit.*, pp. 395, *sqq.*) gives a French translation of them.

‡ Art. "Apollonius," Smith's *Dict. of Class. Biog.*

17. "The Persians call those who have the divine faculty (or are god-like) Magi. A Magus, then, is one who is a minister of the Gods, or one who has by nature the god-like faculty. You are no Magus but reject the Gods (*i.e.*, are an atheist)."

Again, in a letter addressed to Criton, we read:

23. "Pythagoras said that the most divine art was that of healing. And if the healing art is most divine, it must occupy itself with the soul as well as with the body; for no creature can be sound so long as the higher part in it is sickly."

Writing to the priests of Delphi against the practice of blood-sacrifice, he says:

27. "Heraclitus was a sage, but even he* never advised the people of Ephesus to wash out mud with mud."†

Again, to some who claimed to be his followers, those "who think themselves wise," he writes the reproof:

43. "If any say he is my disciple, then let him add he keeps himself apart out of the Baths, he slays no living thing, eats of no flesh, is free from envy, malice, hatred, calumny, and hostile feeling, but has his name inscribed among the race of those who've won their freedom."

Among these letters is found one of some length addressed to Valerius, probably P. Valerius Asiaticus, consul in A.D. 70. It is a wise letter of philosophic consolation to enable Valerius to bear the loss of his son, and runs as follows:

"There is no death of anyone, but only in appearance, even as there is no birth of any, save only in seeming. The change from being to becoming seems to be birth, and the change from becoming to being seems to be death, but in reality no one is ever born, nor does one ever die. It is simply a being visible and then invisible; the former through the density of matter, and the latter because of the subtlety of being—being which is ever the same, its only change being motion and rest. For being has this necessary peculiarity, that its change is brought about by nothing external to itself; but whole becomes parts and parts become whole in the oneness of the all. And if it be asked: What is this which sometimes is seen and sometimes

* That is to say, a philosopher of 600 years ago.

† That is to expiate blood-guiltiness with blood-sacrifice.

not seen, now in the same, now in the different?—it might be answered: It is the way of everything here in the world below that when it is filled out with matter it is visible, owing to the resistance of its density, but is invisible, owing to its subtlety, when it is rid of matter, though matter still surround it and flow through it in that immensity of space which hems it in but knows no birth or death.

"But why has this false notion [of birth and death] remained so long without a refutation? Some think that what has happened through them, they have themselves brought about. They are ignorant that the individual is brought to birth *through* parents, not by parents, just as a thing produced *through* the earth is not produced *from* it. The change which comes to the individual is nothing that is caused by his visible surroundings, but rather a change in the one thing which is in every individual.

"And what other name can we give to it but primal being? 'Tis it alone that acts and suffers, becoming all for all through all, eternal deity, deprived and wronged of its own self by names and forms. But this is a less serious thing than that a man should be bewailed, when he has passed from man to God by change of state and not by the destruction of his nature. The fact is that so far from mourning death you ought to honour it and reverence it. The best and fittest way for you to honour death is now to leave the one who's gone to God, and set to work to play the ruler over those left in your charge as you were wont to do. It would be a disgrace for such a man as you to owe your cure to time and not to reason, for time makes even common people cease from grief. The greatest thing is a strong rule, and of the greatest rulers he is best who first can rule himself. And how is it permissible to wish to change what has been brought to pass by will of God? If there's a law in things, and there *is* one, and it is God who has appointed it, the righteous man will have no wish to try to change good things, for such a wish is selfishness and counter to the law, but he will think that all that comes to pass is a good thing. On! heal yourself, give justice to the wretched and console them; so shall you dry your tears. You should not set your private woes above your public cares, but rather set your public cares before your private woes.

And see as well what consolation you already have! The nation sorrows with you for your son. Make some return to those who weep with you; and this you will more quickly do if you will cease from tears than if you still persist. Have you not friends? Why! you have yet another son. Have you not even still the one that's gone? You have!—will answer anyone who really thinks. For 'that which is' doth cease not—nay *is* just for the very fact that it will be for aye; or else the 'is not' is, and how could that be when 'the is' doth never cease to be?

"Again it will be said you fail in piety to God and are unjust. 'Tis true. You fail in piety to God, you fail in justice to your boy; nay more, you fail in piety to him as well. Would'st know what death is? Then make me dead and send me off to company with death, and if you will not change the dress you've put on it,* you will have straightway made me better than yourself."†

The Writings of Apollonius

But besides these letters Apollonius also wrote a number of treatises, of which, however, only one or two fragments have been preserved. These treatises are as follows:

a. The Mystic Rites or Concerning Sacrifices.‡—This treatise is mentioned by Philostratus (iii. 41; iv. 19), who tells us that it set down the proper method of sacrifice to every God, the proper hours of prayer and offering. It was in wide circulation, and Philostratus had come across copies of it in many temples and cities, and in the libraries of philosophers. Several fragments of it have been preserved,§ the most important of which is to be found in Eusebius,‖ and is to this effect: "'Tis best to make no sacrifice to God at all, no lighting of a fire, no calling Him by any name that men employ for things of sense. For God is over all, the first; and only after Him do come the other Gods.

* That is his idea of death.

† The last sentence is very obscure. The text reads: *ἄνελέ μέ πέμψας μετὰ ταύτην την φωνήν, ἥν ἐὰν μὴ μεταμφιέσῃ, παραχρῆμα κρείττονά με σεαυτοῦ πεποίηκας.*

‡ The full title is given by Eudocia, *Ionia;* ed. Villoison (Venet.; 1781), p. 57.

§ See Zeller, *Phil. d. Griech.*, v. 127.

‖ *Præparat. Evangel.*, iv. 12-13; ed. Dindorf (Leipzig 1867), i., 176, 177.

For He doth stand in need of naught e'en from the Gods, much less from us small men—naught that the earth brings forth, nor any life she nurseth, or even any thing the stainless air contains. The only fitting sacrifice to God is man's best reason, and not the word* that comes from out his mouth.

"We men should ask the best of beings through the best thing in us, for what is good—I mean by means of mind, for mind needs no material things to make its prayer. So then, to God, the mighty One, who's over all, no sacrifice should ever be lit up."

Noack† tells us that scholarship is convinced of the genuineness of this fragment. This book, as we have seen, was widely circulated and held in the highest respect, and it is said that its rules were engraved on brazen pillars at Byzantium.‡

b. The Oracles or Concerning Divination, 4 books. Philostratus (iii. 41) seems to think that the full title was *Divination of the Stars*, and says that it was based on what Apollonius had learned in India; but the *kind* of divination Apollonius wrote about was not the ordinary astrology, but something which Philostratus considers superior to ordinary human art in such matters. He had, however, never heard of anyone possessing a copy of this rare work.

c. The Life of Pythagoras. Porphyry refers to this work,§ and Iamblichus quotes a long passage from it.‖

d. The Will of Apollonius, to which reference has already been made, in treating of the sources of Philostratus (i. 3). This was written in the Ionic dialect, and contained a summary of his doctrines.

A Hymn to Memory is also ascribed to him, and Eudocia speaks of many other (καὶ ἄλλα πολλά) works.

We have now indicated for the reader all the information which exists concerning our philosopher. Was Apollonius, then, a rogue, a trickster, a charlatan, a fanatic, a misguided enthu-

* A play on the meanings of λόγος, which signifies both reason and word.

† *Psyche*, I. ii. 5.

‡ Noack, *ibid.*

§ See Noack, *Porphr. Vit. Pythag.*, p. 15.

‖ Ed. Amstelod., 1707, cc. 254-264.

siast, or a philosopher, a true theosophist, a reformer, a conscious worker, a true initiate, one of the earth's great ones? This each must decide for himself, according to his knowledge or his ignorance.

I for my part bless his memory, and would gladly learn from him.

G. R. S. MEAD.

THE STATUE OF THE GOD

ONCE upon a time, as nursery tales begin, there stood in a great valley broadening to the sea a very great and populous city; around it were hills sliding greenly downwards towards the city suburbs; high on the hillsides were gorse and heather, golden and purple belled, where the wild bees droned all day in summer time. There, too, were red-boled singing pine trees that whispered of the secrets the wind blew to them from the sea, which stores secrets as the wild bees store honey, as the hearts of the aged memories of youth and love.

It matters nothing in what age nor in what country this city flourished; within it dwelt many people, both good and bad, wise and foolish, rich and poor; tragedies and comedies were played hourly in the lives within its boundaries, and the cry of the children, old and young, which never ceases, went up from it day and night. It was a civilised city, the chief in a land of great cities, a country of large possessions and much power. Chief of all buildings therein was a great temple dedicated to the service of a God, the Patron of the city and its people. There was a legend, nay, more than a legend, for it was an article of faith with all who thought rightly, that the God, by reason of His great compassion for the ignorance of the people, once took human shape and dwelt among them; ruling them, giving them wise laws, and bidding them, "Thus and thus shall ye believe."

Such legends, as we know, are found among many peoples of the earth to this day. There were no books in the city setting

forth the words of the God, nor any picture whereby men might know in what guise He had appeared when He took human form; thus it befell that many painters and sculptors made pictures and statues representing Him as seemed good to their pious fancies; and many holy men diligently collected the traditions that had come down to them by word of mouth, and made of them a Law of the God. This law they taught the people, saying to them:

"These were the words which came to our fathers, and thus do we, their sons, expound them, that ye may know the mind of the God."

Nevertheless, after many ages had passed, for it was an ancient race, there were many schools and temples setting forth the Law and interpreting it in divers fashions. But all the people believed on the God, and the worshippers in each temple grieved very sadly because the worship offered in other temples was not so pleasing to Him as their own. Nevertheless, despite all differences of interpretation all the people acknowledged the same Law, and gave praise and thanks because their God had revealed Himself to but one nation, and that nation their own.

In the latter days of the city it became very rich and powerful, and men grew restless and weary by reason of the pressure of the life within them, and the fierce throbbing of the life without. Thus it came to pass that there rose up one by one those who said the laws were not made by the God, but by His priests; they whispered, and at last said loudly, that the teachings of their fathers were untrue, and even of a false morality and a narrow wisdom, so that they could not have been given by aught but a man. At last they questioned whether the God had ever come to the city at all. It is the tale of these days which I shall try to tell; or rather I shall tell the story of a man who lived in those times.

There was a priest who dwelt in the city then; he was the chief priest of the chief temple, a grave and learned man, versed in the writings of all whose opinions were as his own. He was a man of pure and simple life; he was of a high and delicate

honour; also he hated sinners, save when they left their sins and humbled themselves in the temple wherein he ministered. Chiefest of all sinners he abhorred those who doubted of the wisdom of the law which the priests taught. Now this priest had a brother much younger than he, whom he reared very austerely, though in his heart he felt great love for him. This boy was a silent, thoughtful child, yet within him there was a hidden fire; it burst forth at times in fits of fierce anger, wilfulness and disobedience, or in wild mirth. Sometimes it leapt forth as passionate love, or as a strange mood of causeless gloom. As this child grew older he devoted himself fervently to the service of the God; his changeful temper became for awhile steadfast, and because he had in him a gift for such matters, he wrought carvings of much beauty to place before the altar. His brother, seeing this, was glad because one of his race was so devout and had so great a genius.

But when the boy was eighteen years old, and was soon to be wholly dedicated to the temple service, there beat in on his brain the throbbing life of the city, and there hissed into his ears the questioning and doubting of the men who, seeing the evil which was wrought in the city, and the denial of the God which spoke from the lives and deeds of those whose lips sang His praises, were driven in very despair to think that even though it might be true the God had once visited the city, He had long forgotten it, and its people. And the boy, because he was devout of nature, and also because he desired to be holy of life, was filled with agony by the doubting of his heart and the tempting of his fiery soul; so that at last he went weeping to the priest, his brother. The priest found it hard to credit the thing he heard; his emotions were keen and strong, but he knew them not by that name, because they were harsh rather than tender. Great was his wrath against that which was incomprehensible to him, bitter his contempt of sins which were not his, and of weaknesses which he knew not. So he called his own weaknesses by the names of strength and abhorrence of folly and evil; and his prejudices he called reason; and he dreamed not that he was at the mercy of these, even as the boy, his brother, was tossed by the passions of his more tender soul.

So when the lad laid before him the agony of his heart the priest bade him cry for pardon to the God he had blasphemed; he charged him to stifle his questionings rather than seek to answer them; he bade him seek peace and freedom from temptation by means of solitude, repression, silence, fasting and the scourge. And this counsel the boy followed, till his brain was maddened and his heart was sick; until the young strength of his body, his eager tender heart, his restless, questioning mind, and his artist's love of that which was beautiful and joyous, formed a great flood to sweep away the landmarks of his childhood; and mad because he doubted the very existence of the God, and frenzied by the cold silence which met the agony of his questioning, he sought his brother once more and raved madly of that which was in his heart. Then the priest cried out on his blasphemy, and the boy fled from the temple; he went with his brother's curse upon sin ringing in his ears, and flying into the city he led a wild and evil life, driven thereto, not by love of evil-doing, but by the restless energy and despair within him, which drove him like a leaf before a fierce, compelling wind.

One thing alone he kept holy, and guarded strictly; he wrought no evil by means of the genius which was in him; if he fashioned nothing which was high and great, he fashioned nothing which was foul and loathsome, and to the hurt of any man.

He lived carelessly and sinfully during four years, and then he fell ill. He was plunged into great poverty, for he had saved nothing of his earnings; so it came to pass that one, hearing of the sickness and want of a youth who gave promise of great genius, came to him, and bade that he should be moved to his house and there nursed and tended. This was done, and there the young man grew well again slowly, and marvelled at the high thoughts, noble words, and selfless toil of the man who had thus received him; so that one day, being greatly moved to wonder and admiration, he cried out:

"Ah, you! you indeed show forth the glory of the God; if all His worshippers were as you are, no man would pause to question the truth of what they taught. Their lives should be their scripture."

And his host answered him, smiling a little at his eager words:

"I do not believe in the worship of this, nor of any God. I live for and serve my fellow-men. I toil that right shall be established among our people unto all generations."

Then the young man was amazed; and as he watched this great and honourable man, who sought for no reward, not even in heaven, who sowed with never a hope of reaping, and laboured for those whom his eyes should never see, his own life was shamed into a greater righteousness, and the manliness and strength in him were roused and stung into life. He rose up and said:

"Even as you can live, O great and noble one, the servant of your country, and the slave of the high and drastic law of your own soul, even so can I. I, too, will crave no God to worship; I, too, will live even to the highest that I find within myself."

Speaking thus he changed his manner of life, and ruled it strictly, and wrought mightily at his art, until, the whole current of his being flowing thus in one channel, his name began to be honoured as that of a great artist, the greatest in the land. He and the great statesman and leader who had befriended him in his sickness and shame were now close friends, though fully ten years parted them in age. But souls are, and let us therefore rejoice, cast in different moulds; the high path trodden by the ruler seemed to be grey and colourless to the artist. The statesman toiled for the welfare of the human race, an impersonal abstraction; but the thoughts of the younger man turned longingly to the dream-God of his childhood; a God-Man to whom his heart clave lovingly. The vision of a God-like humanity which should be when he was dust had no power to stir nor draw him.

At last the longing of his heart inspired his thought and nerved his hand; he roused from its numbed trance of grief the long past worship of the boy, so that it might blend with, and make bright with the grace and fire of youth, the deep longing of the man for that which he believed to be a mere mirage; and thus he wrought, filled with the reverence felt by all devout unbelievers

for the lovely ideal which he would gladly have given life and fame to prove a truth.

He wrought a statue to represent the human form of the God of that city ; when it was finished, only the man himself, who knew how fair, how radiant had been the figure that lived in his imagination, looked on the statue with dull eyes, and was dissatisfied. Those who gazed on the work of the sculptor saw resting upon it the glimmer of a light, of which all that they held most dear in their dearest was the pallid reflection ; so that no holy image had ever been seen which seemed to draw the worshipper so near to the worshipped. The people well-nigh offered worship to the man who had wrought this wonder ; and the rulers said that it should stand in the chief temple. But the artist said no, this was his gift to the city, and it should stand in no temple, but on the summit of a great hill without the city walls. It should stand in a shrine, through the open windows of which the moonlight should glint, and the sunshine pour freely ; through those windows the little birds should sing and fly at will, and the soft sea-breeze should sweep, bearing pine, and thyme, and gorse scents as incense, and breathing low in utter reverence of the God whose Image made the place so holy.

This was done ; and many pious souls climbed the steep hill to pray in the shrine, so that fewer people than of old went to the great temple, which was frequented by the less devout, by the more idle who cared not to breast the steepness of the hill, by the children who were too young to climb, or by the aged who loved the familiar places where they had first been taught to pray. But the artist who had wrought the statue never worshipped in the shrine, for he said :

"It is only a fair fancy of my own, though to the simple people it speaks to them of the God."

The people of the city had quite forgotten the sins of the great sculptor's youth, for his life was now very sober ; he was esteemed to be both wise and gentle, he was full of charity towards all men, and was sought eagerly by the greatest of the city, although his brother the priest held aloof. But the artist himself did not forget, and the sins of his past made and kept him humble, and though he was not one constantly to dwell upon

remorseful thoughts, and indeed, thinking remorse to be oftentimes a harmful link to sin, he put it from him, yet nevertheless sometimes his sad soul would cry:

"If I had done otherwise! Ah! to have nothing to repent, nothing of which to feel sorry and ashamed."

But one day when these thoughts had pressed upon him hardly he roamed out on the hills and entered the Shrine where was his statue; and there he saw a man lying at the foot of the image, his face hidden.

The artist halted on the threshold and saw with surprise that he who lay there was one who was known to be a man of little honour and of sinful life, and the sculptor marvelled to see him lying there.

That night there came one who knocked upon the artist's door; when he opened it he saw the young man who had lain before the Shrine. And this man said:

"May I speak with you? May I come in? Few will open their doors to me now; to-morrow, it may be, none will do so. Will you?"

The artist answered: "Why not? I pray you to enter."

So the man entered, and sat down by the hearth. He was very pale, and his eyes were full of a great horror; he hid his face from the artist's eyes, and shivered, and did not speak. When the artist, speaking gently, asked him why he had sought him thus, the young man's mood seemed to change. His face grew set and hard in its pallor, though his lips trembled still. He rose up.

"I do not know why I came," he said. "I will go out again."

But the other held him, crying: "Nay, but you do know. It was for no little matter you sought me to-night. So your eyes tell me."

"If my eyes told you but half the truth," said the other bitterly, yet shuddering, "you would not hear the other half. You would strike me, you would cry shame on me, you would drive me from this place."

"If you thought that," said the artist gently, "you would not have come to me to-night."

Then the man who had sought him strove to thank him for his words, and failing, burst into tears; so the artist led him within and sought to comfort him. After a while his visitor told him that which was in his mind; for he, after much wrong-doing which had pressed but lightly on his conscience, had been guilty of a crime: a crime so evil in its treachery and cruelty, so far-reaching in its ill effects, that for the first time in his life the shock of horror and great shame had made the man pause and look into his soul, and trace the path he had lightly trodden unto this; and now, in bitterest contrition and grief, he confessed his sin, and prayed for counsel how he might, at any cost to himself, undo in part the wrong he had done. The artist grieved with his sorrow, and counselled to the best of such wisdom as was his, and strove to bear the burden of the sin with the man who had done so evilly. When the dawn came the young man left him; hope and sadness fought in his eyes, and on his white face was the gleam of the better things that should be. But as he went he said:

"I never thought I could have spoken of this thing to any man."

"Indeed," said the other, "I have been wondering why you came to me of all men; but I am very glad."

"There are three great men in our city," said the young man, blushing. "There is the priest who teaches in the temple, and there is the ruler who lives for the weal of the people, and there is the sculptor who showed men the features of the Divine. I said of the first: he is too holy; he will shudder at my sin, and curse me in the name of his God. And I said of the second: he is too strong and great to understand such weakness and wretchedness as mine; and he will be angry to think that I should so wrong any. But of you—will you be angry if I tell you why I came?"

"Surely not," said the other.

"I came because—forgive me—I said: he is wise and strong, and he is pure; but once he was not so wise, once he was not so strong, once he was not so pure, and so it may be he will remember his struggles and his follies, and he will understand and pity me. Are you angry?"

"No," said the sculptor slowly. "No. I understand. But —there in the Shrine? I saw you there. If the priest be too holy, is not He whom he serves more holy?"

"That is different."

"Wherein lies the difference?"

"There is all the difference," said the departing sinner, "that lies between one who is wise, loving and holy, and One who is wisdom, love, and holiness."

As he spake he went down the steps and passed into the city. The artist climbed to the roof and watched the dawn flush the sky and make it tenderly, ineffably rosy for love of the Light that was coming. From where the artist stood, he could see the roof of a little temple where the priest taught of a terrible and eternal doom for those who had sinned and did not believe in the God.

"Though this were true," murmured the artist, "to-day I should be glad; to-day I would not undo the past."

And from that hour, though memory still made and kept him humble, he never again cried in his heart: "If I had done otherwise," and the sinner loved him greatly, so that for very love of him he amended his ways.

It befell a year later that the artist grew ill; at first the illness seemed to be but slight, but after a while it became more serious, and soon it was known he was on his death bed. Now, oftentimes when a man so lies, his thoughts go back to his childhood; and the names of those he loved and has half forgotten in the press of life rise to his lips. But the artist, who was of a loving nature, had never at any time forgotten his stern brother; and now his heart turned to him with a great longing, for he said:

"I go into darkness; it may be there is no life beyond death; even if there be, I have denied my brother's God, so that his life and mine may be set far apart by reason of that denial, and my heart yearns toward him."

Therefore a youth who was his pupil, and in after days a very great sculptor, sought the priest and told him his brother's words. But the priest said:

"Tell him if he repents his blasphemy and believes in the

God, I will come quickly to him, and pardon and receive him again in His name; but otherwise I will not come."

The young man went away, and returned saying:

"He bids me say: Sorely do you tempt him to lie to you in this matter, for he loves you and longs to see you as the fevered long for cool water; nevertheless he desires to see you only as his brother whom he dearly loves, and not as a priest of the God in whom he does not believe."

The priest replied: "Save as the priest of the God I will not come. I should sin if I did so, and the people would deem that I held blasphemy to be of no account. Though the city honour my brother, I will not honour him. The thing he has done is doubly evil; for with his own profane thought he has fashioned a figure of the glory of the God, so that the people, leaving the temple, worship this infidel's mere dream. How should this man see a glory which is holden from the eyes of those who serve in the temples of this city? If any image of the God be raised let it be the work of His priests or of such as follow them. Which of us, think you, young man, is the more likely to see Him as He is? I, who serve before His altars, or my brother who denies Him?"

The young artist cried: "Sir, our legends say the God came on earth for love of men; and in truth I think the man who loves is more likely to see His glory than he who harshly judges his brother. But now, in very truth, I doubt whether any can wholly see it, for I think men's minds are as heavenly mirrors blurred by the damp mists of earth, and all catch broken gleams of light. He whose mind is least beset by these earthly vapours shall reflect most truly. But why do I talk? You visit the dying, reverend sir; visit this dying man!"

The priest replied: "This dying man I will not visit, save he confess his sin."

Thus speaking he mounted the steps of the altar and prayed long and earnestly that the artist might repent, for in his heart was stirring love for the child he had reared.

The next day the young artist came again, crying with tears in his eyes: "May the blessing of the God be on you, sir, because you came to him."

The priest answered: "I did not come."

The young man was amazed, saying: "You did not come? But he assures me you visited him by night and smiled and blessed him. I watched by him last night. To my shame I slept a little while, and when I woke from a fair dream, wherein I saw the work which I am trying to do made perfect, he told me you had departed."

"It was the weakness of his sickness," said the priest gravely and sadly. "I did not come."

He spent the night before the altar, praying for his brother; on the morrow he met in the court of the temple the sinner who had visited the artist to tell his crime. The priest frowned when he saw him, for his sin was notorious, and the city cried shame on him still, though he had amended his ways. The young man frowned too, for he was hot-tempered and proud, and easily moved to rebellion. Then he humbled himself for love of the dying sculptor, and drew near, saying: "I come to bear your brother's grateful thanks, sir, because you visited him again last night."

The priest started, exclaiming: "I did not visit him."

"I watched beside him last night," said the sinner, "and alas! I slept at my post. Yet, in a measure, I am glad, because I dreamed a wonderful dream. I beheld myself as in a mirror but fair and noble, pure and good; and at last, understanding that I saw what I might have been, I wept; even as I wept, in shame and bitterness, a word came to me in my dream: Thus in truth thou art; and thus, in truth, shalt thou know thyself to be in the time to come; whereat my tears became tears of gladness. I woke to find your brother's face shining with joy, and he said you had but then departed."

"I did not come," said the priest. "But—but do not tell him so."

And, much moved, he entered the temple, and all the day and all the night he wept and prayed before the altar; praying not that his brother might repent, but that he might himself be shown what he ought to do.

On the morrow when he left the temple, he was spent with strong emotion and the torment of restless thought. He went to

his house and there he passed the day in reflection, thinking of his brother with much sadness, love, and tenderness. At sunset a message was brought to him from the sculptor's closest friend, the great ruler who had befriended him in his youthful days of evil doing.

Now the priest, when he heard the statesman was beneath his roof, went quickly to receive him, nevertheless he greeted him coldly. This man openly denied the God, and it was only because he stood so high among the rulers of the city that the priest consented to receive him. He bowed before him very coldly, and spoke sternly, saying:

"You honour my house with your presence. My time is scant; nevertheless some moments are at your service."

The statesman caught his hand, crying: "Let a common bond of affection and sorrow link us, sir; I thank you greatly for visiting your brother, who, I fear, cannot live to see another sunrise."

The priest, much moved, cried out: "I did not visit him; I have never visited him. Ah! Lord! what wouldst Thou have me do in this matter?"

"He says you visited and blessed him."

"He raves or dreams. I did not come. Did you—did any see me?"

"I did not see you. I was with him; but being very weary I slept some minutes, and was dreaming that I saw the fruitage of my work, the god-like race that shall be when I have passed into darkness. I saw him stand before me, the perfect man of the perfect humanity. I knew my work was not in vain. In great joy I woke, and your brother cried to me that you had but then left him."

"Herein lies some mystery," said the priest trembling. "Sir, I beseech you to believe I greatly love my brother. It is my conscience alone that holds me from him."

The statesman looked into the eyes of the priest and honoured that which he saw in them: an honest purpose struggling in bitter pain; a natural human longing doing battle with a false conception of duty, and being worsted in the fight. He bowed his head, saying:

"Conscience, sir, will draw a man down strange by-ways, and link him with strange comrades, but he who does not heed his conscience will wander farther afield, and into worse company. I bid you good-night, and I wish with all my heart your conscience would lead you this evening to your brother's door. Nevertheless, what must be, must."

Thus the statesman left him; and the priest, his heart torn with love for his brother, and awe and dread of some mystery hidden within this strange thrice-repeated delusion, and filled with fear lest he should sin and so injure his own soul, which he tended most carefully according to the light which was in him, paced his room and struggled with himself. He walked thus till it was nearly sunrise; at last the love of his heart, and his fear lest his brother should die that night, drove him to his house. The door to his surprise yielded to his touch, and he stole up the stair.

It seemed to him that from the sick man's room there glowed a great light, but when he reached it there was only the flicker of the fire, and the glimmer of a tiny silver lamp. An old woman was sleeping before the fire; she was an ancient nurse, who had reared both the priest and his brother. She smiled in her sleep, because she was dreaming of her young daughter, whom she dearly loved. The girl had passed from death to life when she was very young, and her mother mourned her, thinking she had passed from life to death. But now the aged woman smiled; for she saw the girl who was the light of her eyes, the dearest thing to her on earth or in heaven.

The priest entered the room, and his eager glance sought the bed where the dying man lay. Lo! the hand of the sculptor lay in another hand; a human form stood beside the bed, human eyes looked into his, and human lips blessed him and his work. The priest stood there as though stunned and unable to move, for it was the semblance of himself that soothed the dying man and answered the appeal of his heart. All the bitterness and sternness were gone; the worship that he had paid at the altar lit his face; all the love he felt for, but had never shown to, his brother softened his eyes. It was himself, with no power of mind or soul lost, but heightened and transmuted. It was himself, even as

the sinner had said, "as he might have been." In that sight he knew himself as he was, and cast his pride in the dust and set his foot on it and crushed it. Even as he did so, he saw a change pass over this vision of himself. Was this figure the statue that the artist had fashioned? It was more like unto it than aught the priest had seen; but it transcended it even as the noonday glory of the summer sun transcends the glimmer of the glow-worm's light in the dust of the roadside, in the growing dusk of a perfumed June twilight.

The priest fell on his knees and veiled his face; but the dying man raised himself; a light—was it the dawn light?—shone on his white face; he cried with a voice that echoed through the room like the blast of the victors' trumpets on the battlements of a long beleagered city: "Mine was a true vision! He is; and I too may worship Him."

Even as he spoke the light faded, and he fell back on his bed, his arms extended cross-wise. Timidly the priest unveiled his face; the little room was dark, save for the flickering fire-light which quivered on the sculptor's face. The old woman was waking from her dream, and wiping the glad tears from her old eyes; but soon they filled with sadder drops, and she cried out that her master had died while she slept.

But the priest put to his lips the powerless hand of his brother, and walked homewards to the temple, understanding that each dreamer had beheld in the God the fruition and goal of his desire, and he rejoiced in great humility that to him as to his brother it had been given at last to see the vision with clear and waking eyes.

IVY HOOPER.

Do not esteem it a victory, my revered friend, to have poured scorn upon a religious practice or a belief that displeases you. For your confutation, however logical, does not prove *you* to be in the right. It is possible that both you and other people, amid so much that is false or only apparent, may fail to discern the truth which is *one* and secret. If anything is not red, it is not necessarily white; if a creature is not a horse, it need not be a man. If you follow my advice, this will be your line of action: to cease from reviling others, but to speak for the truth in such fashion that what you say can never be refuted.

Sixth letter of Dionysius the Areopagite to Sosipater. Quoted on p. 48, *Studies in John the Scot*, ALICE GARDNER.

SOME MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT DEATH

(CONTINUED FROM p. 463)

WE come now to a class of misconceptions about death which may reasonably be attributed specially to religion. They are due not in the least to Christianity proper, but to our absurd modern materialization of it. I have already referred to the crude doctrine of the instantaneous passage of the deceased into an eternal heaven or hell, which is held by some of the obscurer sects —an idea which has done a great deal of harm in various ways and from its obvious absurdity has caused a considerable amount of practical unbelief. It was so clearly impossible that such an arrangement could be a fair one that people who professed to accept it found one of two alternatives forced upon them. Either the whole thing became misty and meaningless, and men trusted in comfortless uncertainty to what they called uncovenanted mercies—which meant that they vaguely hoped that their deity might after all be kinder than their dogmas allowed; or else they adopted an unphilosophical theory of a sudden and complete change at the moment of death, whereby the departed immediately lost all his evil qualities and became an angel, and so was fit for heaven—or on the other hand (though of this usually little was said) he presumably dropped any fragments or reflections of good that may have clung about him, and blossomed forth into a full-grown demon.

It seems almost unnecessary to point out how foolish and erroneous such a doctrine is. Nature plays no conjuring tricks, and with her all progress is gradual; if the undesirable is to be eliminated, or the weak made strong, these processes must take place step by step, little by little—naturally (as we very truly put it) and by normal growth, not miraculously and by supernatural intervention. As a matter of fact we find that death

makes absolutely no change whatever in the nature of a man; what he was the day before his death, that precisely and neither more nor less he is the day after his death. If he has been spiritually-minded, full of devotion, or of magnificent intellect during life, then he possesses all these characteristics after death also; if on the other hand he has been mean and narrow, full of base thoughts and sensual desire upon this plane, he loses none of these evil qualities in his passage through the portals of the grave. The fact is that death does not affect the real man in the slightest degree; the putting aside of the physical body no more alters his nature than does the removal of his overcoat. When a man realizes this he at once sees that death falls into line with all the other processes of nature of which we know anything; he feels that he need waste no time in expecting some miraculous metamorphosis, but that he has to build himself up slowly and steadily into that which he wishes to be, for he is working under an eternal and immutable law which, though on the one hand it gives nothing without effort, yet on the other hand never fails to reward effort with mathematical exactitude. He has brought his unseen world out of the imagined domain of caprice into the recognized realm of universal law, and thus he knows exactly upon what he has to rely.

Our religion has unwittingly done us another evil turn in attaching such exaggerated importance to the necessity of a special preparation for death. The Church, as ever, is wiser and more tolerant than the sects; she strongly recommends the administration of various sacraments when they can be had, but forbears to pass adverse judgment upon a man simply because he happens to die out of her reach. Many of the sects, however, make the man's eternal welfare depend absolutely upon the state of his mind at the moment of death; if he is "saved," or "in a state of grace" at that particular instant, he may be regarded as booked through for the Elysian Fields—if otherwise, the less said about his subsequent condition the better. This extraordinary theory of salvation by hysteria—salvation by feeling oneself "saved"—is perhaps one of the most astonishing aberrations of the human intellect, if indeed we can suppose intellect of any kind to be engaged in such a superstition at all.

This strange delusion is peculiarly cruel in its effects, for a man dies suddenly and away from home (as, for example, a soldier in battle) it is obviously impossible for his relatives to be certain of his state of mind at the moment of death, and thus much utterly unnecessary fear and anxiety is caused. As usual with popular superstitions, there is a tiny grain of truth at the bottom of this curious idea, but it is by no means large enough to bear the immense superstructure which has been erected upon it.

The only preparation for death which is of any real use or importance is a well-spent life. If a man has that behind him, it matters very little of what he happens to be thinking at the moment when a bullet strikes him; if he has not that to serve as a basis for his future, he cannot hope to change that future by a spasmodic death-bed repentance. Of course a man who has gone wrong must turn round and come back some time; and it the shock of impending death causes him to do that—well, that is so much the better. It will not alter the karma which he has to work out, but if in the next world he perseveres in his good resolutions, it will very decidedly alter the way in which he takes that karma, and will also affect the additions which he will make to his stock in the future.

It would not be correct to say that the last thought in the mind before death is absolutely unimportant; on the contrary, in the case of an undeveloped person it may assume considerable importance. It will be remembered that Theosophy attaches great weight to the last definite thought in a man's mind before he goes to sleep, because at our present state of evolution we often spend almost or even quite the entire night in revolving and considering it. Naturally with a person who was fully awakened to the astral plane this would matter less, as he would have the power of turning readily from one thought to another, and so could leave at will the subject which he was examining when he fell asleep. The general trend of his thought would be the important thing in his case, for, equally during the day and during the night, his mind would be likely to move in its accustomed fashion.

Just so, in the case of ordinarily evolved people, it would be

the general tone of the mind during earth life that would give the key to its probable working during astral life, and the particular idea which occupied it at the moment of transition from one state to the other would not matter much. But with some quite undeveloped Ego, whose astral consciousness was still very vague and inchoate, the importance of that last thought might be very much greater, as his mind would probably be occupied with it for a long time, and it would change only very gradually. Thus it would to some extent set the keynote to which a good deal of his astral life might be tuned, and so it would certainly be worth while taking some trouble to see that it was a good one.

No one, however, need ever have the slightest doubt or hesitation with regard to the fate of the man who dies unselfishly at the call of duty. His future, like that of every one else, will depend upon his life, and not upon his death; yet that death cannot but be a very potent factor in his evolution. The very fact that he has developed sufficient heroism to die for what is to him an abstract idea means very great advancement from his previous position. Whether the cause in which he is fighting be in the abstract right or wrong, simply does not affect the case; he thinks it to be right, to him it is the call of duty, the voice of his country, and he is willing to cast aside all selfish considerations, and obey it even in the face of certain death. Observe that it is in the last degree unlikely that the type of man from whom our private soldier is drawn would in his ordinary home life have any opportunity of developing such magnificent courage and resolution as he gains on the battle-field, and you will begin to see that, in spite of its horrors, war may nevertheless be a potent factor in evolution at a certain level. This, again, is the grain of truth at the back of the idea which possesses the Mohammedan fanatic, that the man who dies fighting for the faith goes straight to a very good life in the next world.

Nevertheless, though in certain cases death on the battle-field may do more for a man's evolution than continued life would, there is reason in a general way in the prayer of the Church, "From sudden death, good Lord, deliver us." When a man lives out his life to old age most of his lower desires are naturally

worn out and cast aside even before he leaves this physical plane, and there is consequently so much the less to be done in the astral life. A long illness often produces much the same effect, but the man who dies suddenly in the full flush of youth finds himself in very different case. In him the desires are strong and active, and, therefore, other things being equal, he is likely to have a much longer astral life. At the same time, if he learns to use that life well, it may be productive of much more good karma than he would have been able to make in the same time on the physical plane, so that there are always two sides of the account to take into consideration.

In some cases the man who is suddenly thrown out of physical life on to the astral plane remains for a long time unconscious, in a sleep filled with rosy dreams, as it was expressed in one of the early teachings given to us. In other cases he is conscious immediately and continuously, and it is not always easy to follow the working of the laws according to which these variations take place. As a general rule it may be said that his state depends largely upon the direction in which his consciousness has been used to working. Most young men, for example, would have in their astral bodies a good deal of the lowest matter of the plane, yet if they had learnt in good time to keep in check sensual desire of various kinds, their consciousness would not be in the habit of functioning through such matter. In the re-arranged astral body that matter would be outside, and would therefore be the only channel open to external impressions. The man, however, not being used to receiving this order of vibrations, could not suddenly develope the faculty, and would therefore be happily unconscious of all the unpleasantnesses of that lowest sub-plane.

Another compensation which comes to the victim of sudden death, either in battle or by accident, is the special ministration always accorded to such cases by the band of invisible helpers. It is stated that such work was in earlier periods attended to exclusively by a high class of non-human entities; but for some time past those human beings who are able to function consciously upon the astral plane have been privileged to render assistance in this labour of love. Such help is more especially needed in the case of these victims of sudden death, not only

because they have so much stronger an astral body to manage, but also because in many cases they are naturally very much startled and even sometimes very seriously alarmed. The business of the helper is therefore to reassure and console them and to explain to them as far as is possible the condition in which they find themselves and the course of action which is most desirable for them. All experience of these higher planes shows us that in all possible cases we may depend upon finding that the scheme of Nature provides as fully as may be for all contingencies, so that in spite of the difficulties which seem to us to be so constantly arising in the path of our progress, the real fact is that everything is arranged to help us and not to hinder us, and that the great laws are intended to facilitate our advance and not to delay it. Whenever hindrance arises it is invariably the result of man's interference with, or misconception of, the divine scheme; and when we once get behind the temporary confusion of these lower planes we realize the truth of the old saying, that all things work together for good for them that love Him.

C. W. LEADBEATER.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

THE LIFE IN DEATH

STILL and unruffled, passionless, alone,
Scarred by the torment of too ardent fires,
Spent by consuming of intense desires,
Waits the pale moon, her life's fierce drama done.
What, though the joy from every pulse be gone?
What though no ardour thrills, no pang inspires?
How shall she care, who, as her life retires,
Flooding her being feels a mightier One!
Sun of my soul! my life of self is wrecked,
Finished, out-flamed, importunate of *thee*,
Fit in its calcined ashes to reflect
Through the world's night *thy* great effulgency!
So in whatever darkness of my sight
Turnèd to thee, I will show forth thy light!

E. M. G.

THE INTERMEDIATE PASSAGE

THE position of an ordinary Christian, such as the majority we see around us, is simple enough. He has a system of faith which, whilst not explaining at all how he comes into the world, and making but very slight attempt at defining for what purpose he remains in it, nevertheless has for him the highly satisfactory assurance that after death he will be "saved" from the everlasting torment reserved for the majority of mankind (why, or by whom, he is satisfied to remain practically ignorant), and will be happy ever after. His religion does not require him to make any effort to understand the why and wherefore of the world in which he lives. He is "not of the world," nor is his Master's "kingdom" of the world. To him "the world lieth in wickedness;" and his only claim for "salvation" is that he has "come out of it, lest he should be partaker of its plagues."

He has not thought out this system for himself—God forbid! the attempt would be a presumption—"prying into the secrets of the Almighty." He has learnt it from his parents and teachers; his companions reflect it on him—else they would cease to be his companions; and the "Gospel" takes its unquestioned place as a fixture in his mind along with the British Constitution and the British policeman. Now for a soul not yet developed up to the point where it is *called* to break from the general mass of mankind into a separate and individual path of its own, this condition of mind, however narrow and limited it may be, has at least this advantage, that it is fairly complete in itself, and leaves very little hold for any temptation to premature intellectual growth. And the profoundly unreasonable prominence given in it to the *next* world, to the almost entire neglect of the one in which we are actually living, may suggest the explanation of the undoubted fact that if such a person's embryo mind *should* be stirred to action it will more probably be by

something like Spiritualism than by Theosophy. For the essence of Theosophy is the wise use of our present life, which we hold to furnish the only possibility of a better life in the future—as the vulgar Christian would say, as a final and complete condemnation of us, we trust in *works* and not in the least in *faith*. On the other hand, the marvels of Spiritualism take him at his weak point. His faith teaches him indeed that his beloved are happy in heaven; but no one has ever come back to say so; and, after all, the "saving" faith is not so certain as it might be. The "Spanish Cloister's" malicious suggestion:

> "There's a great text in Galatians,
> Once you trip on it entails
> Twenty-nine distinct damnations,
> One sure if another fails!"

is only too fully characteristic of the mind which sets deliverance from an eternal hell on the correctness of a "Faith" of which every Protestant theologian has given a new definition, repudiating all previous ones as "inventions of Satan." So that it is quite natural that, when the spiritualistic medium undertakes to produce the actual departed soul, and to speak its messages of affection to those left behind, and its assurances to them that it is well and happy in its new life, this should be eagerly accepted as at once a confirmation of the Gospel, and a blessed exemption from any farther exercise of thought on the subject.

But even as supplemented by Spiritualism the "Gospel" furnishes no food for one in whom the mind has begun to stir. The position of the old Scotch woman—to be only (perfectly) sure of oneself and (doubtfully) of Sandy, is not a state of mind *possible* to an educated and imaginative man going up and down the streets of a great city like London or Paris. He cannot fail to feel himself in presence of a vast, organised, and powerful Life, moving on its own ways and for its own mysterious purposes, quite undisturbed by the vaticinations of prophets or the denunciations of priests and moralists; and the attempts of religion to account for or explain this great fact must strike him as feeble in the extreme. Distinctly—certainly—it is no mere devil's hash of a world originally formed by a good but weak Creator; and with equal certainty he will see that if it is to work out right in

the end (a conclusion he will not be able to resist, however little prospect there may seem at present of it) it will not be upon the lines of a Christianity which can no more understand it now than it can undertake to guide it in the future. As the years go by more and more men and women come thus to open their eyes to the fact that the world is something far bigger, far wiser, and (strange to say) far better than the Christianity in which they have been educated and which they have learned to consider its only hope; the prison-walls are broken down around them and the free, boundless space is open before them.

It is a wonderful—one may say a tremendous—experience for them; and the way they take it is a very distinct trial of character. Of those who use their new freedom to give themselves into more complete bondage to the flesh, and of those who have been too long fast held between the stone walls and can only totter about helplessly when freed, like the drunken man who complained that it was not the length of the road but the breadth of it which bothered him, I do not here speak. In both cases freedom has been gained before they were ready for it—a misfortune which it may take lives of slow learning by their blunders and sufferings to set right. But amongst the souls, more happy in their karma, who come to their new life awake and enlightened, there is also much difference. A soul who thus perceives that he belongs to the world and moves with it on its upward road, and who also recognises the goal, so far ahead and above, which the world-evolution has before it, *may* joyously throw off all the old encumbrances and plunge at once into the new life, recognising in it the fulfilment of his old blind longings and the meaning of his old, seemingly causeless discontents, but also he may *not*. In the majority of those thus situated, Bhakti—the religious temperament, the *soul*, of which creeds and dogmas are but the outer husk—is strong. It is no mere fancy which makes them *feel* life flowing into them through the observances of their religion, but simple fact. How, indeed, should it be otherwise? The hymns, the prayers, the blessings, the absolutions on which their soul feeds, have been charged, century after century, with the magnetism of every good man in the whole western world. When at the end of Mass, the priest turns round at the altar to

say to his people: "Benedicat vos omnipotens Deus, Pater et Filius et Spiritus Sanctus," he is uttering the succession of sounds and using the gestures which for more than a thousand years have carried the full heart's desire to bless from millions of devout priests, he himself sharing in their intention and associating himself with the power of their innocence and their love. Can anyone be so blunt of perception as to hear in these only ten ordinary words? And if this be the case with *words*, what of that consecrated bread and wine which the devout Catholic regards as the Body and Blood of his Lord, the partaking of which is to him the actual communion, flesh to flesh and soul to soul, with the highest Divinity he is conscious of? It is but a symbol, that is true; but if we have complaint to make of the popular devotion, can it be other than regret that the crowds who bow before it as an actual idol understand so little of its awful dignity and have so little comprehension of the true adoration which is due to the sacred symbol of that mystery of identification with the Deity which is the highest ideal of man and angel alike, the great hope of the devout of every age and every religion since the world began?

It is needful to insist upon this, because to the souls of whom I am speaking, the first gleam of the new life and light beyond comes as a disturbance of all they hold sacred—a doubt cast upon the reality of the object of their worship. It shapes itself as a doubt whether their sins are really forgiven in absolution—a doubt whether they do right to bow down before the Presence—a doubt if there be anyone to whom to pray or any virtue in their prayers. In time it will come as a new life *superseding* the old faith, but at first it is but an unwelcome intrusion which undermines it, offering (so it seems) no devotional system to replace it, felt as a rude incursion of the cold daylight of the outer world into the incense-scented darkness of the heart's inner sanctuary; and the devout worshipper cries as the Syrian of old, "Ye have taken away my Gods, and what have I left?"

It is with those who are enduring this experience we Theosophists have to deal; they naturally look to us for guidance. No one else can understand their trouble; no one else can listen to them with patience, not pressing this or that spiritual nostrum

upon them, as others do, but waiting quietly the working of their own minds, under the guidance of Powers who know them better and love them more wisely than we; standing ready only to soothe and quiet, to help them to keep through all their trouble the peace of the soul. This is the first necessity—to avoid anything which even seems like *hurrying* them. Let us think how many years it took us to reach the point at which *we* now stand; how much hesitation there was, how often we drew back, terrified, from the step we had gained, how desperately we struggled to shut our eyes to the light. And yet (sorrowful confession!) when at last we, somehow or other, find ourselves fairly over the hard place, our first instinct is to be impatient with those we have left struggling in the mire, that they do not take at one stride the Slough of Despond we are only just through ourselves. We see *now*—so clearly; and we forget the years of doubt, of hesitation and blindness which have gone before. If we would help others, we must *not* forget this. It is useless to assure them that there is safety on the other side—when they get there. They feel themselves leaving, reluctantly, the solid ground; what we have to do for them is to help them to find a safe stepping-stone for their next step, where they may stand and recover breath and nerve to face the sight of the rushing torrent around them.

Perhaps this so familiar image of steps on a path may itself sometimes mislead us. They have been all their lives moving forwards on the path, to the best of their power; but that path has been so closely walled in, and they have been so habituated to depend on the walls for their guidance, that when these fall away and they have to expand into a new life all round them—free, like Dante in the Earthly Paradise, to go where they choose and do what they please, they tremble and hesitate, feeling all too certainly that they have not attained the free, pure and enlightened Will, the full assurance that they can think no wrong, which was his passport for entrance. It is this which is their trial. It is more like the pacifying of a newly conquered country—everywhere the old enemies rising to renew the contest; and always that looking back longingly to what they have left behind which is strongest in the deepest and holiest natures. It is but the light-minded who can forget the old in their curiosity

to explore their new realm; it is only the mean and small souls who must abuse and find fault with their guide, as they part with him at the gate he cannot pass. The right-minded will feel as Dante felt, that the new freedom hardly seems at first sight to compensate for the loss of the revered and beloved Master; and the time grows long, and Beatrice—the Divine Wisdom—tarries. It is no theoretical trouble, but the most practical and pressing difficulty. Such a one comes to us for counsel. He begins dimly to be conscious of the rising within him of new views of the world about him and the soul within him, which will in time transform his whole circle of thought, and reduce the most cherished dogmas of his religion to the position of the child's A B C. But as yet they are mere misty dreams. He cannot deny them, for this would be to deny the deepest certainties of his soul; but he cannot explain them to others, and much less can he defend them. And yet, to retain all the things which seem indispensable to his soul's life—the companionship of his fellows, the sacraments of his Church—he must openly profess or at least silently admit the Articles of Faith of that Church, declarations which are mere coarse materialisations of the Truth, already of no meaning or value to him except as symbols of the great realities the Church has forgotten and would at once repudiate. He feels the discipline of the Church to be to him a sham, her denunciations of eternal punishment a falsehood, her claim of Divine revelation an impertinence; and yet, with his whole heart, he loves her, and cannot conceive to himself how he can live without her blessings and communions, an exile from his caste. Must he at once break loose?

An anecdote I saw in print for the first time but a few days ago, gives the answer to the question as neatly as it well can be put. When William Penn, a gay young courtier, fell under the spell of George Fox, and began to learn from him the Inner Life, he asked: "What am I to do with my sword?" And the Spirit spoke by Friend George's mouth: "Wear it, friend, *as long as thou canst.*" There spoke the Muni, the Adept. He saw the Spirit was working, and that in no long time the sword would become an unendurable burden, to be thrown aside for ever; but until the soul was fully ripe for the sacrifice—so

long, indeed, as to lay it aside would *be* a sacrifice, no word from outside must press it upon him. To my mind, this deep reverence for the working of the Inner Light in his pupil's own soul is more decisive of Fox's claim to our respect than all that strange mixture of the most elevated instincts and the most childish vanity which fills his diary. It is not only that we must wait till the mind is fully convinced; the right time may, indeed, come before this, for the decision is not one for the reason; but also it may not come till long after, and *that* is a point often forgotten. There is no reason why a Theosophist need hurry an enquirer; he does not believe that he risks the loss of his soul for ever by remaining too long the outward follower of a religion in the literal sense of whose dogmas he has ceased to believe. Nay, more; like Fox, he would say: "Remain, as long as you can;" it is far more useful to help to leaven a society with the true sense of its doctrines, to try to recall it to its Divine mission, than to leave it for the sake of our own personal freedom. If it were but possible to do this with the two great divisions of the Christian faith it would be the greatest benefit which mankind could at this present time receive; and it can only be done (if at all) from within.

But this is a position which has its own difficulties for the adviser. We must not hurry our new convert, but, also, we must not check any inspiration which he may have to make a move for himself; even though we may doubt whether he has the wisdom and courage to carry it safely through. Everyone must have his chance; what we have to keep in mind is that we have not to judge by what would by the world be considered the success of any such step. That a man shall be so far raised above his own natural level as to contemplate doing something for his true spiritual progress is much—that he shall have the courage to carry it out is something actually done, the benefit of which he can never hereafter lose. But it may well be that it is foolishly, badly done, and that he may get into trouble by it—make himself ridiculous, and bring obloquy upon the Truth he has attained; he may very possibly lose courage, and time after time deny his faith; never mind—it may be all right, notwithstanding. The evil will pass, the good will not; and we must

not dare to judge, either our own advice or our friend's conduct, till we are in a position to know what progress he has made in the spiritual life—the one thing for which he lives and returns time after time to life—by what may seem his weaknesses or his mistakes.

One thing more. In all the stories the hero, after endless trials, at last comes to a decisive point; the gate opens and he is safe inside the Hall of Learning; a final and conclusive step, like the end of a child's tale, "And so they were married and lived happy ever after." That *will* come, in time; but, alas! for very few of us in this life. In one sense, indeed, it is true enough even now; no one who has truly felt the power of the unseen, whose eyes have even once been "lifted up to the hills, whence cometh our strength," can ever make himself truly and completely happy in the lower life, strive as he may to debase himself to it. But for one who is strong enough to hold to this conviction there are many who can only learn by long and disastrous experience of their failure in the attempt. For most of us life is as the struggle of the shipwrecked mariner to gain a footing on the wave-swept shore, time after time sucked back helplessly by the retiring billow. And for one looking on from the safe height of the cliffs above it would be hard to have patience with the continual failure, but for the knowledge that the struggle is for life or death—nothing less. What we have to gain is the divine patience of Those who watch calmly, quietly, as knowing that the final triumph is certain, and yet sorrowful for the needless delay and the wasted sufferings on the road: the sorrow of the Master who wept over Jerusalem, "If thou had'st but known, in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace," mingled with the confident and profound certainty that the Law of Love *must* reign all in all, before the kalpas end.

ARTHUR A. WELLS.

ON THE BASIS OF MANIFESTATION

A Speculation

The Eternal Parent wrapped in her ever invisible robes had slumbered once again for Seven Eternities.

Life pulsated unconscious in Universal Space.

There was neither Silence nor Sound; nought but ceaseless Eternal Breath which knows itself not.

The Secret Doctrine, i. 55.

The "Parent" Space is the eternal ever-present Cause of all—the incomprehensible Deity, whose "Invisible Robes" are the Mystic Root of all matter, and of the Universe. Space is the one Eternal thing we can most easily imagine—it is without dimension in every sense, and self-existent.

The Secret Doctrine, i. 67.

The "Breath" of the One Existence is only used in application to the spiritual aspect of Cosmogony by archaic Esotericism; in other cases it is *replaced* by its *equivalent on the material plane—motion*. . . . This Breath, as seen, can never cease, not even during the Pralayic Eternities.

The Secret Doctrine, i. 85.

What is that which was and is and will be, whether there is a Universe or none?—Space. From its undifferentiated to its differentiated surface it is composed of seven layers.

The Secret Doctrine, i. 38.

Were it possible to arrive at a clear mental conception of the state of things indicated in the above selection from the Stanzas of Dzyan and their Commentaries, it would greatly help us in conceiving the method of manifestation. As it is the mind is like the dove of old which found no rest for the sole of her foot; it flutters over the fluidic phrases, vainly striving to grasp their content. Now and then we think we clutch an idea, but it slips through our fingers like the sands of time itself. This elusiveness is inherent in the nature of things; the question of the structure of Space is outside all our experience, and cannot be defined and reflected on, like a theory synthesised from internal

impressions. The symbolic method employed tries, by the use of images derived from things known, to suggest an intuitive apprehension of the idea of Space, which cannot be put into words. The words do not exist in which to state it clearly, for words are but symbols of the actual, or of ideas abstracted from experience, and Space, apart from manifestation, is outside actuality. It seems, however, possible to suggest a hypothesis as to the structure of Space which might fulfil the requirements of science, and at the same time coincide with the idea suggested by the Stanzas. This hypothesis will start from a clear idea derived from observation, but, as its qualifying materiality is stripped away, it must grow more and more hazy at the edge, till a mere principle, a mode of motion, is all that remains. Such as it is, it will, I venture to think, throw a certain light on the question of manifestation, and render that process a little less difficult to conceive. These speculations are suggested with the utmost diffidence, as the mere fancies of one who has a nodding acquaintance with physical science, as well as some faint appreciation of the great ideas shadowed forth in *The Secret Doctrine*. The only apology that can be offered is, that any idea is in some respects better than an absolute blank; it at least gives something to modify or develop. Should those who know see fit to take such a course, should they indeed entirely explode this hypothesis in the process of supplying something better, well and good, I could desire no other result; while those who are content to recite formulæ without trying to understand them, can easily pass this article over.

Far apart as they are in method, the experts in eastern and western science seem agreed that the ultimate physical atom is a vortex of energy. Lord Kelvin postulates a frictionless fluid, and says that the rotational motions of portions of this fluid are what we know as ponderable matter; while the movements of these through the fluid are what we know as moving masses. The esoteric science describes a sea of astral atoms, again vortical, but frictionless from the physical point of view; portions of this fluid are the basis of that most complicated vortex, the ultimate physical atom of manifestation. The description which has been given us of the atom is from direct

clairvoyant observation, and refers to its present state, as instinct with the energies of the Logos; hence its complexity. But we learn that before manifestation the indestructible atomic basis still exists. The physical atom, then, must be thought of as something much more simple, the simplest, indeed, that can be imagined, since the complex forces of manifestation are not present in it. Most of us have, I believe, been in the habit of thinking of this atom of primordial Space as identical with the manifested physical atom; but, on consideration, it seems plain that, inherent in that manifested atom, are all the forces which work out as manifested nature. Obviously, all the physical forces—whether forming the chemical elements, or uniting them into molecules, or holding these together in living bodies; whether they spring up in those bodies, or beat upon them as solar energy from outside—must all arrive on the physical plane through the primary physical atoms. They must all, therefore, be represented in the triple modes of motion of the atom—rotatory, spiral, and expanding and contracting. So long as either of these modes of motion persists in the atom, so long will the corresponding manifestation of nature endure. When they all cease, the manifested atom will also cease to exist on the physical plane of Space; and physical heaven and earth will have passed away. But the physical plane of Space will continue to be, "whether there be a universe or not, whether there be Gods or none." The primordial atom of physical Space must therefore present a mode of motion differing from those of the atom of manifestation, and it must be one which will continue whether manifestation be present or absent. It must be something which may be spoken of as "ceaseless, eternal motion," and as "the basis of manifestation." It must be disposed in "seven layers," corresponding to the seven primary atoms which manifestation presents; and, just as we understand that the same modes of motion exist in the primary atoms of the seven planes, so we may expect an identical mode of motion to be in operation, as the characteristic of the atoms of the seven planes of Space. Can such a mode of motion be imagined? Perhaps western science may help us to an idea. Lord Kelvin's vortex atom, considered by him as fulfilling the requirements of physical theory,

is compared to a smoke-ring. We all know that this object revolves from within outwards, after the mode of a rubber ring rolled down a stick. This mode of motion is called *rotational*, as distinguished from *rotatory*—that of a spinning top. Helmholtz demonstrated that such a rotationary vortex in a frictionless medium would exist eternally and be indestructible. The rotation could never cease since the force could never be dissipated.

I venture to suggest the hypothesis that Space, before the birth of a Solar System, may be thought of as occupied by rotationary vortices of this type, but with the rotation-motion in every direction, not in a single plane as in a smoke-ring. The atom would thus be a sphere of influence, pervaded by vibrations arising in the centre and taking rotationary paths to the periphery and back. One may perhaps first imagine three smoke-rings situated about a common centre, and rotating in three planes at right angles—planes corresponding on a globe to the equator, the meridian at Greenwich, and the meridian at right angles to that—just to begin with. Then, by filling in all the intervals with smoke-rings in intermediate planes, a *rotationary sphere* will result. But such a structure is unthinkable in smoke or any physical matter; the particles of carbon would have to move in two directions at once; here we part company with the actual, the clear conception derived from experience. But having imagined the smoke sphere, let us replace each particle of carbon by a minute and perfectly elastic vortex atom, fixed in position; and let us imagine the rotationary movements which the smoke particles refuse to take, as replaced by vibrations passing from atom to atom along rotationary paths. There is now no difficulty, I think, in conceiving the rotationary sphere of influence, since the vibrations would pass from elastic atom to elastic atom, in any direction independently of each other. Such a vortex of force once set going in a mass of perfectly elastic atoms, would continue for ever, like the vortex ring in the frictionless fluid. Imagine the astral sea as differentiated into a series of such vortices, and physical space is perhaps conceivable. Such spheres may be thought of as in contact without interference, for the paths of the vibrations in contiguous vortices would not interfere; but

the vortex spheres might occupy an area bounded by a rhombic dodecahedron, the figure produced by the mutual pressure of like spheres. Having arrived at the idea of physical space as consisting of a series of such spheres of influence, I think the idea must be extended farther. Every astral atom in the astral space sea must be the centre of a physical space sphere, so that the physical spheres will inter-cut each other in every plane, as the circles on an engine-turned watch case do in a single plane; while no two spheres will have the same centre. When the atom of manifestation is formed and moves freely in physical space, it will then always occupy a physical space sphere at every point of its path. The dodecahedral structure might still exist, whether the physical vortices be thought of as pervading a definite number of astral spheres, and thus being of a uniform size, or as pervading an indefinite number and being of every conceivable size; for whatever sized sphere we like to imagine, it will always be surrounded by like spheres and might take the dodecahedral form with respect to them. Thus we may think of a physical vortex sphere as arising from a central astral sphere, and pervading those directly in contact with it, as its sphere of influence; or we may imagine rotationary vibrations shooting out of the astral sphere in the actual centre of the sun, and taking rotationary paths to the periphery of the Solar System and back, as the extremes of thinkable possibility. Our idea is becoming vastly hazy at the edge, but the principle of rotationary motion remains intact. However, we do learn that the primary physical atom of manifestation comprises a definite number of astral atoms in its structure, hence for purposes of thought we may think of the spheres of physical primordial space as being of such a size that the atoms of manifestation may rotate and expand and contract within their limits. The one idea which persists, with respect to these physical rotationary spheres, is their fixity of position or inertia. It is impossible to think of their moving from, or with, their astral centre. Place does not exist before dawning manifestation brings a centre and circumference. "Alone the One Form of Existence stretched boundless, infinite, ceaseless, in dreamless sleep." But the ceaseless, eternal motion still

persists, whether there be a universe or not. Might this motion not be rotationary? It is the only conceivable mode by which the abyss could be atomic, and differentiated into seven layers; and at the same time be self-existent.

The astral sea of Space I imagine as built of similar rotationary spheres playing in the plane of Space next "higher," corresponding to the mental plane of manifestation. Each mental plane sphere would be a centre from which astral rotationary vibrations would radiate. So I imagine in a given area of Space an equal number of "mental," astral, and physical vortices having the same mode of motion, but differing vastly in size, the astral spheres playing in the mental, and the physical in the astral seas. In the same way I imagine the mental spheres playing in the buddhic sea, and the buddhic in the nirvânic, and so in and in to the seventh plane, on the "undifferentiated surface," where conditions transcend the imagination. The spheres of the "seven layers" are all fixed in position and transmit the vibrations which constitute the vortices of the plane next in order from within outwards. So I imagine an equal number of the vortices of all seven planes to be present in a given area of Space, each being the centre from which the next plane vortex radiates. We may, perhaps, conceive ourselves as penetrating into a physical sphere, and arriving in an atmosphere of astral spheres which transmit the vibrations which comprise it. Penetrating further into the central astral sphere we should arrive in an atmosphere of "mental spheres" similarly transmitting the rotationary vibrations which form the astral sphere, and so on, in and in. Thus the spheres of the seven planes may be imaged as a series of seven bubbles one inside the other, each being the centre from which radiate the rotationary vibrations which form the next larger, while the series of like bubbles which form a given sea, or plane of Space, inter-cut each other in every direction, because they arise from contiguous centres, the vortices of the plane next finer. The idea of the complete interpenetration of the seven planes will necessarily follow, for, taking a single physical sphere, it will play in a section of the astral sea, and all the astral vortices in this section will severally be playing in the mental sea, and all these again in

the buddhic, and so on, in and in. The series of seven bubbles images the seven steps of Space, down which pour the tremendous forces of manifestation. One can imagine a rotatory energy springing up in the innermost sphere and then in the next larger, and so on, till at last it arrives in the physical sphere and is the rotatory energy of the manifested physical atom. So again the spiral and expanding and contracting modes of motion may be thus thought of as arriving on the physical plane. So, I suggest, may that stupendous fount of energy which one science calls the First Cause, and the other the Manifested Logos, come forth from the Unknown. The method of the transference of energy from the vortices of one plane to those of the next, up and down, can now be perhaps conceived. An impact on a physical vortex would agitate all the astral vortices comprised in it, just as a tap on the side of a bladder full of water would agitate all the molecules of the water. This agitation would also affect all the mental plane vortices comprised in the astral atoms. The original physical impact at the same time would be reproduced on the opposite side of the physical atom, and be propagated to the next, and so continue indefinitely in a straight line. Reversing the idea, a wave motion arising in the astral atom at the centre of a given physical atom, would spread throughout the whole collection of the astral atoms concerned, and so reach the surface of the physical atom, and be propagated through all the contiguous physical atoms, as a wave of physical energy. For such a wave motion (like the circles on a pond, only proceeding in every direction) to arise in the astral atom, it would first have to be present in the corresponding mental atom, and so on, in and in. In this way, energy may be thought of as arising in the seventh plane vortices, from the Unknown Source, and radiating to the surfaces of those atoms. Thence the radiation would reach the sixth plane, fifth plane, and other larger vortices, and at last reach the physical plane as physical vibratory energy.

In this way, I suggest, the complex vortex of force, described as the primary physical atom of manifestation, comes to arise in a physical primordial Space-sphere; a similar, if simpler, complexus having been previously active in the spheres of the higher planes from the highest downwards.

The sevenfold basis of manifestation now perhaps is conceivable, and the condition imagined, referred to in the heroic phrase of the Stanza, "The Eternal Parent, wrapped in her ever-invisible robes, had slumbered once again for seven Eternities." These rotationary vortices of Space may be the robes, and possibly they may be ever-invisible to eyes evolved to sense the vibrations of manifestation. A vibration arising in one physical Space-sphere may be imagined as propagated to the next in every direction, so, I infer, the light comes to us from the fixed stars. Such an impact would reach the atom of manifestation in the Space-sphere, when present there, and be sensed by the eye built of these manifested atoms. The manifested atom would be part and parcel of the Space-sphere in which it happened to be playing, and the modes of motion which make it up would be present in each of the corresponding Space-spheres of the several planes, so the manifested atomic planes of Space would interpenetrate each other equally with the primordial planes. Looked at in this way, the basis of manifestation and manifestation itself are seen to be different distributions of energy, and modes of motion. Our solid matter is made of these vortex atoms, combined and vibrating in such a way as to resist our bodies, which consist of like materials. The whole resolves into energy, the great waters of Space being the veil of that Unknowable, which also manifests in the Solar System as the one Ego, that one source of power which we call the Logos.

On these lines I venture to interpret the occult Catechism: "What is that that ever is?" Answer: "Space, the Eternal parentless." "What is that that ever was?" "The Germ in the Root." (The rotationary spheres in the planes.) "What is it that is ever coming and going?" "The great Breath." (The rotationary mode of motion.) "Then there are three Eternals?" "No, the three are one—and this is Space." (*The Secret Doctrine*, i. 39.) It seems possible: without rotatory motion no vortices and no planes. Without planes (Root) no motion and no vortices. Without vortices (Germ) no motion and no planes. The combination of the three results, I suggest, is Space as constructed on this hypothesis. The term Root seems to refer to the seven planes taken together, "the whole expanse of cosmic matter."

I have insisted on the necessity for thinking that these primordial vortices of Space are eternally fixed, that they are conceivably invisible, and that they furnish the indestructible basis in which the vortex atoms of manifestation play. The complex of forces which make up a physical object must be thought of as transferring their grip to successive layers of the primordial medium, when the object is moved, just as the beam of a searchlight impinges on different layers of the ether as it travels from point to point of the compass. So also our several bodies on the different planes must continually change their basis as we move about. Indeed the whole solar system of force as it swims through Space, must ever seize on a fresh area as it proceeds, just as a train in motion advances over fresh rails, and leaves behind those on which it momentarily rested.

The primordial vortices of Space being eternally fixed does not, I think, preclude the idea of the physical atoms of manifestation being movable in the continuum, just as much as the more complex vortices of dense matter can obviously move. Indeed the primary physical atom of manifestation once established, would, I imagine, be amenable to all the laws of motion, which are found to apply to those reduplicated vortices which are dense to our sensibilities. The physical atom in its present state is described as a complicated force vortex, playing in the astral sea of manifested atoms, and showing different modes of motion. It is rapidly rotating both on itself and in a circle, it presents ten strands of enwrapped spirals through which force is moving, and it continually expands and contracts. The spirals pass diagonally down the outside and up the centre of the vortex.

I imagine that these primary atoms would originally be established in the physical spheres of Space over a vast area, the constituent forces arising in the highest planes of Space and manifesting on each plane in turn, till they arrived at the physical; the primary physical atoms of manifestation being conditioned as to size by the primordial atoms of Space in which they play, supposing these to be of a definite size. This would be the Cosmic Mist stage, perhaps, of which the phrase "the centre everywhere and the circumference nowhere" seems very suggestive. The arising of the rotatory, spiral, and expanding

and contracting systems of force in the physical Space-spheres, would be a centre everywhere; hence the circumference might well be said to be nowhere. When once these primary atoms have manifested, I conceive that they would be free to move in the astral sea from one physical primordial Space vortex to the next, and that they would gradually form the rotating nebula, and central sun, according to the nebular hypothesis. As the nebula contracted, and the primary atoms got closer together, one can imagine that groups of atoms might be caused to rotate about a single centre, like miniature solar systems, and the ethers below the atomic thus come into existence. These etheric bodies consisting of numbers of primary atoms, from two to seven, I have been told, might furnish the different ethers demanded by science, to convey the vibrations of different forces or modes of motion, such as electricity and heat. Larger rotating groups, having numbers of the different etheric bodies as their constituent elements, might be the chemical atom of matter as we know it. This is the conception which I have been able to deduce from a consideration of the well-known article on Occult Chemistry correlated with statements made in other works.

This idea of the manifestation in a vast area of Space, of the physical basis of a solar system, disposes of the difficulty of imagining the condensation of primordial Space atoms necessary to form a physical sun. One had always wondered what happened in the outlying stretches of Space, when its constituent atoms were thus drawn away. By this hypothesis we can imagine the sevenfold sea of Space extending indefinitely in all directions, and preserving its ceaseless motion, while solar systems come and go, and while the centres of consciousness evolved in them "rest in the bliss of non-being," or emerge as the "Luminous Sons of the manvantaric Dawn."

It seems possible that the first outpouring of energy of which we read, may correspond to the rotatory motion of the primary atom and of its rotatory combinations into etheric systems; and farther, of their combinations into rotating chemical "atoms." The work of the first wave ends, we are told, in the formation of the chemical atoms, for with their creation matter is essentially formed, but is not coherent.

The second wave, with which attraction, cohesion, chemical affinity and such forces come into play, may be represented by the spiral motion of the primary atom, for this reason: that when an electric current is led through a wire wound spirally round an iron bar magnetism is produced. This attractive energy, drawing atoms together into molecules and molecules into masses, may be the creative cause of the mineral kingdom culminating in crystals with their geometrical structure. The colloid form of matter, which is more complex and higher in the scale than the crystalline, is the creation of the vital force which draws together the matter of the seven sub-planes and holds it as its vehicle of manifestation. I venture to suggest that the pulsating movement in the primary atom may be this form of energy playing within itself unmanifest till its protoplasmic basis is evolved. It then might be evoked as movement, and the other vital energies, by stimuli playing upon its vehicle from outside. It seems possible that these three modes of motion may have arisen at different periods of evolution, and correspond to the three outpourings of energy of which we read—the rotatory mode establishing the chemical atoms; the spiral mode establishing molecular matter with its polarities; the contracting and expanding mode establishing vitality, or physical life in the vehicles built of molecular matter.

Expansion and contraction *in response to a stimulus* is the characteristic mode of motion of vitality, and that unknown form of energy must reach the physical plane through the primary atom in the same way as the others. It is unthinkable, to my mind, that the vital force is anything of the nature of chemical affinity or cohesion, or that polarity which causes molecules to deposit in crystalline forms. Vitality presents the powers of movement, digestion, assimilation, and reproduction, even in its most simple manifestation. The amœba is as essentially an individual unit as the human body. When it is killed the chemical forces take their normal course; while it lives they are subjected to a higher controlling power, which synthesises the matter of the several sub-planes into a living creature. I venture to think that a profound distinction exists between the geometrical forms of crystals and living bodies, however low they may be

in the biological scale. Indeed, I am obliged to see in the living cell, the physical manifestation of that One Existence whose tremendous potentialities are but partially manifested as the powers of the human soul. Even in the amœba as it divides, grows, and divides again, cannot there be traced the presence of the Creator, the Preserver, and the Destroyer? When such an organism divides into two new ones, is it not in the very act destroyed? I know that "living crystals" are said to exist, but a suspension of judgment on this question will be discreet. Up to the present the scientific world has not been startled by the demonstration of so stupendous a phenomenon, to bridge the gulf between vitalised and non-vitalised, living and "dead" matter. The recent experiments in which seeds were chilled to a minus temperature of nearly 200 degrees, far below the point at which all chemical activity ceases, and yet germinated when thawed and planted, seems to finally dispose of the idea that vitality is essentially the same as chemical action. Indeed, this notion seems to be as inherently materialistic as the kindred one that thought is the excretion of the physical brain cells. The latter is merely a logical extension of the former. I feel that we must look to a different wave of energy as the essential cause of the phenomena of mind, and if of mind then also of vitality. The Ray is one, whether it animates a series of vehicles up to the human Ego, or whether it manifests its lower powers in the simplest living thing.

But this is a great question, and one with which I am, if possible, less qualified to deal than with speculations on Space. Both present an attempt to measure the immeasurable and sink the string of thought into the fathomless. Both must of necessity remain unanswered, but perhaps this effort to unravel a great mystery may fan a spark of understanding in some mind, if not by what has been said, then by that which remains for ever unsayable.

A. H. Ward.

HYMN TO SHIVA

[*Little is known in England of the immense hymn-literature of India, and we propose to print a few examples. Translation into verse must be free, but the meaning is rendered as closely as the exigencies of rhythm allow. Some stanzas are omitted, because of the extreme length of the poem.*]

If it be not allowable, O Lord!
That anyone should hymn Thee, save he know
The farthest shores of Thine Immensity,
Truly, the voice of Brahmâ's Self must be
Made mute for evermore! But if it be
That to the full of their, though feeble, reach
All living things may sing Thy praise, and sing
Their thankfulness to Thee, then, too, may I
Hope humbly that this hymn, chanting Thy glories
May also pass unblamed and be accepted.
Far, far Thy greatness doth transcend the path
Of speech and mind! What mortal may aspire
To fully limn that One whom Shruti's self,
Harassed for fitting words and all-amazed,
Doth vainly strive to comprehend in speech,
That only says "This is He not." Who may
Enum'rate and exhaust Thy attributes?
Object of knowledge who may make Thee? Yet
If we were not to strive to understand
Thee, Lord! the Highest! there is nothing else
Worthy to win. All lower objects are
Within the grasp of even dwarfish hands.
To Thee, who didst create the perfect sweetness
Of perfect nectar, no new sweet can bring
The speech of even him whom Thou Thyself
Appointedst as Instructor of the Gods.
Well know I this; and therefore do engage
My mind herein only that I may cleanse

And purify my speech by chanting Thee.
Th' Omnipotence that makes, maintains and mars
The worlds in its three Self-imposed forms
Of Rajas, Sattva, Tamas—this, O Lord!
Perverted intellects contend against
In verbiage vain, battling with the Supreme!
What is the end Thou hast before Thyself—
What are the hands with which Thou would'st achieve it—
What Thy material, what Thy skill, Thy means?
Such are the endless questionings with which
They try incessantly, th' unsatisfied,
To think Thee out, O Thou unthinkable!
And only bring unrest to all the world.
The world composed of parts and birthless still,
This giant superstructure independent
Of all foundation, flung into existence
By any Power less than Omnipotence?
Aho! The depth of dullness that dares doubt
Thy deathless being, Chief of the Immortals!
The Vedas and the Sâṅkhya and the Yoga,
And Pashupati's creed and Vaiṣhṇava—
One says this is the best; another says
That surely is the better way; and so
In different times and places different men
Now eulogise this path and now the other.
Yet surely Thou, O Lord! art the one goal,
The only goal of all the many paths
—Some straight and easy, others crook'd and rough—
Men follow, as they variously incline,
As of the endless streams the one vast sea.
The ancient bull, the bed-post and the axe,
The skin, the ashes from the burning-place,
The serpents and the pallid human skulls,
These are thy furnishing, O Lord! that givest
Away, by careless motion of Thy brow,
The richness and the powers the Gods enjoy.
The moonshine-water that deceives the deer,
And lures them onwards on the desert-sands—
This mirage of the senses moves not Him,
Who finds eternal fullness in Himself.

One says that all is sure, another says
All is uncertain, and between the two
So much confused am I, that I should shame
Almost to sing Thy praise, O Thou who didst
Destroy Tripura's city, were it not
That ever has my tongue been overbold.
To find Thy limits, omnipresent Lord,
In time of old two Gods did set themselves;
Virinchi travelled on the upward path,
And Hari went below, along the flaming
Pillar of Fire and Air. Yet neither found,
Excepting of their own respective reach,
The zenith and the nadir. In reward
Of their humility and true confession,
And hymns of love and faith in Thee, O Lord!
Thou madest them the rulers of the worlds.
If Bâna of the thousand arms withstood,
For e'en awhile, the might of Sutrâman,
And the three worlds with Him, it is no wonder,
Seeing how long he dwelt beneath Thy feet.
Whose head will not be elevated high
If it will only bend itself to thee!
Smara—whose forge is in the memory,
Whose shafts, perfected there, never return
Successless, thrown back, having failed to pierce,
From armour or of God or man or Titan—
He, looking on thee with an eye that saw
No difference 'twixt Thee and the other Gods,
Became a matter for mere memory!
Alas! it is not good to cast insult
At those who have attained to self-control.
The stain of darkness on Thy throat of snow
Where shows the fearful venom Thou didst drink,
Moved by deep pity for the frightened worlds,
To save from imminent and dire destruction
The races of the Gods and Asuras,
Adds only to Thy awful beauty, Lord!
E'en blemishes are beauties if incurred
In ridding infant worlds of foes and fears.
The being of the Earth falls into doubt,

Sudden, at stamping of Thy mighty feet;
Viṣhṇu's abode is sore beset with show'rs
Of stars displacéd by Thy moving arms;
The heavens are with the lashing of Thy locks,
Flowing all unconfined, convulsed; and yet
This Dance of Thine, O Lord! orders the worlds.
Full sure, Vibhu! Thy ways are wonderful.
The stream of mighty waters on whose waves
The stars that filled the skies appeared as foam;
Which, later, made an island of the world
And circled it with oceans fathomless
—That stream looked only like a drop of dew
Amidst Thy locks, when Thou didst garb Thyself
In form of measureless immensity!
The spreading earth should form Thy battle-car;
The God of hundred Yajñas, charioteer;
The monarch of the mountains be Thy bow;
The sun and moon themselves Thy chariot wheels;
And He who wields the chakra be the shaft.
—Why all this show of preparation, Lord,
For breaking down the strength of Tripura,
But that the Master's will playing with aims
Is only guided by itself for means.
An offering of a thousand lotus-flowers
Hari in time of old had vowed to Thee.
And, when at hour of worship Thou didst cause
One flower to disappear, to test his love,
To make the tale complete of His true vow
He offered Thee, rejoicing at the heart,
The living lotus of an eye instead,
Saying with His own sweet and matchless wisdom:
"Accept this, Lord! for do not men call me
Him of the Lotus-Eyes!" That overflow
Of Love Divine took shape, and standeth guard
As Chakra, ever-wakeful, o'er the worlds.
That Daksha, great progenitor of all
That wear the living form, deep-versed in scripture,
Should be the master of the sacrifice,
The Ṛishis Ṛitvijas, and the Gods the guests,
And yet that Thou shouldst slay the sacred rite—

Thou that dost ever joy in pouring forth
Reward abundant for all sacrifice—
Doth only mean, O Lord! that ritual
Yieldeth but ill, divorced from faith in Thee.
O Thou, that didst destroy the Triple City!
If, after seeing Kama's self consumed
With all his flowery arrows by the ray
Of fire from Thy wrathful eye, the Devî,
Whom Thou didst make part of Thy frame divine
For Her Tapasya—if She should rely
On her own peerless loveliness, and think
She holds Thee in the thrall of womanhood
—Well, all the world knows maids are simple-minded!
Thou that rejoicest in the Burning Place,
Hast dire Pishâchas for Thy retinue,
Art covered with the ashes from the pyre,
And all be-garlanded with human skulls,
Truly to all appearance inauspicious!
Yet art Thou full of all good auspices
To them that think of Thee in time of need.
On Pratyak-Chitta fixing close the mind,
Hushing to peace the restless breaths of life,
Joy pouring through all pores, joy lapping eyes
In its own overflow, immersed in streams
Of nectar, do the Yogins turn within
The eyes of wisdom, and behold Thee there.
Thou art the Sun, the Moon, Thou art the Air!
Thou art the Fire, the Waters and the Sky!
Thou art the Earth! Thou art the Self of all!
Thus in our broken speech would we describe thee,
Yet naught we know, O Lord, that is not Thee!
In its three letters doth the sacred AUM
Speak the three Scriptures and the triple worlds,
The triple consciousness and the three Gods;
And only when it passes from these three
In subtle sounds of music to the point
Which is the fourth, does it enunciate
In part and full, Thy dwelling place and Thee.
Bhava and Sharva Thou, and Rudra too,
And Pashupati, Ugra, and Mahân,

And Bhîma, and Ishâna; such the names
Eightfold midst which the Shruti roams in peace.
Grant me a place in those same regions, Lord!
    I bow to Thee, O Bhava! overflowing
With Rajas for creation of the worlds.
I bow to Thee, O Hara! re-assuming
Tamas for the indrawing of the same.
I bow to Thee, O Mṛida! All-prevailing
Sattva that giveth happiness to life.
Shiva! I bow to Thee, Eternal, resting
Self-fixed, beyond the Three! Namo! Namas!
    I bow to Thee, the nearest of the near.
I bow to Thee, the farthest of the far.
I bow to Thee, the greatest of the great.
I bow to Thee, the smallest of the small.
I bow to Thee, most ancient and most young.
I bow to Thee, Sharva! The All! I bow.
    My soul is shaken with my sorrows, Lord!
And all unfit and feeble and slow-moving
To sing Thy ever-spreading glories. Yet
My reverence and love and deep submission
Have forcéd me to lay this wreath of song
In praise of Thine own greatness at Thy feet.
In inks of Light and Darkness, on the sheet
Of Boundless Space, with pen shaped from the stem
Of Kalpataru, wondrous tree of mind
That yieldeth at the wish all fruit desired,
The Goddess Shâradâ of wisdom writes
Account of all the powers hidden within
Thyself, O Lord!—she writes for evermore,
And evermore the scroll is incomplete.

A Hindu Student.

THE INNER PURPOSE OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

[*A Speech delivered by Mrs. Annie Besant, at the Tenth Annual Convention of the European Section of the Theosophical Society*]

It falls to my lot to close this Tenth Annual Meeting of the European Section of the Society, and to close it by saying a few words on the inner purpose of the movement, on the future for which it is preparing, on the work which lies ready to its hand. You have heard from the President-Founder of the Society something of the road that lies now behind us, something of the hopes that inspired those who on the physical plane gave the first impulse to the movement. You have heard from our brother from India something of the dangers of the road along which we are walking, something of the great ideal which inspires the hearts of all true Theosophists, as of all spiritually-minded men and women.

We may go a little further along these lines of thought that have been traced for us, and see how the inner purpose answers to the outer work, how the impulse from the spiritual plane came to incarnate itself in the world around us, how the true impulse came that made the Society, from Those who gave it and who give it its life, Those who sent it out on its blessed mission to the world, how They chose the time and the agents for accomplishing once more on earth the work so often begun and still unended—the work of sending the spiritual herald to announce a new step forward in the evolution of humanity, to mark out the pathway along which men should travel in accomplishing the stage thus opened, sounding the note which was to dominate the whole, stamping on it the mark which was to be the sign of the growing, making the principles known on which the form should be moulded, and giving to the world the life which was to find a new body on the material plane.

That inner purpose of the Society may be said to be two-fold: to the world at large, and to the members of the Society. To the world at large to herald the forward step to which I have just alluded; to the members of the Society to use them as the pioneers of that forward movement, making possible the road along which mankind should tread, hewing out, as it were, in front the path, smoothing that path with their own feet, giving their lives to make it possible—nay, even to make it comparatively easy—for those who should follow them. For as it is the glory of the Theosophical Society to herald the onward movement of the race, so it is the privilege of its early members to bear something of the burden which shall make that same burden lighter for the race that is to be born; to have the glory of the struggle though not of the victory; the glory of the sowing though not of the reaping; the scattering abroad of the seed of progress, leaving to others the glad days of harvest; content if in their day and generation they may make it possible that the great life beyond shall pour in fuller measure over the world so longing for its coming, and if they may be able by what they may learn—still more by what, having learned, they may practise—to raise in front of the race that is coming the ideal of a noble humanity, a humanity more divine than that which yet we have touched, making the ideal which the coming race shall partly realise, preparing the material out of which the statue of a divine humanity shall be hewn.

How shall that be done?

Glancing at the past, trying to learn the lessons of history that lie behind us, we see everywhere in history that when a new growth is coming to man, when a new stage of evolution is approaching and man stands on the threshold of a forward movement, that then from the great Elder Brothers of the race, from Those mighty Ones who are the spiritual Guardians of humanity, from Those who offer in Their own most sacred persons the perfect ideal of man become divine, where strength and tenderness, where wisdom and compassion are wedded in one perfect form and life—from Them, from Them alone, comes ever the impulse that guides humanity forward. And at every critical period of history, when a new race or family is to be born, there

comes from Them alone the first impulse for the new advance, and also the outline of the form in which that advancing life is to be incarnate. Look back into the past and you will see that with the birth of each great family of our Âryan race a new religion has been given to the world, the religion before the people. You will find that the religion thus proclaimed by some Great One, taking birth among men as the Founder of the coming creed, you will find that in each case He gives His religion for the moulding of a new civilisation, for the shaping of a new type of humanity, for the building and the forming of a fresh body for the life, and that in the main points of the religion you can foretell the main outline of the dawning civilisation. That is true, as you will find if you care to study alike in the history of India where the first family of the Âryan race took root, or in the neighbouring country of Chaldæa, where another shoot took its place and left its life and wisdom, or westward still, when you come to Greece and Rome of the Keltic race, with its great traditions of religion and philosophy—moulding the civilisation of beauty in Greece and the civilisation of law in Rome. You find the same with the later-born western nations, who received even ere they lay in their cradle the great teaching of the Christ, to be to them what the teachings of His predecessors were to the nations to whom they were given, and to shape the western civilisation as the Others had shaped the civilisations that went before. And when we find in history that the coming of a new spiritual impulse has ever meant a forward step for man, when we find that the nature of that impulse has outlined the nature of the coming evolution—then what must we think when we see come another mighty impulse from the same immortal source, and what can we learn as we scan the characteristics of that impulse, as to the nature of the growth which lies next in space and time before the advancing feet of man?

One great difference comes at once—springing as it were before our eyes—when we look at the difference between this movement and the others that have gone before it—a difference so great, so vital, so fundamental, that if we can see its meaning, some of the steps at least become clear before us; that if we can assimilate its significance, we have a veritable touch-stone whereby

we may test everything around us in science, in philosophy, and in politics, an Ithuriel spear as it were which we can use to touch every form that comes before us, to see whether within the form is hidden an angel of light, or whether there is veiled within some dangerous misleading demon who would draw humanity astray from the path which it ought to tread.

What is that mark, that unique characteristic ?

Every great Teacher coming to the world has brought as His priceless gift to man some new proclamation of spiritual truth in the form of a new religion. This movement alone, of all the great religious impulses of the past, brings no new religion to mankind, proclaims in no new formal shape the world-message, calls no men to come apart from other faiths and other creeds and place themselves within a pale, which, while it shuts them in for special teaching, shuts others out as not members of the faith, as outside its special proclamation. Alone of all the impulses it speaks, not of a new religion, but of the common basis of all religions alike. Differing from all that went before, it does not build a new church, it does not found a new philosophy, it does not raise a wall of separation round those who accept it, those who reject it being without. It proclaims one basis for all. It teaches religion, and not *a* religion ; that which is common to all, not that which shall be special to a new church or a new faith. It makes its basis in the unity of all its forerunners, so that it joins all together instead of adding a new one to the many faiths of the world. That is its great mark, that its unique characteristic—one belief for all in one spiritual life, one common evolution, one goal which all may approach, and approach by different roads. Every road right for those who walk in it ; every road divine, and men able to reach God therein.

So at the beginning of our race was it stated, and now practically that is put before the world as the stage that it should try to realise ; every man remaining in his own road, every man remaining in his own religion, no converting from one faith to another, no proselytising in one faith by another ; all faiths equally divine, for all have one source and seek one goal ; every man of every race right in his own religion and only wrong

when he denies the inspiration of the religion of his brothers; right whenever he raises loving hands in worship, wrong whenever he pushes out angry hands in rejection; right whenever in his worship he knows that all languages are one in the ears of the Divine that hears them, wrong only when he thinks his voice the only one that can pierce the heavens and reach the divine throne; wrong when he denies to his brothers the same Fatherhood that he claims as his own.

The unity of every faith that loves God and serves man, that is the message which comes to the world as the inner purpose of the Theosophical movement: to draw all faiths together, to see them all as sisters, not as rivals, to join all religions in one golden chain of divine love and human service. That is the purpose of our movement all the world over—to reverence and serve religion wherever we find it, and to pierce through the varieties of the outer faith to the unity of the hidden life.

That, then, our work. But if that be our work, then are we not false to it in its most essential meaning, if anywhere we carry strife instead of peace and speak words of exclusion instead of words of love? They only are the true Theosophists, they only reflect in small degree the spirit of the great Brotherhood of Teachers, they only are worthy messengers, however feeble, of their divine message, who carry out the spirit of brotherhood amid all the warring creeds, and who not only carry the message of peace, but live the peace they teach, and show the ideal of brotherhood in life as thoroughly as they proclaim its reality in words.

But what does it foretell for the future? It foretells the dawning of a civilisation where unity shall be the keynote instead of strife; where co-operation shall be the means of life rather than competition; where beyond the development of the individual in the combative intellect, the spiritual unity shall begin to dawn in the eyes and in the lives of men. For as surely as this truth is given in spiritual form, as surely as the existence of that spiritual brotherhood of man is a fundamental truth in nature, so also it is true that the life must find its fit form in which to incarnate, and that deeper understanding, closer bonds, more real

love between nations now apart, shall tread in the wake of the Theosophical movement, and shall bring in due course of time to the earth we live in a peace which at present lives only in the higher regions of the universe. That is the promise which it lifts before our eyes, despite the struggle of the warring world; that the hope—full of peace and bliss—which it points to in the future beyond the battle-field and the massacre, beyond the poverty and the misery, beyond the heart-break of the present into the heart-joy of the future. The work to which we are called is to form a nucleus of souls at one, to show by our lives the unity we proclaim, to live love in a world of hatred, to live peace in a world of strife. That, and nothing less than that, the high mission to which we are called; that, and nothing less than that, the noble duty that is bound upon our shoulders; and just in proportion as we live it, we shall make it possible for others; just in proportion as our lives are its preachers, will the sermon take effect on the hearts of men.

But if you realise that, what can shake you in your devotion to this movement? What can trouble your serene confidence in the certainty of the joy that lies beyond? The Society in its outer form may be shaken over and over again. It is well that it should be shaken from time to time, for how can the weak and the strong be separated—as they must be separated for a while until the hardest of the battle is over—save by so shaking the Society that only those whose vision is clear, whose hearts are brave, whose wills are strong, shall be able to stay within the pioneer band who are hewing out the road to the future? The place of the weak is not in the forefront of the struggle. The place of the weak is not in the worst shock of the combat. Rather, easier strife for them, an easier pathway, sufficiently difficult to draw out their strength, but not difficult enough to drive them to despair. For those who are strong, as we heard just now, for them the place of hardest fight and keenest struggle, and those who would be the pioneers of the future must be willing to bear and strong to endure. Theirs the place within the forward rank of the movement, making possible for the weaker the treading of the up-hill path.

Matters it then to us, if this be true, that our thought shall

spread everywhere without our name? Rightly did our President tell us that all over the world these thoughts were moving, and that within the limits of the different faiths you find the theosophical ideas proclaimed. That is the testimony to the reality of our work, that the only reward that it is well that we should look for—not that we shall be known as leaders, but that the ideas may permeate throughout the civilisation in which we are living; not that our names shall stand high as teachers, not that our names shall be known as thinkers, but that the teaching shall spread everywhere, no matter what lips proclaim it; that the knowledge shall spring up on every side, no matter by whom that knowledge at any time be given. Enough to sow; let anyone have the *name* of the sowing to whom it may happen to come; let those who can only work when they are praised, let them have the credit of spreading the ideas everywhere. Let us be content with the noble work of labouring, so that the ideas may go everywhere, and let every church take them as its own —they *are* its own if it only knew the treasures that its Teacher gave it. Ours enough to point out where they may be found, and let others hold them up before the eyes of the world. Those who are able to reach the people, let them take the truth and speak it, so that everywhere its sound may be heard. When from Christian pulpit a theosophical truth is taught, let all our hearts see in that the reward for which we have been labouring. If our Master's truth be told, what matters it who shall tell it? If any eyes see His beauty, what matters whose hand it is lets fall the veil?

For those of you who are members of this great Society, who hold it the highest privilege that Karma could bring to you to be one of the workers in this movement for humanity, for you what is the future offered you, for you what the prize of the high calling which is in the far future to-day? To know what Those who have gone before us have known, so that our knowledge may be used for the helping of the ignorance of the world; to tread the path which Those have trodden before us, that narrow, ancient path that is opened for us by the Sages and can only be shut to us by our own weakness, by our own folly, by our own sin. No other hand in heaven or earth can close the

gateway of that path against any human soul; only its own hand can close it, for thus hath spoken the law. To you the path is clear in sight, proclaimed again in the hearing of all. Coming into the Society you take, as it were, your first step in that direction of which the ending is to be one of the Saviours of the world.

What magic lies in those four words! What music in the inspiration which they bring to the human soul! To be a world-Saviour—what does it mean? It means that all the world's ignorance is less because you know; that all the world's sin is less because you are pure; that all the world's sorrow is less because you are sharing it; that all the world's weakness is less because you lend to it your strength. Struggle to be strong, not in order that you may be strong, but that the world may be stronger. Struggle to be wise, not that you may be wise, but that the world may be the wiser. Struggle to be pure, not that you may be pure, but that the whole world may be nearer to the purity that is divine. Care not for your own joy, for your own happiness, for your own satisfaction. Care only for the upward treading of the world and the little help you may bring to it. You must either be lifted or lift. You must either be a clog or wings to lift the world upward on its road. That is the great choice which lies before you in coming into this movement.

Your Self has chosen that destiny even if your brain as yet knows it not. That your brain may know it as your Self knows it, that your intellect may recognise it as your Self has recognised it—that may be the outcome of your worship, of your devotion, of your learning; for this only is worth living for—that the world may be better because we have been living in it; this only is the one crown of humanity—that the man crowns himself with thorns in order that others may be crowned with life immortal.

"If you have been deceived, it is not the deception that matters, but the forgiveness whereto it gave birth in your soul."—P. 30.

"We suffer but little from suffering itself; but from the manner wherein we accept it overwhelming sorrow may spring."—P. 99.

"It is not by renouncing the joys that are near us that we shall grow wise; but as we grow wise we unconsciously abandon the joys that now are beneath us."—P. 145. *Wisdom and Destiny*, M. Maeterlinck.

THE "WISDOM" TRADITION IN THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

Georgius Gemistus Plethon

"Before many years have elapsed there will be one religion taught everywhere, and universally adopted; a religion which will be neither of Christ, nor of Mahomet; but another differing but little from that of the Ancient Greeks."—Georgius Gemistus Plethon.

Such were the prophetic words uttered at the Council of Florence, 1428, by the sage who came from Greece to Italy to revive the Ancient Wisdom-religion, and to sow the seeds out of which were to bloom the glorious flowers of the Italian Renaissance, that wonderful awakening to a newer and higher life which is truly termed "rebirth." Sent from the older country with the mission of unification, he appeared at the Council of Florence as the sage who, loved and honoured in his own country, was to leave a yet more indelible impress on the hearts and minds of the Italian people. When we read what was written of him, and what he did during that eventful epoch in Italian history, it might be truly said that he came in "trailing clouds of glory," "Italy caught the first rays of the new light long before Germany or England," says an Italian writer on the Renaissance; but what was this "new light"?

It will vary according to the mental and spiritual position of the seeker after light; much has been written on the wonderful "revival of learning" which developed so suddenly in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and which affected all Europe with its powerful forces; it has been treated from many and various aspects, religious, artistic, literary; and even the commercial side has not been overlooked. But one phase, and that the most vital, of this unique awakening to life, after a long

period of mental and spiritual darkness, has been entirely neglected, or, at the most, only cursorily referred to as an unimportant factor in the problem; a phase which to the student of mystic tradition is the most absorbing in interest, for it bears the hopeful promise of spiritual light and life in its bosom.

The coming of Gemistus, the sage of Mizithera, is no lesser thing than the re-introduction into Italy of the ancient Wisdom tradition—brought not by a zealous missionary of the uneducated type, but by a philosopher charged with the sacred mission of reviving not only mental culture with the aid of Grecian knowledge, but also the yet more important "Culture of the Soul" based on the ancient philosophical tradition of the East.

Italy, in earlier times, had been the centre for the great teacher Pythagoras, the sound of whose teaching has gone forth to all lands; nor indeed had the remnants of the Gnostic sects been entirely dispersed, although the bitter persecution of the Roman Church had done its utmost to crush out those fragments of the Wisdom-teaching that were yet lingering among the various sects, such as the Cathari, Patarini, Albigenses, etc., who were the scattered inheritors of the Manichæan and other Gnostic traditions. Nor had Italy, during these dark years, forgotten her birthright; her mystic tradition was only hidden, not crushed out; laid temporarily aside, not effaced. That land whose children have been the world's poets, the world's painters, the world's builders, could not divest herself of that inner force which gave birth to those outer forms which men call painting, poetry and sculpture. What are they but the clothing of thought, the physical aspect of the truths, spiritual and vital, which her geniuses have tried to voice for poorer imaginations to follow? Thus, when to Italy came the sage who was to give the "new birth," and revive the ancient tradition, there was but one answer, and it came, bursting forth like the glad spring breaks out when the warm sunshine comes. Heralds there had been, martyrs many, precursors of this "new birth"; but round Gemistus gathered together the groups who were ready for his teaching, and from him we can trace onwards the men who formed the links in the golden chain of the Eastern truths. At this

period we enter on a different phase, no longer veiled hints of truths which it was dangerous to proclaim aloud, but the public teaching of the "Secret Doctrine" protected by the great Cosmo de Médicis; later on it took definite shape in the Platonic Academy, in which the "philosophy of the soul" was to be taught, with its true relations to the exterior and interior worlds.

A golden moment this, truly termed a "Renaissance," for the doctrine of "rebirth" or "metempsychosis," was one of the truths most emphasised by Gemistus and his disciples, Marsiglio Ficino, Pomponius Lœtus, Pico della Mirandola, and others who took their teachings from his inspiration.

It is impossible in these sketches to enter on any detailed history of this exact period; such treatment would lead too far away from the particular aspect with which we have to deal, namely, to trace this Eastern tradition as passed on from one teacher to another. Those few who had this definite tradition in their charge are the figures of the epoch to whom our attention must be restricted. The living links in this chain will be, Georgius Gemistus Plethon, Marsiglio Ficino, Pomponius Lœtus, Pico della Mirandola, Bernadino Telesius, Tomaso Campanella, and Cornelius Agrippa. Many others there are in the groups round these mystic students, but we shall have to deal with them incidentally. Those readers who wish to gain a clear idea of this eventful history-making epoch cannot do better than read carefully the books of J. Addington Symonds, whose admirable works give such a vivid picture of the dramatic events of this period.*

It is necessary to study the condition of the Papacy at that time in order to see why men grasped so thankfully at the purer ideals which were being presented to them from Platonic sources. The purity and beauty of the teaching of Christ were being defaced and degraded by the Vicars of Christ, and the Christian Platonist, Marsiglio Ficino, with whom we shall deal later on, tried to restore the philosophy and true doctrine in his country. Amongst the few in the church at that time whose lives shone like stars in the darkness of a black night, must be

* Symonds (J. Addington), *The Renaissance in Italy; The Age of the Despots; The Revival of Learning; The Fine Arts; Italian Literature*, 2 vols.; *The Catholic Reaction*, 2 vols. *London*, 7 vols., 1875-86.

named Cardinal Bessarione, the disciple of Gemistus, and his protector also. Surrounded by many degraded in their lives, he lived his days throughout with a stainless reputation for purity and honour. But few were such men in the church.

The ground had been to a large extent prepared by the rapid spread of Averroism, and a sound basis it proved to work upon, for Averroes taught, as did Erigena, that philosophy and religion were one; the great influence that this famous Arabian teacher had exercised in Italy, is noticed by a historian of the period,* and not in the most friendly way, but a glance backwards to the previous centuries will give a clear reason for us to understand from another aspect why the rapid change of this "revival" period was of such a sweeping nature and affected every phase of the nation's life in its uprising.

A concise idea of the darkness which reigned from the 5th to the 8th centuries is given by Owen, who says:—"Pagan learning was forbidden as a sin. Mental cultivation was tabooed as a frivolous and utterly needless attainment. Relaxation, whether mental or physical, was stigmatised as unholy. The enjoyment of Nature—the refining influences of the Arts, as Music, Poetry, and Painting, all were anathematised as irreligious."†

Having thus briefly glanced at the conditions into which the teacher came, we will turn to his life; and here we will summarise briefly what the Abbé Migne‡ tells us about him. George Gemistus, better known by the name of Plethon, was born at Constantinople about 1355; he was born of an illustrious family. For some reasons which have not yet been discovered, he left his native town and went to Adrianople; there he attached himself to a mysterious Jew, by name Elisée, who was extremely influential with the Sublime Porte, a devoted student of occult sciences, and was finally burned alive. It was apparently on the death of this Jew that he changed his residence to the Morea, and established himself at Mizithra, the ancient Sparta. It was here that he spent most of his life,

* Tirabaschi, *Storia*, vol v., 277, 280.

† Owen (John) *The Skeptics of the Italian Renaissance*; p. 76. London, 1893.

‡ Migne, *Patrol. Græca*, tom. 160, p. 793.

occupied with literature and philosophy, and here that he founded —or possibly and more probably—continued the Secret School, of which he was the head.

It appears also that he had a public position of some importance, and that at this period he was writing on philosophy, rhetoric, geography, astronomy and astrology, besides a treatise on the *Virtues*, and *Physical (or Natural) Proofs of the Existence of God.* As a litterateur and savant, his superiority over the majority of his contemporaries is unquestioned, and these qualities, according to Migne, attracted to Gemistus the illustrious Bessarion, one of the most enlightened Cardinals who has ever graced the Vatican. This future Cardinal went to a convent in the Morea to prepare for his monastic career. Of their connection, and of the great influence exercised by Gemistus over this prelate we will speak later on ; at present the career of the occultist is to be traced, for the Sage of Sparta had an important mission to fulfil.

In 1438 Gemistus was consulted by the Emperor John Paleologus on important political matters, and especially on the subject of the re-union of the Churches (Greek and Latin). He was chosen by the Emperor as one of the six Greek representatives at the Council of Florence.

The speakers at the Council were limited to Bessarion of Nicea and Isidore of Russia. But we find that Gemistus uttered some memorable and significant words, whose truth is only now, so many centuries later, slowly dawning on the world: "Before many years have elapsed there will be one religion taught everywhere and universally adopted; a religion which will be neither of Christ nor of Mahomet, but another, differing but little from that of the ancient Greeks."

It was on this visit that he became intimately acquainted with Cosmo de Médicis, and from this apparently small circumstance grew and developed the brilliant groups of the Neo-Platonists of Italy, and with them that famous Institution the *Academia Platonica*, whose name and influence gives the crown of worth to the Italian Renaissance. Cosmo de Médicis became the pupil of the Sage of Mizithra, and thus the golden chain of tradition was continued and revived; the project was then

formed for the Platonic Academy, and it was at this time that Gemistus wrote his treatise on the *Difference between the Doctrines of Aristotle and those of Plato.*

It appears also that it was at this same time that he adopted the name of Plethon; according to a prevalent fashion of those days, when many of the learned adopted pseudonyms.

Gemistus returned to Greece about 1440, and appears to have taken up his public work again. He died about 1451.

A very admirable account of his work in his own country is given by Fallmeyer,* which is of interest since this author states in distinct terms that Plethon drew his dogmas from the Brâhmaṇas of the olden time.

Gemistus himself appears to have regarded Zoroaster as his great authority, who as "the most ancient amongst those known to us by tradition, who acted as interpreter for the Medes and Persians and the greater number of the other ancient Asiatic nations of things pertaining to God and other exalted matters."

"We trace back our dogmas to this man," says Gemistus in his *Epinomis* (quoted by Fallmeyer), "but not, however, as if we thought that they first sprang from him; for these true dogmas are as old as the whole world, and existed from all time amongst men, even though they were accepted at one time by a greater number, and at other times by fewer—accepted namely, by those who strive onwards in the right manner, starting from the universal thoughts placed in our minds by the Gods. But amongst the men named by us, this Zoroaster is the most ancient interpreter of the true dogmas; he is said to have lived more than 5,000 years before Heraclitus."

"Just as Pythagoras, according to the legends of his later biographies, travelled from one side of the then known world to the other when making his philosophical researches, and drew his wisdom no less from India than from Spain, in like manner Plethon received his teaching on the one hand from the Western Iberians, and on the other, not only from the Magi of the Medes, but even from the Indian Brâhmans as well."†

* Fallmeyer (Jacob Phil.), *Geschichte der Halbinsel Morea während des Mittelalters;* vol ii., pp. 135. Stuttgardt; 1836.

† *Op. cit.*, p, 138.

A well-known German author* referring to him says: He "appears to have occupied himself less with the Council than with the spreading of the Platonic Philosophy, and made a profound impression on his hearers, among whom were Cosmo himself and the celebrated Pomponius Lœtus. The effect produced was related by one of his disciples in these words: 'How astounded were the Romans—or rather the Italians—with the wisdom, the virtue, and the eloquence of this man! In their midst he was like a sun; some exalted him as a master and benefactor; they called him a Plato and a Socrates.'"

"Gemistus Plethon, however, did not influence people only by his oral teachings, but also by his writings, the principal of these being his book, *The Laws*, which work his adversary Gennadius declared to be heretical, and quietly consigned to the flames! In consequence of this summary proceeding, it has not come to us entire, but in a fragmentary condition; it was read with avidity by his contemporaries, and almost accepted as a dogma of faith. The aim of that work can have been nothing less than to make a fundamental revolution in the whole of life, both political, moral and religious."

The same author quotes a passage from this work in which Gemistus avows his belief in metempsychosis, or re-incarnation.

"In this doctrine alone," says the philosopher, "can we find our happiness, in view of what happens to us on this earth; the upholders of all other doctrines withdraw themselves from happiness; just as far as they, in their beliefs, differ from our teachings do they draw nigh to unhappiness. The most unhappy beings are they who hold beliefs which are the most opposed to ours, for in their ignorance of sublime matters, they wander in spiritual darkness."

I. COOPER-OAKLEY.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

* Geiger (Ludwig). Traduzione di D. Valbusa. *Storia Universale;* "Rinascimento e Umanismo in Italia e Germania," vol. viii., Sect. II., p. 134. Milano; 1891.

CORRESPONDENCE

God and Suffering

To the Editor of The Theosophical Review

Will you allow me to take exception to a statement made in the May number, page 244, by Dr. A. A. Wells. He says: "A God who does not Himself suffer is not the God of this creation." I do not think that this will stand the test of reason. The God of this creation, whether the "Logos" or "The Unknowable," is at the head of the creation, and in It all things live and move and have their being. It has no equal nor superior in this creation. Now any being who suffers at the hand of, or through, another being, is at that moment the inferior to him who causes the suffering—suffering implies pain and hurt—and he who hurts is for the moment superior to him who is hurt. If God is therefore a sufferer, He has found a being His superior. In that case God is not the head of all. The sick child which pierces its mother's breast with sorrow, does so because it has found a weak point in its mother's nature. Can we imagine God to have a weak point?

I think Dr. Wells has made a God no better than the Hebrew God.

Jos. Clayton.

Answer

I think Mr. Clayton's difficulty is the very usual one, that he does not understand how much more there is in *everything* than we have any idea of. It is quite true that in the Logos "we all live and move and have our being"; that, ultimately, His Will must rule and all the errors and evils of humanity end in doing "whatsoever His determinate counsel and forethought have decreed to be done." From this point of view He cannot suffer, for not only shall all be well in the future, but all *is* well now to the great Mind to which past and future (as *we* speak), are both equally present. But it is also true that the sufferings which we ourselves endure are His sufferings, for our life is His. Nothing exists to suffer which is not

a modification of Him—nothing has any life in it which is not His, nothing which will not be drawn back into Him when perfected by the experience alike of joy and sorrow through the ages as a human soul. I do not know where Mr. Clayton got his curious idea that a sufferer is necessarily the inferior of the one who makes him suffer, and that a mother suffers in her child's pain because of a weak point in her nature; things could hardly be put more strangely topsy-turvy. The mother suffers in her child because the child *is* herself—*more* herself (if one may say so) than her own body; and it must be fully realised that, in our eyes, the case is precisely the same between our God and ourselves. It is the very thing on which I was laying stress that the only God we can admit *has* (in the querist's words) a "weak point" in every one of the Egos into which He has breathed His life; He will have these "weak points" as long as there remains a single soul which has not finished its earthly pilgrimage. His reward He will reap when He comes "bringing His sheaves with Him"—surrounded by the new Gods His self-sacrifice has developed from human beings like ourselves into His equals—not to sing His praises in any everlasting heaven, but to work with Him under still higher Masters at the joyous never-ending task of the illimitable perfecting of what once—far back in the night of ages—was so low and poor a thing as our human race.

ARTHUR A. WELLS.

THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITIES

India

THE sixteen new class-rooms of the Benares Central Hindu College are reported to be advancing towards completion, and the new Boarding-house is to be opened with thirty students instead of the fifteen originally contemplated. The Superintendent has taken charge, and the Paṇḍit charged with the religious supervision is in residence.

Europe

THE Tenth Annual Convention of the European Section is over, and the Theosophists whom the occasion gathered from far and near have scattered to their various centres of activity, refreshed and strengthened for their work by the glance at the movement as a whole, and at the individuals concerned in it in particular, that such a meeting

renders possible. As the Society grows in inward and outward strength these meetings gain in interest and in power for good, and a remarkable feature this year was the large number of foreign delegates who were present; India, America, Australia, New Zealand, Holland, Germany, France, Belgium, Spain and Italy were all represented, two countries sending ten members each, another five, and so on. The President-Founder was with us, the outward sign of the unity and unbroken continuity of our Society all the world over. Perfect weather made it easy to take advantage of the various gatherings.

Proceedings began on Friday, July 6th, with a Reception of delegates and members at 28, Albemarle Street, to meet the President-Founder. All the rooms of the new official home of the Society in Europe were thrown open, and the evening was much enjoyed. Mrs. Besant was with us at all our meetings, and in spite of her heavy work in public lecturing and private instruction looked well and full of energy.

The general formal business meeting, with Colonel Olcott in the chair, was dispatched on Saturday morning in a satisfactory manner. Officers were re-elected, the only change being Mr. Chapman, public accountant, as auditor, in place of Mr. Digby Besant.

After afternoon tea at 28, Albemarle Street had given opportunity for the exchange of thought with old and new friends, the evening was devoted to a full public meeting in the Small Queen's Hall, which was addressed by Mr. Mead, who delivered an admirable speech on "Fragments of a Faith Forgotten," and by Mr. Leadbeater, on "The Practical Effect of Theosophy." On Sunday evening the same hall was again crowded to hear the President-Founder speak on "The Progress of the Theosophical Movement," and Mr. G. N. Chakravarti deliver to us "A Word from India." Mrs. Besant then spoke on "The Inner Purpose of the Society." On Monday there was again afternoon tea at the Section Rooms, followed by questions in the lecture room, which Mrs. Besant, and afterwards Mr. Leadbeater, answered. Thus ended a Convention distinguished by the visible advance which it disclosed in quiet unity of purpose amongst our members.

The Section lecture room has overflowed on the occasions of Mrs. Besant's Friday five o'clock lectures on "Thought Power, its Control and Culture."

The Blavatsky Lodge has also had the pleasure of two lectures

from its President. On July 5th the subject was "Parsifal." On the 12th she spoke on "India and England." Mr. Mead lectured on the 19th on a newly translated dialogue of Hermes and Asclepius, and Mrs. Besant again occupied the platform on the 26th.

Mrs. Faulding, Miss Beatrice Ward and Mrs. Hogg "received" on the Monday following the last of the Countess Wachtmeister's "At Homes," thus continuing this useful activity.

Our President-Founder was in Germany from May 28th to June 18th, visiting the Hanover and Hamburg Lodges and the Leipzig Centre, and making the acquaintance of the new members.

The young French Section has already made its mark in Theosophical history by organising and carrying out the plan for the International Theosophical Congress in Paris. Some of our leading Theosophists were present, the President-Founder presided over most of the meetings, Mr. Chakravarti delivered a valuable address, and Mrs. Besant's lectures raised great enthusiasm. It is the unanimous opinion that there is, at last, promise for the work of Theosophy in France, and our fellow-members there are encouraged to continue their efforts with even greater energy than before.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Rája Yoga

A Visit to a Gñani. (Chicago: Alice B. Stockham and Co.)

This is a well-timed reprint—we suppose by permission—of the four chapters of Edward Carpenter's *From Adam's Peak to Elephanta* which have special interest for Theosophists. It may be remembered that on the first appearance of this work it was carefully reviewed in Lucifer, with chief reference to these chapters, which contain the account of his visit to and conversations with a Yogî, of whom the reviewer says: "He appears to have been a true follower of Râj Yog, and there is no doubt that he had attained a high degree of the inner peace." Carpenter has done full justice to the Teacher's pronouncements on the life of the higher Ego, the expansion of the individual consciousness into what he calls the cosmic consciousness in ecstasy, the practical method of attainment; including in these the reaching

concentration by fixing the mind securely upon a single object, and next by transcending *all* thought (of the lower mental plane, that is). Of this, the frequent subject of Mrs. Besant's exhortations, he says:

"It is one of the most prominent doctrines of the Gñanis that the power of expelling thoughts, or, if need be, killing them dead on the spot, *must* be attained. Naturally the art requires practice, but it is worth it. It may indeed fairly be said that life only begins when this art is acquired. For obviously, when instead of being ruled by individual thoughts, the whole flock of them, in their immense multitude and variety and capacity, is ours to direct and despatch and employ where we list, life becomes a thing so vast and grand compared with what it was before, that its former condition may well appear almost antenatal. If you can kill a thought dead for the time being, you can do anything else with it that you please. And therefore it is that this power is so valuable. It not only frees a man from mental torment (which is nine-tenths at least of the torment of life), but it gives him a concentrated power of handling mental work absolutely unknown to him before. The two things are correlative to each other."

In commending the little book to our readers, we may do well to reproduce the correction made by the LUCIFER reviewer on the statement (p. 79) that the defect of the system is the little insistance on the idea of *love*. "He is evidently not aware (says the reviewer) that to reach Jñâna one has to pass through Bhakti Yoga, which, if anything, is the Yoga of Love. Karma, Upâsana or Bhakti, and Jñâna (Gnosis) are a trinity which mutually support each other and accompany the pilgrim on the paths of Átma-Vidyâ or true *self*-knowledge."

A. A. W.

FROM THE "DARK AGES"

Studies in John the Scot (Erigena). By Alice Gardner. (London: Henry Frowde; 1900.)

MISS GARDNER, in continuing her series of monographs, of which we have already had her Julian and Synesius, has once more been fortunate in her selection. Erigena is one of those mediæval writers to whom one turns when trying to show how much more there was in those times than the mere word-splitting generally credited to them. The enormous advantage we have over them in the knowledge of the facts of nature is too apt to blind us to their excellence in their own

line. It was the early time of the development of what was to be our own modern scientific intellect; and if the schoolmen often played with their new tool—as we see the Elizabethans playing with *their* new tool, the modern English language, in Shakespeare's "Love's Labour Lost"—there were also those who made worthy use of it, and of these Erigena is one of the pioneers. He was fortunate in this respect, that the theological system had not then hardened upon the Church. The highest philosophy was dawning upon their eyes—Plato, Aristotle (after long eclipse) for secular learning; and Dionysius, who was to be the foundation of all religious and mystical theology—the direct parent of all the sanctity of S. Francis, S. Catherine, S. Teresa, and all their followers. The idea that true philosophy and true religion could be at variance would have been held as impossible then as *we* think it now. We must not lay much stress on the squabbling betwixt rival theologians, to which Miss Gardner has devoted perhaps more of her limited space than was strictly necessary. We do not suppose that Longfellow's disputants:

> "May the Lord have mercy on your position,
> You wretched, wrangling culler of herbs!"
> "May He send *your* soul to eternal perdition
> For your Treatise on the Irregular Verbs!"

really desired any great harm to each other; it was the recognised way of debate, as it seems to be at Berlin to this day. Besides they, like Erigena and *his* opponents, were Kelts, and that explains much. I know my Irish well, and love them; and if an Irishman were to swear in court he had seen me with his own eyes committing all the deadly sins seven times a day I should only take it as suggesting that he disagreed with me as to the date of Queen Anne's death, or thought I did not sufficiently subscribe to the League. He would not really mean any harm; and if he saw me in any trouble would run to help me and forget all his gorgeous fireworks of denunciation in an instant.

Erigena's interest to us is that the system he propounds is so nearly our own. In his great work "Of the Divisions of Nature" (by which he understands not only physical nature, but the One and All, as his division shows), he gives us four classes: 1. That which creates and is not created (the Logos, from which all emanates at opening of Manvantara). 2. That which is created and creates (our Planetary Logos, defined by him as the primordial ideas, archetypes, divine acts of will). 3. That which is created and does not create

(nature up to man—2 and 3 together forming the Universe as a Manifestation of the Logos, Theophania). 4. That which neither creates nor is created (the Absolute into which the All is involved at the close).

His Divine Trinity is: Father=Substance, Being; Son=Wisdom; and Spirit=Life; as we behold them in the Being of the universe, the Wisdom of its order, and the Life which gives it constant motion.

Man was originally sinless and sexless, but after the Fall acquired an animal nature and the animal sex. On our final return to Divine Unity sex will vanish and the spiritual body will be regained.

Sin is mistake as to what is good, and its punishment is disappointment with its result. Hell has no local existence, but is the inner state of the sinful will; and its results for all are final purification and redemption.

The ultimate goal of our progress is Deification (a bold word, is it not?), or resumption into the Divine being, in which the soul is raised to full knowledge of God and *knowing* and *being* are one.

Thus was it possible for a Catholic theologian to teach his pupils in the ninth century. Would that the nineteenth had such freedom!

We should like to made a suggestion to Miss Gardner in taking leave of her interesting little work. A mention in her preface of "his namesake Duns of unhappy reputation" persuades us that she has not yet made acquaintance with that other and much more important Irishman for herself. She would find in Duns Scotus, the chief light of that freer and more modern Franciscan theology of which I have several times spoken here, a worthy subject for her next volume. Overshadowed in his own community partly by the extreme subtlety of his voluminous writings, but more by the success of the rival Thomist school in obtaining Papal patronage; vilified by the English Reformers as the Doctor of the Friars they so much hated; she would yet find him the worthy successor of Erigena in keeping up and handing on what I think I may fairly call the Platonic tradition, and resisting to the last the tendency to the materialisation and (if one may use the word) the crystallisation of Christian theology which has so completely and so ruinously triumphed in our own time.

A. A. W.

Religion or Rivalry

Cristo e Budda. Studii di Religione Comparata. Di R. Mariano. (Firenze: G. Barbèra; 1900.)

The main part of this book is good work of the ordinary missionary type; with considerable parade of authorities and much attempt at fairness (so far as this is possible to a Christian Apologist). A dummy Buddhism is set upon end and duly knocked out of time round after round—I mean chapter after chapter—to the praise and glory of the Christians. I think my readers, like myself, will have no stomach for the details of the process. Is it possible that any thinking being can imagine that their Great Teacher can feel anything but disgust and scorn for such defenders? Why will they not learn from Him that "God has never left Himself without witness" in *any* time or place? Why must the Buddha and His followers be wrong because six hundred years after and many thousand miles away, a new Teacher appeared to teach the same doctrine to others? Why indeed, except that "by this craft we have our living—Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

But Sig. Mariano has discovered that there is a new phenomenon —Theosophy and Theosophists; "that is to say, a propaganda carried on by Buddhist missionaries and apostles in the very circle of the oldest and most seriously Christian countries!" and explodes in a torrent of Italian adjectives accordingly. He gives a brief sketch of Theosophy, honourably mentioning his authorities, which are the *Missionary Magazine*, 1885, and *Theosophy*, number 761 of the publications of the London Tract Society, 1892! It will perhaps not be very wonderful if the said sketch is rather wide of anything *we* know as Theosophy; but surely the Tract Society must know best. Finally, as his book is going to press the crowning horror breaks upon him. He says:

"I had written this, when I came by chance to hear that a 'circle' of Theosophists, that is (so to say) a kind of Neo-Buddhistic chapel, has already been started and is in full work here in Florence. I cannot treat it as a hoax, for all particulars were given me. If any one should wish to visit the chapel, here is the street, the number and the story—Via Maggio, No. 58, floor 2. I congratulate my fair city of Florence, which I love above all others in the world, on the rare privilege of a possession, so far as I know, as yet unshared by the metropolis of Italy!" (N.B.—This is wrote sarkastical, as our

friend Artemus Ward used to say, and is inaccurate withal.) Whether, as our author asserts, it is true that in Paris one may assist at a Buddhistic Divine Service with the accompaniment of the Liturgy used in Ceylon or Burma, under the superintendence of the High Priest, Léon de Rosny, I don't know; but I *do* know that if any of his readers takes him at his word and expects to find anything of the kind in our Florence Lodge he will be much disappointed. But the visitor will at least find those who can give him much more reliable information than Sig. Mariano possesses as to what we believe and what we hope to do for his beloved Italy. Let us at least thank him for his advertisement, and part friends.

A. A. W.

The Voice

Le Son dans la Nature, par Edmond Bailly. (Paris: Libraire de l'Art Indépendant, 10, Rue Saint-Lazare; 1900.)

In this interesting little work the author commences by tracing the various accounts of the origin of sound given in the earlier religions, concluding that "the mystic tradition of the most diverse races is unanimous in declaring the Word, the Voice, Sound, the first source of the manifested universe. The Indian philosophers see in the *Âkâsha* the protoplasm of Forms; and by Forms we must understand as well those of the Divine World of the Spirit, as those, less subtle, of the Intellect and as those heavier ones of Matter. It is in the splendour of their interior Beauty that all these Forms came from the hands of the 'Weaver of the Beginnings'; and if they appear to us, too often, unattractive or hideous, it is that our own fallen souls have degraded them." The Harmony of the Spheres, that of the musical gamut and the various strange and unaccountable sounds of Nature, are discussed in the remainder of a little volume which makes a pleasant hour's reading, as well as a useful introduction to more serious works on the subject.

A. A. W.

Magazines and Pamphlets

Theosophist, June. "Old Diary Leaves" this month are entirely devoted to the Colonel's tour in Japan. Everywhere received with high honour, he seems to have been overwhelmed with work, under conditions not all favourable. The bitter cold of the Japanese winter, which laid Dharmapala up in hospital, he seems to have found very trying; and he speaks most feelingly of the insufficiency of the

Japanese bedding to keep a European warm in rooms only protected from the weather by light paper screens. But he collected 1,500 volumes for his beloved Library—which compensated for much suffering; and when at a magnificent ceremony at Kioto, with which the paper ends, the Master of the Temple, representing Shâkya Muni Himself, in gorgeous attire, estimated by the Colonel as worth twenty or thirty thousand dollars, stopped the procession to make him a low bow—"about as great a shock to his followers as an earthquake would have been"—the Colonel is fully justified in saying that "I fully comprehended that the Chief of the Eastern Hong-wanji had told me, as plainly as if the words had been spoken, that the Buddhists of Japan were grateful for my efforts to restore the influence of the religion which had consoled and comforted so many millions during the past fifteen centuries." The other articles comprise "Esoteric Astrology as a factor in Evolution," by G. E. Wright; an interesting paper on what one may perhaps call the historical evidence for Poseidonis," by W. H. Trimble; the continuation of Miss Edger's "Ethics of Christianity;" Mrs. Hooper's "Australian Magic and Traditions;" a panegyric on H. P. B., delivered by J. J. Vimadalal to the Hyderabad Branch on White Lotus Day; "Cycles," by C. Kofel; the conclusion of the translation of the Anubhavânanda Lahari; and a valuable and thoughtful paper by W. G. John, entitled "Self-Salvation or Self-Sacrifice," which our readers would do well to read and ponder for themselves.

In *Prashnottara* for May the "Caste System" is continued. An interesting suggestion is made of its origin in the gradual rising of a man from the solitary hunter to be the member of a civilised community. "We see," the writer says, "that as a man rises in social status by self-improvement, his duty to his fellow-men increases also, and his life becomes more and more one of *service*." The Shûdra serves to gain his own living only; the Vaishya "recognises a duty additional to that of serving himself, I mean the duty to serve others and to live for others; and he initiates it by alms-giving and sacrifice." The next lift in the social scale comes when, as Kshattriya, "he becomes prepared to protect his neighbours at the risk of his own life." And the last when, a Brâhmaṇa, "he takes upon himself his special duty, that of *teaching*, in addition to his earlier duties of giving alms, performing sacrifice and study." If the castes lived up to such an ideal, who of us could find a word to say against them? "The Daily Practice of the Hindus" is continued, and the notes of

Mrs. Besant's talks on the Emotions conclude an interesting number. The June issue has some interesting Questions and Answers.

The Ârya Bala Bodhinî for May has a pithy saying from Sri Râmakṛiṣhṇa: "God is the tree of all desires. Whoever says in His presence, 'O God, I have got nothing,' really gets nothing; but he who says 'O Lord, Thou hast given me everything,' gets everything." The June number is a little dull.

The Colombo *Buddhist*, vol. xi., No. 3, is again an interesting number. We have also *The Dawn* for April; *Journal of the Buddhist Text Society*, vol. vii., part i.—containing, amongst other interesting matter, a valuable dissertation by Prof. Satis Chandra on the Twelve Nidânas. This should not be passed over by anyone who is studying the Origins—*Journal of the Mahâ-bodhi Society; Siddhanta Deepika; Theosophic Gleaner;* and the *Indian Review* for June.

The Vâhan for July is somewhat scrappy, but contains a valuable reply by C. W. L. to the question: "Can one do anything to help a person who is about to die, and how?" G. R. S. M. is responsible for two answers, dealing shortly but clearly with important subjects, one how the Universe can be said to be contained within us, the other a very suggestive summary of the Gnostic ideas connected with the "glyph" of the Magdalene out of whom seven devils were cast. J. v. M. settles finally the disputed word Narjol, and the number ends with answers to the curious question: "How does it benefit a man to go to Hell?"

Der Vâhan for June promises a freer exchange of questions and answers with its English elder brother, and expresses a hope, which we fully share, that the English *Vâhan* will thereby gain in interest and many-sidedness.

Bulletin Théosophique, June, contains the speeches and poems with which our Paris friends celebrated White Lotus Day. One word of Dr. Pascal's is too good to pass over: "Let us cease then, I pray you, to think of what profound ignorance and careless conceit have called the faults of H. P. B.! *Let us cease to be fools!*"

Revue Théosophique Française for June. Dr. Pascal in closing his article on Ancient Sociology asks: "Why must society go through so much suffering to gain knowledge? Because it is only in the school of experience that one learns what is wisdom and what is folly. Obedience and blind faith are good only to guide the first steps of infancy. Rational faith and obedience, in sociology as in religion, are the glorious fruits of knowledge, which is only gained by experience."

Theosophia for June. J. van Manen continues his commentary on the Tao Te King. We notice also a lecture on Karma by P. Pieters, Jun., and a full report of Mr. Leadbeater's lecture to the Amsterdam Lodge on April 12th.

The June *Sophia* has a short paper on White Lotus Day by Ramón Maynadé, and a well-chosen selection of translations.

The Theosophic Messenger for June is severely business-like, and beyond the National Committee Letter and the Questions for study has only the Enquirer for general reading.

Philadelphia for May presents us with an interesting series of translations, mainly from the French.

Theosophy in Australasia, May, has a useful summary in few words of the arguments for "The Necessity of Reincarnation," and some interesting answers to questions on Reincarnation.

The N. Z. Theosophical Magazine, May, gives us some curious experiences of some of the members, and the continuation of S. Davidson's "The Church and Modern Religious Problems;" S. Stuart answers objections to the theory of reincarnation, which seems just now the burning question with our Australasian friends. In the June number Mrs. Draffin has a suggestive story, and Mrs. Judson writes usefully on "The Making of Faculty."

Also received: *Light; Monthly Record and Animals' Guardian; Review of Reviews; L'Écho de l'Au-delà et d'Ici-bas; Suggestive Therapeutics; Star of the Magi; The Lamp; Amicitia; El Sol; Mind; The Arena; Humanity;* the first number of the new volume of *Modern Astrology*, containing the opening of the promised course on Occultism in Astrologic Study. If we may judge by this first specimen it is likely to draw the attention of many of our readers, as bringing it thoroughly into line with our own views of the universe and the origins of things. *The Ideal Review* for July has several matters which interest us, among them a paper on "The Great Awakening," by Charles Johnston, in which is treated the opening of the eyes of the Soul; Alexander Wilder is also at his best on "The Metaphysics of Matter."

We have also to acknowledge: *Theosofie en Godsdienst*, a reprint of an article from our Dutch contemporary *Theosophia;* and *The Laws of Law*, by T. Baty (Effingham Wilson, 1s.) an interesting little exemplification of the larger and more scientific way in which Law is treated by its modern exponents.

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