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ON THE WATCH-TOWER

THE rooms of the Theosophical Society in Albemarle Street were filled, on the evening of the 8th of May, with brilliant flowers and happy faces. High on the platform were piled masses of blossoms—pendant lilies, starry clematis, soft-hued azaleas, backed by great branches of pine and gorse that had been breathing the air of the New Forest but some few hours before. From the midst of the greenery, wreathed with snow-white blooms, the well-known portrait of H. P. B., with the clear, unfathomable eyes, gazed on those who had assembled to do her homage. Her old friends and pupils were there, and the younger ones, to whom she was a great teacher personally unknown, had also gathered round, and both rooms were crowded ere yet the meeting-hour had struck.

In Memory of H. P. B.

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EXTRACTS were read, as she directed, from *The Light of Asia* and the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, Mr. Mead and Mr. Keightley filling the office of readers. Then Mr. Leadbeater spoke of her Eastern work, and her Adyar home, laying stress on the power that ever radiated from

Uniter of East and West

her. Mr. Mead told of her Western work, and of the strong affection she inspired in the little band of workers who surrounded her. Mr. Keightley described the invigorating effect of the freedom and largeness of her intellectual side, of the vivifying atmosphere that breathed from her, of the reality which would not tolerate a half-true form. The last speech fell to Mrs. Annie Besant, the President of the Lodge, who spoke of her many-sided human-ness, her courage and her unswerving devotion, and of her continued interest in the Society's work.

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Children of the Wisdom

It is well that the memory of Humanity's dauntless servants should be kept green in the memories of all, for there are not too many great Souls incarnated among us in these days of hurry and confusion. We are often too small to recognise them, too narrow to welcome them, too conventional to do them fitting honour. With our eyes on the ground, we see the frayed hem of their garment and not the crown of stars that diadems their head. But what of that? The Wisdom is justified of her children. Well for us if we are sufficiently kin to them to love and reverence them, for

> Through such souls alone
> God, stooping, shews sufficient of His Light
> For us i' the dark to rise by.

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Pioneers

Nearly 140 years ago, during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, some of the humbler followers of the Wisdom were ploughing up the arid soil of Europe. For this was one of the recurring periods in which a sign is given that the great truths are never left wholly without witness, even when they seem to be totally obscured. Such a sign has lately come into our hands in the form of a book printed in 1766, bearing the Rosicrucian symbol of the Pelican feeding its young, entitled *A Lapse of Human Souls in a State of Pre-existence the only Original Sin, and the ground-work of the Gospel Dispensation*. The author is the Rev. Capel Berrows, A.M., Rector of Rossington, Nottinghamshire, and one vaguely wonders what the easy-going, fox-hunting, port-

drinking parsons of the Georgian era thought of this unlike brother. The Rev. Mr. Berrows begins his work with references to the fact that "the most learned and ingenious among the antient philosophers" believed in the pre-existence of the soul, and then quotes "passages in holy writ" in support thereof. Of these, *Job* xxxviii. 21, *Jer.* i. 5, *S. John* xvii. 5, are not usually mentioned; with regard to the first, our author complains that the English translation is bad, and should be: "Know thou that thou wast then in being, and that in number thy days are many." The quotation from *Wisdom*, viii. 20, is very apposite: "Yea, rather, being good, I came into a body undefiled." Chapter III. proves the existence of this belief among the Greek and Latin Christian Fathers, and incidentally mentions a Mr. Brocklesby, "a man of most prodigious learning," who published a book in 1706, *An Explication of the Gospel Theism and the Divinity of the Christian Religion*, etc., and who regarded this doctrine as an integral part of Christianity. We have then the names of some other modern believers in the pre-existence of souls—Dr. Henry Moore, Mr. Glanville (see his *Lux Orientalis*), Dr. Cheyne, Dr. Butler, Bishop of Durham, and the Chevalier Ramsay. Having thus laid a foundation, our reverend author proceeds to argue the question as deducible from man's sufferings, from his depravity, and from original righteousness; he considers that human souls were involved in the rebellion of the fallen angels—one guesses here that he is hinting at certain occult facts—and that this is the "original sin" from which Christ redeems men. The best part of the book is perhaps the chapter meeting the objections put forward to the doctrine of pre-existence, and incidentally the author shews his belief in the existence of the Christian Mysteries, in which was given knowledge not publicly taught. Lastly, Mr. Berrows applies this doctrine to the solution of various difficulties in the Christian scheme. It is interesting to notice that he regards repeated incarnations as a proof of God's love, giving the soul many opportunities of improvement. A useful appendix is added from *An Account of Origen and his Opinion*, printed in 1661. These light-bringers at the close of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are the manifest forerunners of the present movement, the preparers, under the

inspiration of the White Lodge, for the active propaganda of the present.

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Spiritualism in Italy

We hear from a correspondent that there is great excitement in Rome; Signor L. A. Vassalo, the editor of a leading newspaper, has given a lecture in which he has publicly declared his belief in Spiritualism. From *Il Travaso delle Idee* of the 6th of April we learn, with all the abundance of superlatives in which the modern Italian rivals the Greek of the Lower Empire, that an hour before the beginning "the grand Hall was overflowing with its audience; there was a general scrimmage at the doors and the heat was already suffocating." Making all allowances for the aforesaid superlatives, the lecture seems to have been well received and to have been worthy its reception. Speaking of Eusapia Palladino, the lecturer said that there was no occasion to deny that "in certain mysterious moments of the hypnotic sleep she had substituted for the two hands in contact with her neighbours one single hand, and had made movements with the hand thus left at liberty," for there are abundant cases of the kind recorded in spiritualistic books; but he impressed upon his audience his full conviction that such frauds were entirely insufficient to account for the phenomena observed, and gave accounts of sittings with her in which he was fully assured by his own observations that "all hypotheses of fraud or hallucination were completely excluded." The lecturer enlivened his discourse with anecdotes which produced "the most noisy hilarity," and at the conclusion was "frantically applauded, having succeeded in convincing his audience. The impression produced on the hearers who crowded together, commenting and enjoying themselves in animated discussion, was enormous. In fine, the evening was one of emotion and of great delight."

Beneath all this froth of words we may at least read that in yet another stronghold of Materialism the doctrine of a life which transcends the material and does not cease with the life of the body has been publicly set forth and not at once laughed out of court, as it would have been twenty years ago. How far its favourable reception is due to that other Greek characteristic of

the Italian mind, its perpetual readiness "either to say or hear some new thing," as Paul found it at Athens, time must show; but it will certainly help the workers of our new Theosophical province.

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THE *Christian World* remarks on the movement in Catholicism towards liberalism, quoting the remarks of Monsigneur Mignot at Toulouse on the changes undergone by central Christian dogmas. Thus the Atonement had been regarded as a ransom paid to the devil, as an acquittal of a legal debt owed by humanity, and now under new moral and humanitarian aspects. It gives also an extract from a work by an Italian priest, Padre Lapide, who regards dogmas as the human presentations of great truths. He says:

E pur si muove

> They are forms borrowed from given points of view, from given philosophies of life, applied at the time to Divine things. It is thus that we find in the various dogmatic definitions of past ages the visible trace of Jewish, of Greek, and of scholastic thought. May we not imagine an ulterior progress which will permit theologians to express them under some new form, harmonising better with a more advanced condition of the human mind, and at the same time with the eternal, immutable truth?

Thus are theosophical ideas beginning to work in Catholicism, the leaven hidden in the dough by a woman, and presently all will be leavened.

* * *

FROM various directions comes similar testimony, both in important and unimportant matters, showing how men's attitude is changing towards the world. Dr. Javal, of Paris, himself blind, alleges that in blind persons a sixth sense developes, that is latent in all, perceiving "warm and indefinite vibrations," and that the sense-organ is in the forehead. This sense is sometimes called the "sense of obstacles"—not a very illuminative name, since the perception of obstacles may be said to be the essence of all the senses. But students will recognise the seat, and will remember the asp on the Egyptian crown. Mr. Andrew Lang, again, does much to break down the barrier between orthodox and occult science; he has lately been writing on crystal-gazing and the power of visualising the thoughts of another person, and

Straws showing the Current

their actions at a distance. Verily these things are the merest fringe of occult science, but none the less is it true that "clear-seeing" is as much a fact in nature as the ordinary limited seeing, and represents merely a higher evolution of the sight-organ, at present sporadic but presently to be general. The jelly-fish with his eye-spots may, in his time, have thought that anyone who pretended to see a few yards was a rogue and a charlatan.

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MORE important—of very grave importance, indeed, scientifically—are Professor Schrön's discoveries about crystals (not crystal-gazing). Two years ago the Professor gave three lectures, one on the "Genesis of Microbes," the second on "Bioplasm, the Morphogenesis and Life of Crystals," the third on the "Organisation of Matter, Matter and Force"; these were delivered to the professors of the University of Naples, the lecturers, and the medical students of the fourth, fifth and sixth years, and he also gave demonstrations illustrating his discoveries to a picked group of seven professors, each eminent in his own line. Speaking quite generally, Professor Schrön claims to prove that all microbes produce crystals, that these crystals evolve, and show pathological changes; that the study of sixty-two inorganic salts proves that they also "in youth" are evolving tissues, and that all crystals are produced by bioplasm. Hence the division between inorganic and organic vanishes. We have only received the syllabus of these important lectures—and it may be remembered that we referred to them at the time of their delivery—but we hope shortly to place before our readers a fuller statement on the subject.

Not a Straw

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STUDENTS of the higher science have been specially interested in the "common ancestor" theory of certain of the highest apes and man, ever since H. P. Blavatsky astonished an incredulous age by the brilliant suggestion that these anthropoids were the descendants of man by crossing with apes proper. Since then some bold scientific speculators have put forward the theory that the anthropoids' descent from man is the best explanation of

The Consanguinity of the Anthropoids and Man

the observed facts, and that there is no need of the "common ancestor" supposition. That this intimate blood relationship between men and the higher apes is not merely a theoretical necessity, but is now a recognised fact of direct experimental science, unhampered by the unsatisfactory invention of a series of "missing links," is shown by the following.

In the December number of *The American Naturalist*, Dr. H. W. Rand has given an extended abstract of Friedenthal's experimental proof of this blood-relationship. ("Ueber einem experimentellem Nachweis von Blutverwandschaft." *Archiv. für Anatomie und Physiologie*, Physiologische Abtheilung, Hefte 5 u. 6, 1900.)

The effect of human serum was tried upon the blood of six species of apes . . . at the Berlin Zoological Garden. In all cases the human serum dissolved the ape corpuscles. Among the true anthropoid apes is found blood which is physiologically equivalent to that of man, as was proved by experiments made with an orang-outang, a gibbon, and a ten-year-old chimpanzee, just as the blood of such widely separated races as the negro and the white is physiologically equivalent. The writer concludes that such experiments justify the placing of man and the anthropoid apes together in the same family, or at least in the same sub-order, rather than isolating man in a sub-order of primates, co-ordinate with the sub-orders of the platyrrhines and catarrhines.

See also *The Zoologist*, 4th Series, vol. v., no. 61, Jan. 15th, 1902. The justification of H. P. B. by science goes on apace.

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Dreams and Thoughts

MANY of our readers have read with pleasure the works of Mr. Edward Carpenter, especially his *Towards Democracy*, *Civilization; its Cure and Cause*, and *From Adam's Peak to Elephanta*, and have recognised in him a man in many things of like thought with themselves. They may therefore be pleased to read the following account of a lecture delivered by him under the auspices of our Sheffield Lodge, at the Cutlers' Hall, to a large audience, as reported in *The Sheffield Daily Telegraph*:

Mr. Carpenter said that in dreams we noticed the same kinds of thoughts and images floating through our minds as in ordinary waking thoughts, only they were much more incoherent, much more scrappy, and often much more grotesque. Some people very rationally supposed that that was partly because in sleep the higher part of the mind, the more reasoning part, was

quiescent, and therefore could not regulate the images which arose, as it did in our waking hours. But the cause which set the images moving was just the same in dreams as in waking hours. They were suggested by feelings, desires, emotions in the mind. Insufficient covering during sleep would lead to a dream of snowstorms, or something of that character. As to the quiescence of the reasoning faculty in dreams, he quoted a story of a literary man who dreamt what he believed to be a superb piece of poetry. Waking, he scribbled it down, and then went to sleep again. In the morning, when he read the piece which he expected would make him immortal, he found these words: "Walker with one eye, Walker with two; Something to live for And nothing to do." (Laughter.) Metre and rhythm had been attained, but the thought was not of a high class. In waking hours a crowd of incoherent images constantly arose in the mind, but nature around called us back immediately to the actual facts of life. The reality of dream images was accounted for by the fact that there was nothing to interfere with them.

He had not had any great experience of spiritualism, but from what he had heard and read he had no practical doubt that, under certain circumstances, when people called mediums were in a state of trance, images appeared which became visible to other people. A dream image was more vivid than a waking image, and as a trance was a much deeper sleep, its images would be more powerful. He thought there was very little doubt about that part of the ghost theory relating to wraiths—the images of persons which, just at the moment of their death, appeared to some distant relative or friend. Death was a still deeper thing than a trance, and at the very moment of death a person might throw out his image so that it should impinge upon another person who was in sympathy with it at the time.

As houses, streets, tramcars were the outcomes of people's thoughts, might not the wonderful world of nature be the expressions and images of the thoughts of some other being or beings? What a marvellous thing was writing. The fact that the dots and scratches on a piece of paper conveyed a meaning was most mysterious to the primitive mind of a savage, and he thought it equally possible that we were in such a position with regard to the dots and scratches on the great face of Nature. It was a question of degree. The more we studied the lower animals the more we saw that their movements were full of meaning and intelligence. It did not seem impossible that the wonderful panorama of Nature was the scene of myriad thoughts and feelings, in some degree at any rate comparable with those which sprang up in our minds, though possibly of a much vaster character and belonging to other planes of existence. Did it not seem that there was a vast unity underlying all things, and that all of them in the end, deep down, must have a common purpose and object of existence? And in that thought there was rest. (Applause.)

DID JESUS LIVE 100 YEARS B.C.?

THE innumerable problems which arise on every side to confront the dogged perseverer in theosophic studies are all, in their own spheres and seasons, of such immense importance, that it would be somewhat presumptuous for a single student to select one such problem out of the many, and to declare that it pressed more than the rest for immediate solution. To each of us, no doubt, at every moment of our evolution, some special problem seems more insistently to press than the rest, and all others for the time being appear to be of secondary importance; but the moment passes and another arises to take its place, and with it appears some new riddle, or an old one in a new guise.

There happens, however, for the moment to be a problem which, though not as yet even heard of by the general public, is, nevertheless, of great interest to many students of Theosophy, and to me, therefore, this problem seems to press, not for solution—for of that I have no immediate hopes—but for a more satisfactory definition than has been as yet accorded to it.

The problem I am about to attempt more clearly to define is not a metaphysical riddle, not a spiritual enigma, not some moral puzzle (though all of these factors may be made to inhere in it), but a problem of physical fact, well within the middle distance of what is called the historic period. It is none the less on this account of immense importance and interest generally, and especially to thoughtful students of "origins," for it raises no less a question than that of the error in the date of the life of the Founder of Christianity; and that, too, not by the comparatively narrow margin of some seven or eight years (as many have already argued on the sole basis of generally accepted traditional *data*), but by no less a difference than the (in such a connection) enormous time-gulf of a full century. Briefly, the

problem may be popularly summed up in the startling and apparently ludicrous question: Did Jesus live 100 years B.C.?

Now, had all such questioning been confined to a small circle of first-hand investigators of the hidden side of things, or, if we may say so, of the noumena of things historic underlying the blurred records of phenomena handed down to us by tradition, there would be no necessity for the present series of papers; but of late years very positive statements on this matter, based on such methods of research, have been printed and circulated among the general public; and what, in the opinion of the writer, makes the matter even more pressing, is that these statements are being readily accepted by ever-growing numbers. Now, it goes without saying, that the majority of those who have accepted such statements have done so either for subjective reasons satisfactory to themselves, or from some inner feeling or impression which they have not been at pains to analyse. The state of affairs, then, seems clearly to demand, that as they have heard a little of the matter, they should now hear more, and that the question should be taken out of the primitive crudeness of a choice between two sets of mutually contradictory assertions, and advanced a stage into the subtler regions of critical research.

And, lest the reader should start with too great expectations, and be disappointed in the sequel, let me again preface this enquiry by repeating that it is far beyond my power (and I may, I believe, safely add, beyond the ability of any other normally endowed student of history and tradition) to decide this question in any absolute fashion, least of all to answer with an emphatic Yes; indeed, most minds trained in historic research, even the most cautious, will be strongly inclined to sum up the probabilities of the accessible evidence as pointing to a distinct negative, while the vast majority of the general public will of course decide the problem off hand, not only with an angry No, but with the further reflection that the very raising of the question betokens a seriously disordered mind.

It is not, then, with any hopes of definitely solving the problem that these articles are undertaken, but rather with the object of pointing out the difficulties which have to be surmounted by an unprejudiced historian, before an even qualified

recognition can be given to such a revolutionary proposition in the domain of Christian origins; and this with the main intention of trying to indicate what appears to me to be the sane attitude of mind with regard to similar problems, which those of us who have had some experience of the possibilities of so-called occult research, but who have not the ability to study such matters at first-hand, should endeavour to hold.

In what I shall set forth in these articles, then, I hope most honestly to endeavour to treat the matter without prejudice, save for this general prepossession that I consider it saner for the only normally endowed individual to hold the mind in suspense over all categorical statements, by whomsoever made, than to believe either on the one hand without investigation, or on the other, even after long study, in the consequent despair of arriving at any real bed-rock of facts in the unsubstantial material commonly believed in as history, and thus in either case to crystallise one's mind anew into some historic form, on lines of evidence concerning the nature of which we are as yet almost entirely ignorant.

And, first of all, let me further set forth very briefly some of the considerations which render it impossible for me to assume either a decidedly negative, or even a purely agnostic, attitude with regard to possibilities of research other than those open to normal ability and industry; for if we would honestly endeavour, in any fashion really satisfactory to ourselves, to interpret the observed phenomena of our lives, we are compelled by a necessity greater than ourselves to take into consideration *all* the facts of at least our personal experience, no matter how sceptical we may be as to the validity of the experiences of others, or how critical we may be concerning our own. On the other hand, we most freely admit that those who have not had experiences similar to our own, are quite justified in assuming an agnostic attitude with regard to our declarations, but we doubt that it can be considered the nature of a truly scientific mind to deny *à priori* the possibility of our experience, or merely contemptuously to dismiss the matter without any attempt at investigation.

It has been my good fortune—for so I regard it—to know a

number of people who have their subtler senses, to a greater or less degree, more fully developed than is normally the case, and also to be intimate with a few whose power of response to extra-normal ranges of impression, vibration, or stimulation (or whatever may be the more correct term), may be said to be, as far as my experience goes, highly developed. These latter are my personal friends, whom I have known for many years, and with whom I have been most closely associated. From long knowledge of their characters, often under very trying circumstances, I have no reason to believe they are trying to deceive me, and every reason to believe in their good faith. They certainly would have nothing to gain by practising, if it were possible, any concerted imposition upon me, and everything to lose. For, on the one hand, my devotion to the studies I pursue, and the work upon which I am engaged, is entirely independent of individuals and their pronouncements, and, on the other, my feeling of responsibility to humanity in general is such, that I should not have the slightest hesitation in openly proclaiming a fraud, were I to discover any attempt at it, especially in matters which I hold to be more than ordinarily sacred for all who profess to be lovers of truth and labourers for our common welfare. Nor again is there any question here of their trying to influence some prospective "follower," either of themselves, or of some particular sect, for we are more or less contemporaries in similar studies, and one of our common ideals is the desirability of breaking down the boundary walls of sectarianism.

Now, this handful of friends of mine who are endowed in this special fashion, are unanimous in declaring that Jeschu, the historical Jesus, lived a century before the traditional date. They, one and all, claim that, if they turn their attention to the matter, they can see the events of those far-off days passing before their mind's eye, or rather that for the time being they seem to be in the midst of them, even as we ordinarily observe events in actual life. They state that not only do their individual researches as to this date work out to one and the same result, but that also when several of them have worked together, checking one another, the result has been still the same.

Familiar as I am with the hypotheses of "collective hallucination," "honest self-deception," and "subjectivism" of all kinds, I have been unable to satisfy myself that any one of these, or any combination of them, will satisfactorily explain the matter. For instance, even granting that certain of the Jewish Jesus stories (which when eliminated from the rest seem to confirm the 100 B.C. date) may have been previously known to some of my colleagues, and that it might be reasonably supposed that this curious tradition had so fascinated their imagination as to become the determining factor in what might be called their subjective dramatising faculty—there are two considerations which, in my opinion, based on my own knowledge and experience, considerably weaken the strength of this sceptical and otherwise apparently reasonable supposition.

First, the general consideration that my friends differ widely from each other in temperament; most are of different nationalities, and all vary considerably in their objective knowledge of Christian origins, and in their special views of external Christianity. Moreover—though they all sincerely endeavour to be impartial on so important a matter, seeing that it touches the life of a Master for whom they have in a very real sense the deepest reverence—while some of them do not happen to be special followers of that particular Teacher, others, on the contrary, are specially attracted by that way, and might, therefore, be naturally expected to counteract in the interest of received tradition any tendency to apparent extravagance, which was not justified by repeated subjective experiences of such a nature as to outweigh their objective training and natural preconceptions.

Second, the very special consideration, that I have had the opportunity on many occasions of testing the accuracy of some of my colleagues with regard to either statements of a similar nature, or of a more personal character. And lest my evidence on this point should be too hastily put out of court by some impatient reader, let me briefly refer to the nature of such verification.

But before doing so, it would be as well to have it understood that the method of investigation to which I am referring, does not bring into consideration any question of trance, either

self-induced, or mesmerically or hypnotically effected. As far as I can judge, my colleagues are to all outward seeming in quite their normal state. They go through no outward ceremonies, or internal ones for that matter, nor even any outward preparation but that of assuming a comfortable position; moreover, they not only describe, as each normally has the power of description, what is passing before their inner vision in precisely the same fashion as one would describe some objective scene, but they are frequently as surprised as their auditors that the scenes or events they are attempting to explain are not at all as they expected to see them, and remark on them as critically, and frequently as sceptically, as those who cannot "see" for themselves, but whose knowledge of the subject from objective study may be greater than theirs.

Now, although it is true that in the majority of cases I have not been able to verify their statements, and doubt whether it will ever be possible to do so owing to the lack of objective material, nevertheless, in a number of instances, few when compared with the mass of statements made, but numerous enough in themselves, I have been able to do so. It can, of course, be argued, as has been done in somewhat similar cases, that all of this is merely the bringing into subjective objectivity the imaginative dramatisation of facts which have been normally heard or read, or even momentarily glanced at, and which have sunk beneath the threshold of consciousness, either of that of the seers themselves or of one or other of their auditors, or even some permutation or combination of these. But such an explanation seems somewhat feeble to one who, like myself, has taken down laboriously dictated passages from MSS., described, for instance, as written in archaic Greek uncials—MSS., the contents of which, as far as I am aware, are not known to exist—passages laboriously dictated letter by letter, by a friend whose knowledge of the language extended hardly beyond the alphabet. Frequently gaps had to be left for certain forms of letters, with which not only my colleague, but also myself, were previously entirely unacquainted; these gaps had to be filled up afterwards, when the matter was transcribed and broken up into words and sentences, which turned out to be in good construable Greek, the

original or copy of which, I am as sure as I can be of anything, neither my colleague nor myself had ever seen physically. Moreover, I have had dates and information given by these methods which I could only verify afterwards by long and patient research, and which, I am convinced, no one but an exceedingly widely read scholar of classical antiquity could have come across.

This briefly is the nature of some of the facts of my personal experience in this connection, and while others who have not had such experience may permissibly put it aside, I am unable to do so; and not only am I unable to do so personally, but I further consider it more honest to my readers to admit them to my privacy in this respect, in order that they may be in a better position to estimate the strength or weakness of my preconceptions or prejudices in the treatment of the exceedingly interesting problem which we are about to consider.

It will thus be seen at the outset that I am unable *à priori* to refuse any validity to these so-called occult methods of research; the ghost of my repeated experience rises up before me and refuses to be laid by an impatient "pshaw." But it by no means follows that, because in some instances I have been enabled to verify the truth of my colleagues' statements, I am therefore justified in accepting the remainder on trust. Of their good faith I have no question, but of the nature of the *modus* of their "seeing" I am in almost complete ignorance. That it is of a more subtle nature than ordinary sight, or memory, or even imagination, I am very well assured; but that there should be entrusted to an apparently favoured few, and that, too, almost suddenly, a means of inerrant knowledge which reduces the results of the unwearied toil of the most laborious scholars and historians to the most beggarly proportions, I am not quite prepared at present to accept. It would rather seem more scientific to suppose that in exact proportion to the startling degree of accuracy that may at times be attained by these subtle methods of research, the errors that may arise can be equally appalling.

And, indeed, this is borne out not only by the perusal of the little studied, but enormous, literature on such subjects, both of antiquity and of the present day, but also by the repeated declara-

tions of those of my colleagues themselves who have endeavoured to fit themselves for a truly scientific use of such faculties. They all declare that their great aim is to eliminate as far as possible the personal factor; for if, so to say, the glass of their mind-stuff, through which they had to see, is not most accurately polished and adjusted, the things seen are all blurred, or distorted into the most fantastic shapes. This "glass" is in itself of a most subtle nature, most plastic and protean; it changes with every desire, with every hope and fear, with every prejudice and prepossession, with every love and hate.

Such factors, then, are not unthought of by my colleagues; rather are they most carefully considered. But this being so, it is plain that it is very difficult to discover a sure criterion of accuracy in such subtle research, even for the practised seer, or seeress, who is willing to submit himself to the strictest discipline; while for those of us who have not developed these distinct inner senses, but who desire eventually to arrive at some certain criterion of truth, and who further believe that this is a thing beyond all sensation, we must be content to develop our critical faculties on the material accessible to us, and do all we can with it before we abandon the subject to "revelation."

Nor is this latter attitude of mind irreligious; for, if we are in any way right in our belief, we hold that the workman is only expected to work with his own tools. To use in an expanded sense a phrase of the *Gîtâ*, there should be no "confusion of castes"; or to employ the language of one of the Gospel parables, a man should lay out the "talent" entrusted to him to the best advantage, and if he do this, no more for the moment, we may believe, is expected of him. We have all, each in our own way, to labour for the common good; but a workman whose trade is that of objective historical research is rarely trusted with the tools of seership as well, while the seer presumably is not expected to devote his life to historical criticism. Doubtless there may be some who are entrusted with two or more talents of different natures, but so far we have not as yet in our own times come across the desirable blend of a competent seer and a historical critic.

We must, then, each of us in his own way, work together for

righteousness; hoping that if in the present we employ our single talents rightly, and prove ourselves profitable servants, we may in the future become masters of two or even more "cities," and thus (to adapt the wording of a famous agraphon) having proved ourselves trustworthy in the "lesser" be accorded the opportunity of showing ourselves faithful in the "greater (mysteries)."

Having, then, prefaced our enquiry by these brief remarks on the nature of the methods of research employed by those whose statements have lately brought this question into prominence in certain circles, we proceed to enumerate the various deposits of objective material which have to be surveyed and analysed, before a mind accustomed to historical study and the weighing of evidence can feel in a position to estimate even approximately the comparative values of the various traditions.

We have, then, in the first place to consider the apparently unbroken and consistent Christian tradition (that Jesus was born in the reign of Herod and was put to death under Pontius Pilate), and further to glance at the material from Pagan sources claimed to substantiate this tradition; and in the second to acquaint ourselves with the Talmud Jeschu stories which purport to preserve traditions of the life and date of Jeschu (one of these traditions confirming the 100 years B.C.), but totally at variance on every point with the Christian account; and further to investigate the mediæval Jewish Jesus legends, based for the most part on Talmudic sources, but also in one form retaining the Christian element of the Herod date. In the second part of our subject, moreover, it will be necessary to preface the enquiry by some consideration of the origin, growth, history, and nature of the Talmud itself.

That there are many better equipped and more competent than myself to discuss these difficult subjects, no one is more keenly aware than I am. But seeing that there are no books on the subject readily accessible to the general reader, I may be excused for coming forward, not with the pretension of discovering any facts previously unknown to specialists, but with the very modest ambition of indicating some of the outlines of the question for those who cannot find the information for themselves,

and of pointing to a few of the difficulties which confront a student of the labours of specialists, in the hope that some greater mind may at no distant date be induced to throw further light on the matter.

Finally, seeing that in the treatment of the Jewish Jeschu stories, many things exceedingly distasteful to lovers of Jesus will have to be referred to, and that generally, in the whole enquiry, many points involved in the most violent controversy will have to be considered, let me say that I would most gladly have avoided them if it were possible. But a greater necessity than personal likes or dislikes compels the setting forth of the whole matter as it is found. We are told that the truth alone shall make us free; and the love of it compels us sometimes to deal with most distasteful matters. Few things can be more unpleasing than to be even the indirect means of giving pain to the sincere lovers of a great Teacher, but the necessities of the enquiry into the question: Did Jesus live 100 years B.C.? primarily involves a discussion of the Jewish Jeschu stories, and it is therefore impossible to omit them.

G. R. S. MEAD.

"HIS WAYS PAST FINDING OUT"

[THE following is the translation of a hymn, written by a blind poet, who was, like many another, puzzled by the clashing of various rules given in the Scriptures of his faith with the acts of revered persons therein set down. The people named are well-known characters in India. Similar difficulties are met with in the Jewish and other sacred books.]

LORD of Pity! Thy ways are not seen!
From good deed Thou drawest riches, and from riches sins unclean.
Lord of Pity! Thy ways are not seen!

Scripture sayeth, he that giveth but one cow to help the poor,
Crossing death, his way he wendeth straight unto high heaven's door;
Yet King Nṛiga cows ten thousand gave to Brâhmans every day,
And for one small fault of judgment in deep hell for ages lay.
Lord of Pity! we see not Thy way!

Son that breaks the word of father stands attaint of grievous sin;
Yet when young Prahlâda doth it, he doth Thy approval win,
And that breach, slaying his father, Lion-man! Thou helpest in!
Lord of Pity! Thy ways are not seen!

Saints and Sages, in the Vedas, the high rites of Yajña sing,
Yet when, helped by holy Ṛiṣhis, Bali, wisest Titan-king,
Holds them, into deep Pâtâla, him Thou dost for ages fling.
Lord of Pity! what shall solace to Thy blindest singer bring?

AN ANCIENT CORRESPONDENCE ON VEGETARIANISM

THE April number of the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* contains the text and translation (by the Rev. D. S. Margoliouth) of an ancient (eleventh century) correspondence on vegetarianism, between a somewhat boastful but very pious poet and rigid ascetic of Syria, Abu'l-'Alā, and a Hibat Allah of Cairo, a serious common-sense philosopher of the period. The poet does not come very well out of the argument, but sticks to his preference in diet. Hibat Allah is, on his side, a courteous gentleman, and they part friends. Some of Hibat Allah's final letter may be of interest to our readers. He writes:

"I would have you know that I traversed the earth from the furthest part of my country to Egypt, and everywhere found people divided into two classes. There are the fanatical believers who are so enchanted with their religion, that if their religious records contained the statement that an elephant flew, or a camel laid an egg, they would believe it implicitly. They would regard one who thought otherwise as a heretic and a fool, who might be neglected. With such persons as these reason is at a discount. It is difficult to awake such a man to the fact that the light of reason must have sparkled from the religion which he professes ere its collar could have been placed on the neck or its bracelet on the wrist. How, then, can it be right to give the reason control at the first and to proceed to dethrone it?

"When my fortune brought me to Syria, and I heard of your eminence as a scholar and savant, I found that on that matter opinions were agreed and the evidence established irrefragably. But I found that men were divided about your religious position, and distraught about it, each speaker taking a view of his own. . . . I defended you, . . . saying that your well-known and confirmed asceticism cleared you of all suspicion. I was

convinced that you must have some esoteric religious knowledge, which you kept concealed from the rest of mankind. . . And so when I heard your verse, 'Are thy faith and thy understanding ailing? Come to me that thou mayest learn the true account of the matter,' . . . I approached you as Moses approached the mountain, hoping to get a light. . . . So I dropped in my bucket in the form of my question about a trifle, thus ascending from my own low level to one higher, and rising from my own littleness to one who was great. . . .

"Then I asked you why you abstained from meat, and you replied that you disliked hurting animals and causing them pain. I rebutted your plea, after you had dilated on it, by observing that if God empowers one animal to eat another, though He knows best what is wise and is most merciful to His creatures, you need not be more just and merciful to them than their Lord and Creator. You then changed your ground, and alleged your inability to procure animal food, because of the whole sum which came to you in the year the greater part went to your attendant, and only a little remained to yourself. This, too, I rebutted by pointing to a liberal source, one of those who never taunt those whom they benefit with their favours or insult them, who would provide you with an ample supply of the daintiest food and the most luxurious stores. This, too, you declined, declaring in your second letter that you disliked it, and would not have it, and could not abandon the vegetarianism which you had so long maintained. . . .

"Next you say that God has secrets that only the saints understand. It is just that secret about which we are hovering, and round the door of him who knows it that we are making circuit. And when we, arguing from your verse, suppose that you do possess it, seeing that you profess that your own religion and intellect are sound, whereas those of other men are ailing, you declare that you have no counsel to give! Assuredly in this matter your prose contradicts your verse and your verse your prose. So what is to be done?

"Then you say that the sense of the verse 'Are thy understanding and thy faith,' etc., is given by the following line of your poem, 'Then eat not wrongfully what the water produces,

nor eat the meat of beasts newly slain,' etc. Clearly, then, the sickness of faith and understanding must be due to eating meat and drinking milk and consuming honey, so that soundness of both is to be acquired by abandoning these practices. You must know that soundness of faith and understanding is not produced thereby. Hence the second verse cannot annul the first, so as to make the substance of your assertion that men require to be rendered sound in understanding and faith an exhortation to them not to eat meat or drink milk!

"Next you observe that the creatures of the sea dislike being brought on dry land, and that the reason cannot find fault with abstention from their flesh, though it be lawful for food, for religious men at all times abandon the use of certain things that are lawful for them. Now there is no animal on sea or land that is more honourable than man, the living, the intelligent. He dislikes death, yet he dies. He dislikes being eaten, yet the worms eat him in his grave. If this proceed from some wise principle, then what you say about the sea-animals belongs precisely to the same field; but if it be a cause of deflexion from wisdom, it is absurd that my Maker should be a fool, and I, His creature, be wise. . . . .

"When you complain of your weakness and difficulty of moving, and say you have no strength left to ask or answer questions, whether weak or strong you are still one of the glories of the age, and one whose praises travellers carry with them everywhere. However much fate may have wronged you, you have wronged yourself by depriving yourself of the pleasures of the world. And if you hope for pleasures which will compensate for them, pleasures of a better and more lasting sort, then you will have made no bad bargain, and the verse of yours which has been discussed will have been justified, though you may have incurred the reproach of stinginess in rejecting requests for aid and refusing those who ask you. If, on the other hand, you are torturing yourself without a clear reason, as you now assert, being one of the many who 'idly dispute' and founder in bewilderment, then you have wasted your life and wronged yourself. You will also in the verse that has been quoted have made an assertion which you cannot verify."

CARDINAL NICHOLAS OF CUSA.*

A CERTAIN additional interest may perhaps attach itself in the minds of our readers to the name of Cardinal Nicolaus von Kues, or Nicholas of Cusa, the next in order among the mediæval mystics of Germany to engage our attention, from the fact that H. P. B. speaks of him as an "Adept" (*Secret Doctrine*, vol. iii., p. 367), and though the Editor of that volume remarks in a footnote that this term is "very loosely used by H. P. B.," and appears to mean here an uninitiated disciple, yet personally I remember H. P. B. telling some of us that Nicholas of Cusa was an initiated Adept who, in that particular birth, was to a certain extent resting and, so to say, taking things easy. However that may be, he was certainly a very remarkable man, and we shall find, I think, that Dr. Steiner's treatment of his writings will help to throw light upon that special conception of the mystic path which Dr. Steiner himself has formed, the elucidation of which forms the guiding thread running through the present series of articles.

Nicholas of Cusa, then, was born near Trèves in 1401, and according to some writers, H. P. B. included, was the son of a poor boatman, and undoubtedly grew up to become one of the most learned men of his time. In mathematics he was remarkable, in astronomy he anticipated nearly all the discoveries and views of Copernicus, frankly enunciating the doctrine that the Earth is a body moving in space, while even the famous Tycho Brahé, a hundred years later, still clung to the opposite conception.

Now, this same Nicholas of Cusa, who had thus not merely mastered all the knowledge of his time, but had also extended it by original work, possessed in addition, to no small degree, the power of awakening this knowledge into inner life, so that it not

* Freely rendered on the lines of one of Dr. Rudolf Steiner's addresses to the Berlin Theosophical Society. See review in February number, also articles "Meister Eckhart" and "Friends of God" in the March and April numbers.

alone renders more intelligible the external world, but also serves as a conductor, so to speak, for that spiritual life in man which, from the inmost depths of his soul, he needs must long after. If we compare Nicholas with such spirits as Eckhart or Tauler, we obtain a remarkable result. Nicholas is the scientific thinker, striving to lift himself from research about things of the world on to the level of higher perception, while Eckhart and Tauler are faithful believers, seeking the higher life from the basis of what their religion teaches them. Eventually, Nicholas arrives at the same inner life as Meister Eckhart; but the inner life of the former has a rich store of knowledge as its content.

The full significance of this difference becomes clear when we reflect that for the student of science the danger lies very near at hand of misunderstanding the scope of that species of knowing which enlightens us regarding the various special departments of knowledge. He can very readily be misled into believing that there really is only one single kind or mode of knowledge; and then he will either over or under-rate this knowledge which leads us to the goal in the various special sciences. In the one case he will approach the subject-matter of the highest spiritual life as he would a problem in physics, and proceed to deal with it by means of concepts such as he would apply to gravitation or electricity. Thus, according as he believes himself to be more or less enlightened, the world will appear to him as a blindly working machine, or an organism, or as the teleological structure of a personal God; perhaps even as a form which is ruled and pervaded by a more or less clearly conceived "World-soul." In the other alternative, he notes that the knowing, of which alone he has any experience, is adapted only to the things of the sense-world; and then he will become a sceptic, saying to himself: We can know nothing about things which lie beyond the world of the senses. Our knowledge has a limit. For the needs of the higher life we have no choice but to throw ourselves blindly into the arms of Faith untouched by knowledge. And for a learned theologian like Nicholas of Cusa, this second danger lay peculiarly near at hand as he had been trained up in scholasticism, which, however, in reality proved an assistance to him. But we shall best understand the Cardinal, who naturally had to write and speak

with due regard to orthodoxy, if we go rather beyond the point at which he appears to stop and look back, as it were, upon what his actual attitude implies.

The most significant thought in Nicholas' mental life is that of "learned ignorance." By this he means a form of knowing which occupies a higher level as against ordinary knowledge. In the lower sense, knowledge is the grasping of an object by the mind.* The most important characteristic of this form of knowing is that it gives us light about something outside of the mind, and the mind, therefore, in thus knowing, is directed upon something different from itself; or otherwise stated, the mind is concerned with things *thought of as outside itself*. Now what the mind developes *in itself* about things is the *being* of those things. The things are mind. We see the mind (Geist) so far only through the sensible encasement. What lies outside the mind is only this sensible encasement; the being of the things enters into the mind. If then the mind turns its attention to this being, which is of like nature with itself, then it can no longer talk of knowing, for it is not looking at anything outside of itself, but is looking at a thing which is part of itself; is indeed looking at itself. The mind no longer knows; it looks directly upon itself. It is no longer concerned with a "knowing," but with a "not-knowing." No longer does the man *grasp* (conceive) something through the mind; he "beholds, without conceiving" his own life. This highest stage of knowing is, by comparison with the lower stages, a "not-knowing."

But it is obvious that the essential being of things can only be reached through this stage of knowing; and thus Nicholas of Cusa in speaking of his "learned ignorance" or "learned not-knowing," is really speaking of nothing other than of knowing, come to a new birth, as an inner experience. He tells us himself, how he came to this inner experience. "I made many efforts," he says, "to unite the ideas of God and the world, of Christ and the Church, into a single root-idea; but nothing satisfied me

* The term used here by Dr. Steiner is "Geist," which in this connection appears to mean the "mind," but possibly "consciousness" might also express his meaning, or even "spirit." This word "Geist" in German is very apt to cause misunderstanding, and I am not quite certain what exactly Dr. Steiner means to imply by its use here.

until at last on my way back from Greece by sea, my mind's vision, as if by an illumination from above, soared up to that perception in which God appeared to me as the supreme unity of all contradictions."

To a certain extent this illumination was due to the influence of his predecessors, notably the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite, with which his scholastic studies had brought him into touch through Scotus Erigena. And the same influence is also traceable in Eckhart and Tauler, as well as in the greatest of the schoolmen, St. Thomas Aquinas.

We thus see that, from Nicholas of Cusa's point of view, there can be no question of there being only *one* kind or mode of knowing. On the contrary, for him knowing clearly divides itself into two, first into such knowing as mediates our acquaintance with external objects, and second into such as is itself the object of which one gains knowledge. The first mode of knowing is dominant in the sciences, which teach us about the things and occurrences of the outer world; the second is in us when we ourselves *live* in the knowledge we have acquired. This second kind of knowing grows out of the first. Now, however, it is still one and the same world with which both these modes of knowing are concerned; and it is one and the self-same man who is active in both. Hence the question inevitably arises, whence it comes that one and the self-same man developes two different kinds of knowledge of one and the same world?

The answer may be thus outlined. In the first place, man lives as a separated (individual) being amidst other separated beings. In addition to the effects which the other beings produce on each other, there arises in his case the (lower) knowledge. Through his senses he receives impressions from other beings, and works up these impressions with his inner mental powers. He then turns his mental gaze away from external things and himself beholds his own activity. In so doing self-knowledge arises in him. But so long as he remains on this level of self-knowledge, he does not, in the true sense of the word, behold himself. He can still believe that some hidden being is active within him, whose manifestations and effects are *only* that which appears to him to be *his own* activities. But

now the moment may come in which, through an incontrovertible inner experience, it becomes clear to the man that he experiences in what he perceives or feels within himself, not the *manifestation* or *effect* of any hidden power or being, but *this very being itself* in its most essential and intimate form. Then he can say to himself: In a certain way I find all other things ready given, and I myself, standing apart from and outside of them, add to them whatever the mind (Geist) has to tell about them. But what I thus creatively add to the things in myself, therein do I myself live; that is myself, my very own being. But what is that which speaks there in the depths of my mind (Geist)? It is the knowledge which I have acquired of the things of the world. But in this knowledge there speaks no longer an effect, a manifestation; that which speaks expresses itself wholly, holding back nothing of what it contains. But I have acquired this knowledge of things and of myself, as one thing among other things. From out my own being I speak myself, and the things too speak. Thus, in truth, I am giving utterance no longer only to my own being; I am also giving utterance to the being of things themselves. My "I" is the form, the organ in which the things express themselves about themselves. I have gained the experience that in myself I experience my own essential being; and this experience expands itself in me to the further one that in myself and through myself the All-Being Itself expresses Itself, or in other words, knows Itself. I can now no longer feel myself as a thing among other things; I can now only feel myself as a form in which the All-Being lives out Its own life.

It is thus only natural that one and the same man should have two modes of knowing. Judging by the facts of the senses, he is a thing among other things, and, in so far as he is that, he gains for himself a knowledge of these things; but at any moment he can acquire the higher experience that he is really the form or organ in which the All realises Itself. Then man transforms himself from a thing among other things into a form of the All-Being—and along with himself, the knowledge of things transforms itself into the expression of the very being of things. But as a matter of fact this transformation can only be accomplished through man. That which is mediated in the

higher knowledge does not exist as long as this higher knowledge itself is not present. Man becomes only a *real* being in the creation of this higher knowledge; and only through man's higher knowledge can things also bring their being forth into real existence.

If, therefore, we demand that man shall add nothing to things through his inner knowledge, but merely give expression to whatever already exists in the things outside himself, that would really amount to a complete abnegation of all higher knowledge. From the fact that man, in respect of his sensible life, is merely one thing among others, and that he only attains to the higher knowledge when he himself accomplishes with himself as a being of the senses the transformation into a higher being, it follows that he can never replace the one kind of knowledge by the other. His spiritual life consists, on the contrary, in a ceaseless oscillation between these two poles of knowledge—between *knowing* and *seeing*. If he shuts himself off from the *seeing*, he abandons the real being of things; if he seeks to shut himself off from sense-perception, he would shut out from himself the things whose being he seeks to know. It is these very same things which reveal themselves alike in the lower *knowing* and the higher *seeing;* only in the one case they reveal themselves according to their outer appearance; in the other according to their inner being. Thus it is not due to the things themselves that, at a certain stage, they appear only as external things; but their doing so is due to the fact that man must first of all raise himself to the level upon which the things cease to be external and outside.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

(TO BE CONCLUDED)

THE CEREMONIAL OF THE MASS

Too many men to-day, who are unable to raise themselves, refuse to use the staircase; forgetting that until the will is developed the lower forms are necessary, if the man is to rise at all.—*Path of Discipleship*, p. 97.

THE terms in the King's Declaration regarding the "Sacrifice of the Mass" must remain for the Protestant public a true description of this "adorable mystery," but for one explanation—that offered by the occultist.

Without it the *un*rational faith of the devout Catholic cannot be justified, and the non-Catholic would be correct when he calls that faith *ir*rational, "superstitious and idolatrous."

Rites are vehicles of energies, says the occultist. All outward ceremonial is designed to lessen the hold of the body upon the soul; to subtilise the nervous sensibilities; to quicken the response to the higher orders of vibrations; to turn the stream of human emotion to heavenly things by all the harmonious adjuncts that ages of culture have collected; and by the interplay and interlacing of all the fine arts to bring the senses into the service of the soul.

It is easy to say, as the Quaker says: "Oh, I go straight to God; I do not like forms and ceremonies;" but are there not some who do not respond to the appeal of beautiful ritual because their own vehicles are blunted, or perhaps quite unevolved, and do not respond on all the planes because they cannot?

Ritual instructs the mind, says the priest, and there are few who could follow the whole ceremonial of a Mass without being taught something. The ceremony is an open book; some may think it is over-illustrated and often crudely so, but it is designed for the children of men at all ages, and it may give food for thought to the older souls as well as to the youngest.

Surely the Sacred Heart which still beats behind the Catholic Churches knew something of the needs of His European children

when He devised a form of worship which was to retain its attractiveness for close upon 2,000 years?

If we take a book like Mrs. Besant's *Esoteric Christianity*, describing the sacraments from the occult standpoint, we find it, as it were, opening to us a Pandora box of ancient gems. Gems of gracious customs prompted by the instincts of centuries of true and deep devotion, clustering round the supreme sacrament. And with this point of view following a High Mass in either the Greek or the Roman Church in detail, we are startled to find proof after proof as of some mighty Hand working behind this gorgeous veil, some mighty Mind controlling the instincts of the faithful, though purblind, servants who obey, yet cannot reason out the necessity of the rites they feel compelled to guard in their smallest particulars with such jealous love.

The Mass begins by the entrance of the priest to sprinkle the church and the congregation with holy water. This is either a fitting act of practical occultism actually tending to purify and calm the surroundings, or else it is mere superstition and waste of time. In preparing holy water salt is put in, over which the priest has said: "Creature of salt, I exorcise thee by the living God, by the true God, that the places in which you are sprinkled may be delivered from illusion, from malice and from devilry."

This admits the powers of elementals, and the manner of addressing the salt seems to imply a recognition of some degree of conscious life on its side. Such exorcism is either practical occultism or an utterly useless form. The prayer "*Asperges me*" is in any case an appeal for purity of mind, and is an appropriate preparation for the seeking of higher states.

The priest is a celibate,* whose consecrated life gives him certain definite powers. Without venturing into the profundities of the occult value of celibacy, we may surely allow that personal power is much increased by an economy of energy, a singleness of aim, and the absence of all earthly ties and anxieties. And, also, purity is to the heart what concentration is to the mind. The pure in heart subdue the world by the intensity of a passion devoted to one object alone.

* In the Greek Church a secular priest need not be a celibate. In the Armenian Church a married man can be ordained, but an ordained man cannot marry, and only the son of a priest can be a priest.

The heart of the priest is turned to God, and as a burning-glass focusses the sun on the earth, so he should be a centre, drawing down the sacred fire to ignite that which is inflammable, and to consume all that is impure. And as he loses himself in that glory he draws other men after him. His drawing power is in proportion to his inner withdrawing; his uplifting on the spiritual plane is in proportion to his abasement on the physical plane.

His immediate attendants are also priests, worthy to assist him, and they protect his aura by standing the whole time between him and the people in uninterrupted mental prayer.

Then the choir, or *adytum*, is sprinkled. In this sit only the "elect," those bound by vows. The choir of a secular church is of course only a superficial imitation of the choir in a convent-chapel, where the nuns, or monks, sit in the habit of their order.

It is divided by a barrier of solid marble or wrought metal-work from the rest of the church, as a symbol of the adamantine bar between the esoteric and the exoteric.

In a Greek church there is an *iconostasis* with folding gates, called the Holy or Beautiful Doors.

After the *Asperges*, the priest calls upon the Holy Angels there present to guard each one of those there assembled, "to cherish them and to visit them." (See *Esoteric Christianity*, p. 343 and p. 333.)

The priest then robes himself in the various vestments connected with the story of the Passion, and while a *kyrie eleison* is sung, as an appeal for mercy, the priest reads a confession in secret upon his knees, mentally reviewing his unworthiness, and then incenses the altar.

The value of incense will be acknowledged by many non-Catholics, and it is worth remarking that the priest says to the incense, as if again addressing a conscious being: "Mayest thou be blest by Him in whose honour thou shalt be burned."

He then kisses the altar as a sign of his union with Christ the corner-stone, and invokes to his aid the merits of the Saint whose relics lie buried beneath it. (See *Esoteric Christianity*, p. 384.)

The Collect, Epistle and Gospel are read unintelligibly to

the "vulgar," as mantras, in fact (see *Esoteric Christianity*, p. 335), but are repeated in the vernacular outside the choir. In the Greek Church a little silver lectern is pushed out through the Holy Doors, and before beginning the Gospel the priest says: "Wisdom! Stand up, let us hear the Holy Gospel. Peace to all!"

And then comes the Expulsion of the Catechumens, which is usual also in the Armenian Church and in the most ancient of all Liturgies, the Greek St. James', now suppressed.* The formula in the Greek Church is:

"As many as are Catechumens depart!

"Catechumens depart!

"Let none of the Catechumens! Let all the Faithful!"

In St. James' Liturgy:

"Let none of the Catechumens!
Let none of the uninitiated!
Cast your eyes on each other!
The doors! all upright!"

In St. James' *alone* we find the word "uninitiated."

In the Clementine the "auditors, penitents, and infidels" are turned out.

In the Syrian Jacobite it runs: "Go in peace, auditors! Shut the doors!"

Then follows: Lift up your hearts! It is meet and right so to do"—called by the Nestorians the Cherubic Hymn.

They say: "Lift up your hearts to the region of the tremendous Glory, where the Cherubim cease not to wave their wings," etc.

In St. James' the priest says in secret: "Let all flesh keep silence, and stand with fear and trembling, and think no more of earth; for the King of Kings cometh, the Lord of Lords. The choir of Angels precede him with every Domination and Power. The many-eyed Cherubim and the Seraphim that have six wings covering their faces and chanting the hymn: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!"

Then comes the oblation, and, at the kiss of peace, each priest says: "Christ is among us. He is and will be." And

* It is said to this day once a year on St. James' day in the Church at Jerusalem. The main fabric of it is said to be earlier than 200 A.D.

the deacon answers: "The doors! The doors! Let us attend in wisdom!" "With all wisdom and caution," is added in the Armenian.

And now follows the peculiarly sacred and solemn part of the Mass called the Canon, because it is never changed. (*Esoteric Christianity*, p. 363.)

It is a direct appeal for the presence of the Master. The utmost has been done in inward and outward purification, in adoration and supplication. The hearts of the people have been touched and their mental energies have been aroused by the consideration of the Life and Passion of the Lord. Every effort has been made to help them to associate worthily and intelligently with the inner spiritual intention of the external form. The ringing shout of the Hosannas suddenly ceases. The whole Church is still. The people wait in self-forgetfulness and in a spirit of profound reverence. Not a knee is unbent; the heads of even the children are bowed to the ground. This moment impresses every stranger.

The one who dares to invoke the sacred Name is fasting; no worldly thought has been allowed to enter that day; he is in perfect charity with the whole world. He has prepared the material nucleus. He offers himself as a living agent.

An intense silence reigns. Only the rising incense moves throughout the church; the breath is held in awe, and in the unspoken longing of the entire crowd to be partakers of the priest's privilege, and sharers in the one perfect life.

A great Presence fills the church. Mediator between God and man, in conscious touch by His perfected human senses with His worshippers and disciples on earth, yet dwelling in nirvâṇic consciousness transcending thought, He comes to suffer again and again the limitations of the sacramental form, "cabined and confined in the *ciborium*," and in each celebration of the Mass, He appeals again to the whole race to follow Him and become in their turn Fishers of men. He communicates His intenser and richer life to all souls that watch for Him, and the power of His presence is felt even by the ignorant who come to scoff, so that they say, like Jacob of old: "Truly the Lord is here and I knew it not."

The sound of a small silver bell warns the people within, and outside the great bell heralds to the outer world the supreme moment.

"*Quod ore sumpsimus*," says the priest in a low voice, "that of a temporal gift it may become to us an eternal remedy."

In the Coptic St. Basil he says: "Cause Thy face to shine upon this bread and upon this cup. I believe, I believe, I believe, that this is the quickening body of Thy Son."

"Take the medicine of life," says the Nestorian. And in the Muzarabic the priest says in secret: "Be present, be present, Jesus! O good High Priest." (See *Esoteric Christianity*, p. 360.)

Avenues of continuous vibrations are opened up to higher and higher levels of life, merging into impenetrable perspectives of unseen yet living minds, and earthly affairs for the moment seem to be the unreal and the trifling things. The angels throng round in awe and reverence. Glimpses of the opening consciousness of which men hardly dream may dawn for an instant upon the receptive mind.

The Real Presence is understood as a real uplifting; it has become a fact of consciousness, and the devout believer says: "I will die rather than relinquish a faith which elevates me to the adoption of the Sons of God and makes me heir and joint-heir with Jesus." (*A Method of Hearing Mass*, "Crown of Jesus," p. 255. See *Esoteric Christianity*, p. 360.)

Occult science alone explains and justifies to the reason this attitude of the devotee, and his desire to express it on all the planes, and so make one moment in a rough-and-tumble existence an acceptable, supreme and full expression of his one diviner love.

And when the words "*Ite, missa est*" are said, the people rising throng round (it was the custom to gather round the priest) the happy celebrant to ask a last blessing, and an assurance of the great, unfailing source of safety and gladness, which he has helped to bring to their remembrance.

A. L. B. HARDCASTLE.

SOME LEGENDS OF RUSSIAN ASIA

From the Arctic Ocean in the North to the hot sands of Central Asia in the South, where cities of the hoary past lie in graves of dust, from the triple peak of the Altaï in the East, and the Pamirs, the "Roof of the World," at whose feet lost civilisations await their hour of rebirth in the light of Science, to the Amon and the Syr-Darias rolling their deep waves through tiger-haunted jungles, all across Siberia, Ferganah, Turkestan, to the doors of Muhammedan Bokhara and Samarkand with their holy mosques and their rich antique libraries, full of Arabian wisdom, all over that great span of earth wander tribes of the fourth race—Mongols, Kirghiz, Kalmucks—re-confessing through all times the Law of the Buddha, in the midst of fierce Muslims, under wars and persecutions of all kinds. To some of their legends, as ancient as their steppes, which were old when Tamerlane was young, to some legends of both Buddhist and Muslim let us give an hour of study. The first two are of Mongolian tradition.

I. The Birth of Fire

There was once a time when men on earth had no knowledge of the fire (*om*). Destitute was their life without it. They cried out to God to send them down the fire of heaven that warmed the skies with its flashing light. But God seemed not to understand the wish of their hearts. Out of the heaven He made the sun (*koûnj*) and the moon (*aï*). . . .

Among men on earth lived a very clever magician (*douana*), by name Frouk. He raised his voice and cried unto God saying: "Without fire life is not possible for us." And God answered: "I gave you fire. The sun shines on your days, the moon illuminates your nights on earth." "True," said Frouk. "Without sunlight, without moon-rays, no life would there be for mankind. But we pray for fire which we can kindle so as to bring

sun-warmth into our houses, to prepare human food as fit for man."

Then God bade the daring mage descend into Hell itself, and in the darkness he received what he came to seek—a spark, only a spark, of fire. But he who knew bore the spark up to mankind, and from that tiny spark he spread fire all over the earth of men.*

II. The Birth of the World and of Man†

Before the World came to birth Chaos was empty.
To produce the exterior universe Three concentrated:
The Spirit-Founder.
The Perturbator of the Waves.
The Builder of the Corals.

In the beginning of things the First brought to bear from ten sides a strong pressure on the primary Chaos. By this concentrating force He produced a subtle, intangible matter of bluish tint; from this, two concentrations of the Perturbator of the Waves produced the great Cloud of Creation, from which He caused to come forth an uninterrupted and long-enduring rain, and so brought into existence the infinite Salted Sea. The Builder of Corals then made three concentrations, by which He produced a foam like curds in milk. Multiplying it seven times He made the first points; from the first points a grain of dust; from this a skin; from this the diameter of a hair; from this the length of a grain of wheat; of seven grains an inch; of it the greater measures and miles and leagues. Ever increasing its thickness He made the mountains, then the seas. . . .

In the centre of the universe, of the whole system of the worlds, arose the Great Mount Sumber. Round it there came forth four great Seas; that of the East was white, of the South dark blue, of the West red, of the North yellow. The circle around was in all 3,975,000 miles of 8 leagues each(?).

Round the [? encircling] mountains were placed twelve worlds, four of which were vast and with each of them two

* Communicated by Al. Ivanovsky. *Review of Ethnography* (1890). No. iv., p. 265.

† From the book of *Tihula Kehry Glykchi Teguss Othatu*, or *The most important Information on the Origin of All.* Translated from the Mongolian on the Anu river in 1812. *Messenger of Sion* (1817), Part iv., Bk. iii., pp. 356-62.

smaller ones. The Great Mount is in the north from us; we are on the world south of it (the world of noon).

And then came forth the contents of the universe. The human race and animals were thus born:

One of the kingdoms of heaven—the spirits—fell and was obliged to be reborn in human regions. In time they filled all worlds. Of celestial origin, these all lived at first 80,000 years. Believing in future bliss, and expecting it, they did not move as we, but wheresoever they would go, thither they travelled without effort by air or on clouds. Of pure origin, they ate no coarse food, but only purest ether. They had no husbands, wives, or children; they multiplied at first by ultra-natural force of transformation. There was then no visible sun or moon; but they had light from rays from themselves. Nor were they called men as yet, but spirits.

After some ages one of them, having found eatable substance, "butter of earth," tasted and ate; others followed his example. Their ethereal food was forgotten, the spirits could no longer fly; their body ceased to give out light-rays; they remained in utter darkness. From that night came the first evil, the limitation of the intellect in man—*ignorance*. In consequence of this the sun, and moon, and stars appeared in heaven.

After the lapse of further ages one of these spirits found a forbidden plant, *ovu*, and ate of it and gave to others. The sexes divided; *sense-pleasure* came, sons and daughters were born to them. Then one unworthy spirit found forbidden fruit, *salu;* through curiosity he tried it and gave again to others. All their former food disappeared, they had only *salu* to eat; one of them made a provision of it, it disappeared also. Then they had to work, planting fruits for food, and other things. From this arose *cupidity*, and coarse food came in use. Those who used it lost the pure colour of their faces; others had contempt for them, being more beautiful. From that came *pride;* then quarrels about land, needed for planting fruit-trees, then fighting, and *murder*. From the greater harvests of some came *envy*.

Then a beautiful, kind and wise spirit came among them; He chose the better from the others; to prevent disorder he gave to all an equal portion of the lands. Thankful, they pro-

mised Him obedience, swore it, and elected Him as Ruler. In Enechkek tongue He was called Mahâ Samâdhi Râjâ; in Touhit tongue, Maihbaï Keourbi Khialbhza, which is "Tzar chosen by all." This first Ruler of Earth, believer in the God Samandabadana, was named by the holy name, "Possessor of the whole Universe," called Master and King of Chagravark [? Chakravartin]. From that time these beings, His people, were called only men. . . .

Thus is told the legend of the building of the world in the Steppes of Anu, where the hoofs of the tribe's horses raise the sunlit dust of forgotten civilisations, sisters of Atlantis.

III. The Mountains of Prometheus

The Caucasus is a land that bows to Islâm. Of late the interest in things Muhammedan, the steadier wish to draw the Prophet's sons nearer to that heart of religions which bears the name Theosophy, becomes more and more marked. One who is born among Muslims, or who has lived long under the Green Flag, often grows to be a friend of that faith under whose conquering shield our European science, and even some traditions of the Inner Wisdom, found in the Middle Ages their only refuge.

When one rides through the sun-burnt perfumed steppe, wide as an ocean, at the feet of the Caucasus, on one of those golden-haired Karabach horses, which bear us on wings of wind through the desert prairies; when on warm, scented, starry nights one sits on some hill with that desert beneath the eyes, lit by a great white moon, white tents of soldiers in the distance, throwing sharp black shadows on the hard soil; the likeness with the desert where the Prophet wandered rises in the moon-rays, in the sun-glare, like a shadow of the heroical, poetical past of the Arab race. And the high summits on the horizon, with the full white mass of El Bruz, its giant, its Dawalaghin, call up the image of the mountains of Spain, behind which Grenada lay with that wonderful lacework in marble, that poem in stone, Alhambra, dream of the palaces in Baghdad, the city learned in magical arts and in hidden wisdom.

As the Arab women of old, so were the Circassian women of old, jewels of courage, of knowledge and of beauty. And the

races of the Caucasus were as sober and strong as the Arab warriors in their burning desert-sands, feeding on dates, milk and maize. Only, instead of milk, though camels and goats and horses are plentiful, the Caucasian had the pure native wine, dark and fragrant like the Damascus rose, the vines winding their green or golden grapes round rock and house. The banner of the Prophet had not yet waved in the land, nor had Arab or Persian warrior set foot upon it; no woman wore the Mussulmân veil which now separates her from the free world by its white folds.

Since then the Persians have left there the fire temple near Bakou; the Arabs, the Qurân and the harem. On these mountains, one of the oldest legends of the earth places the eternal prison of him who first dared to reach the "glory on high," and to bring humanity the "spark from heaven." These mountains are but the steps to the martyr-throne of Prometheus.

The local legends are many, and we may well study a few of them. In my native part of the range, in the Kabardah, the tradition pictures Prometheus as a venerable old man, chained down on the icy, radiant summit of the El Bruz. He is a Giant, and silent watchers remain for ever by his side round the summit. He is, as it were, in a lethargy. But sometimes he wakes to ask whether the earth still bears lambs, whether still the bamboo grows. The watchers answer: "Yea, all this still happens, but no end is yet to be hoped for thy tortures." Then despair seizes the old Giant. He sighs, he weeps, he pours forth his agony into the dark space; and in a wild attempt to free himself he shakes his chains. In the valleys below the storm rages, rain-clouds darken the sky, hiding the El Bruz in gloom; the earth shakes to its very bowels. And in the storm-heat, among the grey stones, the poisonous datura answers the plaint with the sweet venom of its perfume.

In the neighbouring land of Ossetia, Prometheus is known as the Giant Amîran, imprisoned in a cave because he oppressed men (and truly does the Inner Man oppress the frail human will and body till it can stand His presence).

He also bears in Georgia the name Amîran; but that graceful race has woven a more elaborate legend of his pains. He is

secured with iron chains to one of the rocks in the mountains. A faithful dog bites them in vain with his sharp teeth; for whenever a chain is on the point of breaking there suddenly appears a mysterious blacksmith who makes it stronger than ever with his magic touch. It is the custom of all the "clans" at the foot of the mount, on a certain day of the year, to strike three times on a smith's anvil in order to fasten closer the chains of the invisible martyr. The Abhazians alone do not follow this cruel usage; but none of them will dare to swear his innocence—if guilty of crime—over the anvil of even a village blacksmith.

The Armenians again have their own legend of Prometheus —"Artavadz." But the occult lore of Armenia merits a special study, as well as do some of the hoary sagas among other races round the Caucasus.

There is, apparently, no Muhammedan element mingled with these Promethean legends. N. D. Mansvetoff says that these popular legends come from the "divagations" of Gnostic sects, especially of Vardes (? Bardesanes), mixed with Jewish elements from the *Testamentum Salomonis*, which resembles strongly the Russian tale of the twelve "Shakers," the twelve sister-maladies patronised (?) by St. Sisyn. The disciple who brought the earliest Christian light to the people of the Caucasus was, according to tradition, a girl, by name St. Nina, who came from the Syrian or Arabian deserts. She was the first Caucasian martyr, the first-born from the drops of Prometheus' tears.

IV. The Cave of Tchilok

In Abhazia, on the river Dubab, is the hamlet of Tchilok, and close by, near that earthly paradise called Soukhoum-Kaleh, rises the first range of the Caucasus. There on the hip of Mount Otchirdé is the chief of the legendary Prometheus-caves.

The best time for European visitors, unaccustomed to the sudden and perfidious changes of that southern climate on that beautiful shore which is the haunt of all the most malignant fevers, is May and June. The temperature of the cave itself is then about 18°-20° Réaumur, and 10° close to the water, before one penetrates into the cavern's depths.

You can enter it only by the bed of the stream which flows

from the inner cave—a blue sulphur spring which rushes in two streamlets, one hot, the other cold. Blind insects dance in the faintly lit cave over the mysterious waters. The approach of the cave is hidden, as in a fairy tale, by garlands of long, overhanging stalactites which close with their brilliantly-hued "clusters" the entrance to the first hall. The interior of the caves is a succession of halls with vast ranges of columns, rocky "beds" with crystal "curtains," whole tapestries of stalactites stretching their silver and emerald and ruby and sapphire strings into the darkness beyond. One of the halls forms a natural bath filled with blue sulphurous waves.

Inside this cave is chained to the top of a rock with horse and arms the Abhazian Prometheus. They call him Ablaskir, and their legends record that he was thus smitten for killing off on earth a "red-haired" race; for destroying a "weed" that prevented the harvest of men; and above all else, for never bowing his head to a "god." His earthly "brother," educated with him, Prince Beslan, once entered there; he "saw" . . .; but the help of earth was vain.

V. Caucasian Magic

The reptile kingdom swarms throughout the Caucasian peninsula. From the triangle-headed black viper, not bigger than a child's finger, to the *yeltopuz*, the yellow-belly, which raised on its tail reaches up to a man's waist, sometimes to a man's height, many they are, the "shining, lovely, deadly nâgs," wherefor, in all Transcaucasia, especially in the savage, tropical Daghestan, and up to the Persian frontier, snake charmers are welcome guests. The only charm in use is the ever unchanged traditional song, a series of definite sounds, some of which have to-day lost their meaning to most of the charmers themselves. The *mantra* used has now words of Arabic mixed with it, but the intonation is no doubt the same which was born with the older words, the sense of which is now lost to us. Facing the place where the reptile is hiding, or where the charmer feels the snake to be hidden, the incantator begins his slow song:

"In the name of the prophet Souleïman (Solomon), I order thee to answer, Raise thy voice; do not fear; come out! Move quickly! I will take thy eyes! . . . *Z*ibir! zibir! zibir!"

The charmer hisses like a serpent. Then he pronounces these strange words of an unknown language. He strikes the ground with his stick. The snake shows itself. The charmer draws rapidly on the ground a sign with a stick: "In the name of the prophet Souleïman, come out!" The snake glides forward. The man draws a circle around it; the snake stops and remains quiet. It can now be handled with immunity by the charmer.

And this power of immunity from snake-poison can also be transferred to others by the same incantations. The man to be preserved is first entirely wrapped in a net of "rosaries." Then the charmer takes a piece of ordinary sugar, pronounces over the little white cube some slowly muttered formula, and makes the man swallow it, all the time whispering prayers or mantras. From that hour the charmed life has to fear no living snake; but the man must swear never to kill a snake himself or the "power" leaves him.

The chief magic art for the Caucasian "sorcerer," or "knower," lies in the power of sound. The writer's own grandfather was, in the Daghestan, saved from death from an attack of deadly malaria, akin to yellow fever, when given up by the European "faculty" summoned from Tiflis, by a plain village "knower," who, with a single piercing glance at the unconscious sufferer, pronounced recovery possible. Intoning a mantra over a cup of simple water-melon juice, he poured a few of the rosy drops into the mouth of the dying man: "Do it again at noon," he said. "He is saved." And two or three days after, the European doctors stared in amazement at their resurrected patient walking in the full sunshine of health.

But the rocks and the summits of the Caucasus live a life of their own. The rocks have souls, human souls imprisoned in them, sometimes for unlawful love, sometimes for evil use of supernatural knowledge. The distant, unconquered summits have intelligences abiding on their snowy heads, who "know" and dream, who love and destroy the children of men. And man, too, learns from elfs and titans, and works to save or to harm his brothers. For Prometheus still sleeps chained above the clouds on the Caucasus.

A RUSSIAN.

THE TUMULTUOUS SHADOWS

THE boy sat on the spray-splashed turf alone, and at his feet the sea fretted and leaped. He leaned on a granite rock embedded in the dry, barren earth; soil lodged in the crevices of the rock, and therein sea-pinks grew, and waved their blossoms above the boy's head. It matters not at all whether the tale I tell took place in modern times or in a country which has passed away, it is a story of the past, of the present, and, it may be, of the future, too. Therefore, let those who read, place it when and where they please; I shall phrase it in the words of the present, because it belongs to the present; though it may be it befell long ago.

This child, who sat by the sea alone, was fatherless; and his mother was foolish. He was born to the heritage of great riches, and also to the heritage of bodily beauty; he was born in a position and in surroundings, which made certain virtues and vices easy to be practised by him, and others hard.

His home was in a very rich, luxurious and vicious city; but when he was very young he fell seriously ill, and his mother, loving the life of the city more than her child, yet fearing the death of the boy, and the passing of his wealth to her sister-in-law's son, made speed to send him to a pure and simple place, where he lived in the sun and wind under the open sky from dawn to sunset. He was reared by simple pious people, and he was much alone.

Once, when he was seven years old, he rose at night and wandered, barefoot and half-clad, in the moonlight. By the rock where the sea-pinks grew he saw, sitting alone in the salt-smelling wind that sang over the sea and among the dry land-grasses, a woman round whose head an elfish flame was burning. When she saw the boy she laid her soft, cool hands on him and set him on her knee; she wrapped him fast in her long hair; and

sang to him from midnight to cockcrow in a language that he did not know, though its meaning was not strange to him. When the dawn came, she kissed his eyes till they closed, and laid him on the earth asleep, and she whispered in his ear: "This is thy first true dawn; at thy last sunrise we shall meet once more."

They found the child, when the sun was bright and hot, sleeping by the wash of the waves; and they scolded him for walking in his sleep. Many times he slipped out by night and went to look for the woman; but he never found her again, save once in an idle dream. It came to him on the night before that day when he sat at the sea-verge, after the manner I have told. It was of that dream he was thinking, and trying to remember it. He was now thirteen years old, and had grown tall for his age, and strong, and very comely. As for his soul, it was beginning to seethe within him after the long, dreamful sleep of his childhood.

His dream was on this wise. He stood in a cavern carved deeply in a mountain side, and in it were a great throng who wove a solemn dance; he was swept within their ranks, and danced as they. He seemed to know the measure well. They danced to music; whence it came he knew not. As they wove the dance he found that he was passed from rank to rank of dancers till he reached the end of the cave; and lo! there was the woman who had sung to him through the summer night. She was spinning, and the hum of her wheel throbbed through the cave and mingled with the music. Behind her was a circle of fire that lighted the cavern, and behind the fiery circle a great veil that shook and trembled like a glowing mist of pure gold. From within the ring of fire came the music, and he wondered whether or no the musician stood within that circle of brilliant, flashing, many-hued flame. He went to speak to the woman, and sat down at her feet. She looked at him and smiled.

"You are too old now for lullabies," she said. "So, you are tired of the shadow-dance, are you?"

"Why do you call it the shadow-dance?"

"Because it is one. Look!"

As she spoke, he looked; and behold! all who danced were shadows. They were moved hither and thither by the threads

the woman spun. Fine shining threads were they; he could not perceive whence she drew them.

"Why! they are all shadows," he cried.

"Shadows they are," she answered. "Shadows, and the shadows of shadows."

"Who casts them?" he asked.

"The Maker of Shadows," she answered.

He strained his eyes to see whether the Maker of Shadows stood within the flame-circle. He looked till his eyes streamed with tears, and his heart beat till he thought it would burst asunder; but he gazed in vain; and though, in his mind, he was sure there was a form within the circle of light he could not perceive it, nor know whether it were shadow or substance. He could only see the spinning woman, the great cave, and the shadows as they danced. With a shudder he thought that he, too, must be a shadow like the rest. The woman laughed and answered his thought:

"Not so," she said. "You are the shadow-caster, child of the Maker of Shadows; but this you must learn for yourself in the land of the tumultuous shadows, those who rule rather than obey."

"Is there really any country ruled by shadows?" he asked in surprise.

"You will see," she replied, still laughing. "I will, moreover, tell you something further. In that country it will be your fate never to meet with any, either man or woman, who is not of less age than yourself; older there be, but them you will not meet. You will find it hard to believe this; in fact neither you, nor those you encounter there, will believe it at all; but in that strange country nothing is, nor can be, as it seems."

"It is not surprising in a land where shadows rule. The men there must be mad. How shall I find the way there? Very hardly, I fear, if I shall have waxed so old before I reach it."

"That is not the question," she answered. "Ask rather: How shall I find the way out? But do not ask it; because those who, like yourself, are native to the land, have to find the way for themselves."

"It will be very difficult to find?" he asked.

"Very," she replied. "And yet, so they say, the simplest matter in the world. In truth, you will never find it."

"Then it is useless to search," he said.

"You cannot find what you have never lost," she answered.

Thereupon he woke and heard the birds twittering in the crimson-blossomed rose-tree that climbed above his window; he rose, bathed in the river, and went to the rock by the sea; there he sat and tried to remember, and make sense of the tumult of his dream. I set it down as it unfolded itself to him in his waking hours, and not as it really befell.

As he sat thus, musing, he saw one who ran to seek him, calling his name. He found that his mother had sent for him at last, and his life under the open sky and among the simple, pious folk was ended.

He went to the city, and there he learned to live the life of the city; there, five years later, the foolish mother, who flattered and spoiled him for his beauty, died, and he was left alone in his dawning manhood, a boy, eighteen years old. He was soon surrounded by a little court of men and women who followed him for his wealth, and flattered him for his comeliness and strength. It was an evil, pleasure-loving city, sunk in sloth and luxury.

This youth dwelt there and felt the pressure of its seething, feverish life. The tides of youth, and love of joy and beauty, ran high in him; he had the weaknesses of his strength, the weaknesses that beset the many-sided, richly gifted soul—the soul of many powers, of infinite capacities. He sought everywhere to increase the swell of the tides of life that he might feel their restless motion, their ebb and flow, and thus rejoice in his youth, in his strength, in his powers of feeling, and thinking, and enjoying. He was flattered and praised; he was master of his wealth, and he held a jocund court for the youth of the city, who followed him and imitated his speech, his dress, and his bearing. He sought pleasure in the paths of virtue; and, with little or no sense of guilt, he sought it also in the paths of vice. Thus he lived for some years after his mother's death; nor did he guess that he was living in the country of the tumultuous shadows. He never thought about his dream at all, till he was twenty-five.

The city was the capital of a great province in a vast empire. It lay on the borders of another state, and there were rumours of war. The governor of the province was withdrawn from his post, and another, and a stronger man, was sent in his place. This man, who was given almost unlimited power, was a great soldier and politician, he was at once a clear thinker and a bold and practical man of action. Above all else he was a patriot; one who set his country's weal above his own advancement, above love, above friendship, or any of the desires that commonly draw the hearts of men. Hence he was called harsh and cold; those who were libertines and pleasure-seekers mocked at him for his strictness of life. He was a distant cousin of the young man who once dreamed of the dance of shadows; in years much his elder, and in his whole life more ordered, discreet, and purposeful than he.

When he came to the city as its ruler his young kinsman hastened to visit and welcome him. The governor was, at the time, too busy with state affairs to receive him, therefore he went to the house of his cousin to explain the unintentional slight. The younger man was surrounded by his accustomed associates; they were talking flippantly and laughing loudly when the governor was announced.

Now this new ruler of the province was a man of the world, one who felt no dismay at the sight of the idle and profligate. He greeted his young kinsman and his friends very graciously, and fell to gay talk of such things as would please them; he spoke of the public games, the scandals of the city, and the beauty of the new dancer who held the youth of the province in her silken web. When this strong man, great patriot, and brilliant soldier entered the young man's house, a strange mood fell upon his host; for, on a sudden, the hall in which they sat, the splashing fountains, the flowering shrubs in the open court without, the men, the wine-cups and fruit on the board, and his own strong shapely body, warm with life, and thrilling with sensation, became as shadows to him; and a voice swept through the hall, crying faintly: "Shadows are they, shadows—the shadows of shadows!"

From that day the young man began to seek his kinsman's

presence more and more frequently, drawn, as it seemed, like a moth to a steady flame set in some sheltered niche. The times were very troublous; and the new governor soon perceived that a fruitful cause of trouble and danger was the sloth, profligacy and effeminacy of the young men of the land, especially the wealthy and those of noble birth. At first, deeming him to be a careless fool, he heeded his young kinsman and his ways very little. He greeted him kindly, and was not a little won by a certain power he possessed of gaining the hearts of others. But as he began to perceive that he was not the mere weakling he had at first believed him to be, he saw him as a plague spot, and a source of danger to the state. Therefore he grew very angry; he determined to speak strongly and sternly, and to reproach him bitterly for his life of sloth and self-indulgence.

On a certain day the young man visited the governor, who at first refused to see him, and then, hearing who his visitor was, admitted him. When the young man came in, he saw his kinsman plunged in a great press of business, and he paused on the threshold:

"You are busy," he said. "You should have refused to see me."

The other answered him by an enquiry touching a light woman of the city; he answered in a tone of such biting contempt that his guest winced.

"You did not let me in to ask me *that*," he said.

"I let you in that I might speak what is in my mind. I am your kinsman, your elder by many years, and the governor of this province, I have a right to say to you what I am going to say."

The other laughed; one who was quick to see would have perceived that his lip quivered as he laughed.

"May the powers above assist me!"—he said lightly. "This seems to be serious. What do you intend to say?"

"You will know in a few minutes." The governor began to speak; and now he did not speak either with anger or contempt, but very quietly and coldly. The anger of his heart did not show save by a certain clearly cut mercilessness of speech. Since he was fiercely and deeply in earnest, and saw but one method

of construing his cousin's indifference and sloth, he really expressed some measure of that which was in his mind. The young man listened quietly and very attentively; he turned his face to the window, so that his reprover might not see the tears in his eyes. At last he said in a mild, laughing voice:

"You do not mind giving pain, do you?"

"Not when a man is worth paining; I don't give it needlessly."

"Oh, thank you!"

"I wish I could pain and shame you in good earnest. But that seems to be impossible."

"I should not trouble myself seriously upon that score, if I were you."

He spoke with a light gentle sarcasm, and clasped the arm of the chair in which he sat, because his hand was shaking, and he wished to hide the fact from his companion.

"If you were a nonentity I should say nothing. But you are not. Is it not disgraceful you should be a mere pleasure-seeker in times like these, when the country needs men such as you might be if you would? It is criminal; for you have the power of drawing others to you; and where do you lead them? Into a fool's garden of delights!"

"I am not a mere pleasure-seeker. I do not seek pleasure."

"What do you seek then?"

"I don't know. I think—myself."

"You look for yourself in queer company then."

"I do, sometimes. Very queer. But I am sorry to say I generally think I see myself as much there as anywhere else. And I am inclined to believe that if I were not there, or at any rate a piece of me, I shouldn't be able to see my fool's garden at all, nor the things I chase in it."

"It is a pity your father died."

"Don't you think he was spared a good deal in his son?"

"I do. But he might have given you some sense of duty."

"Is it possible that you are rather hard upon me?"

"Not so hard as you deserve."

"That may be. But is it my fault that we live in a world of shadows? You treat them as real."

"The world is real enough."

"Is it?"

"You have been too prosperous all your life. That has been your ruin. You should have had to fight your way."

"Do you think I look as though I had no fighting then?"

His companion glanced at him quickly:

"You look— Why, what is it? Is life real after all?"

"Can't you see I am sick and tired; and miserable to the core of my heart?" said the other under his breath. "Is it so easy to fight phantoms, to chase shadows? To seek not knowing what you seek? To be ashamed of yourself without seeing why you should be ashamed. To have a mind you can't govern, to be in a state of anarchy, body and soul. That is to find your fool's garden a peaceful playground, is it not? To have no honest griefs nor difficulties to explain your misery, so that in order to be a reasonable mortal and account to yourself for it, you must make them for yourself, like a hysterical woman!"

He broke off with a laugh.

"Laugh!" said the other quietly. "I know you are in earnest now."

"It is a fact, that of late the world has been a land of shadows to me. I have not chased them for themselves, but for something else which escapes me; I call it—myself, because I do not know what else to call it. I see it in every shadow, and when I grasp at it, it has gone, and only the shadow remains. It is true that once I sought sensations; I did not know it at the time, because I did not think; but I know it now. But those sensations were only worth having because they brought a sense of something which I never reached; I wanted sensation—mind you—not experience. You will laugh at me for a fool, because I am young. Young as I may be, I've never known a new experience. I know it all; each thing I grasp, I have known. I think there is no weakness, no folly, I do not know."

"More shame for you, then!"

"You do not understand. I do not mean I have tried them all. I mean I know them."

"I think you are talking nonsense. You do not know much, yet, of human strength and duty."

"I wonder if that is true," said the other, dreamily. "Because I feel as though I knew these also. I danced the shadow-dance through. I ought to know it. If I could remember the figures . . . . "

"Now, you have gone back to your shadows! You are impracticable."

"At any rate, you are the only shadow I ever wanted to emulate. I shall try to obey you. Perhaps you know more than I do; in spite of my boasting, I know you can hardly know less."

From that day he changed the whole manner of his life; he cast aside his luxury, his pleasure-seeking and his sloth; his old associates and haunts knew him but seldom. Soon afterwards a war broke out between his country and the land that lay on the borders of his native province. Joining, with many followers, the host commanded by the governor, he became a very keen and ardent soldier, and it befell that in this war he so distinguished himself by a most valiant action in an hour of great danger, that he received special honours and decorations from the governor's own hand, and the streets, ringing with shouts as the victorious army entered the city, rang their loudest as he passed by. In that hour, when flowers were flung under his horse's hoofs, when the city echoed with cries of joy, when music clashed, and the flags waved, when he saw the face of his friend and kinsman glowing with the deep joy of a man who has served his country selflessly to the uttermost, and seen his service add to her glory and her praise—even in that hour there fell on him a chill fear lest the city and the crowds, the flowers and cries of triumph, his leader and himself, praise and glory, duty and honour, were also shadows; and a sense of unreality, as of a waking soul recalling the world of dream, smote upon him. He put the fear from him; none of all the throng around him shared his dread. The governor, older, wiser, nobler, every way more serviceable than he, declared that duty and loyalty, the love of country, the sacrifice of ease and pleasure to a wider life, the desire of conquest, the building of a noble race, these were the realities of realities, the goal of every true man's effort. This man, greater and stronger than he, was surely right; the strenuous struggle of war was real; the battlefield was no shadow.

He was his kinsman's right hand, his most trusted servant, both in the government of the province, and of those new lands that had accrued to them by the power of the sword. He was sent, young as he was, to a post of much trust in the turbulent, newly-acquired country. Living in the pictures of the restless mind, as all men live, it came to pass that the forgotten pictures of the past had sudden power over him, and blotted out the pictures of the present, and of the to-come.

There came to him from without the touch of a power like unto those shadows he thought had fled from him for ever. Some say this power was sent to him by one who was an enemy of the Maker of Shadows; some that it came from the Maker of Shadows Himself. But howsoever that may be, it came—came in the likeness of a long dead sin; and that which was like unto it in the forgotten pictures of the young man's mind rose up and rushed forth to meet and greet it. He became the prey of the tumultuous shadows, who so glamoured him that he believed them to be his very self. Thus it befell that in an hour of great bewilderment he betrayed his trust, in carelessness rather than in deliberate intent. The city he should have guarded, fell; and the lives of many were taken by the sword of treachery. When it was all over and past retrieving, the tumultuous shadows fled back to the land whence they came, and the man, their victim, fled in great bewilderment from the ruin he had wrought, and rode back alone to the capital to own his sin. Before he could reach it he was seized and brought thither as a prisoner; if the soldiers had not ringed him round the people would have killed him in their wrath.

They tried him as a traitor; for three long, sultry summer days they patiently sifted and questioned concerning his guilt. Because they knew he was guilty they were the more patient and zealous to give him every chance to escape condemnation if he could; for such was the temper of the rulers, who were patient because they were inexorable. He admitted all their charges, and yet he pleaded not guilty. His kinsman, the governor, sat in judgment upon him, and when he was found guilty it was he who spake the words that sentenced him to be hanged when three days had come and gone. For in this matter

there could be no difference between noble or peasant, freedman or slave. A traitor's due was death, death by the hangman's rope, a public death of shame before the eyes of the people.

After he was sentenced they placed him in secure ward; and they spoke gently to him, bringing him willingly aught for which he asked; nor did the people hoot him much as he was led from the court to the prison, because they knew he was to die, and death, in their judgment, closed all accounts, whether for good or ill.

Throughout the first day he sat musing and bewildered; he was greatly puzzled. His mood was that of a child who is lost in a strange place, and is as yet too much amazed to cry for help. For he knew his will had never consented to what he had done; he knew that the things which, so far as he knew it, represented his very life, were the things he had betrayed. He sat as one stunned.

At night he fell a prey to the tumultuous shadows, and these of a kind hitherto unfamiliar to him; the fear of bodily death fell on him, and he sat all night sick and trembling with physical dread; while at the core of his heart, the voice of one who was not afraid, reasoned with him, and asked whether indeed he, who had met death again and again right heartily, was, after all, a coward.

On the second night he slept, and dreamed that he was free. The prison door stood wide open, and the long stretch of desert sand without lay blanched in the moonlight. He stood at the door and saw the sentry lying on the ground asleep. He ran past him and fled over the pale sands; upon him was a great lust of life. In the distance was a group of palm trees, and under them stood one who watched him. Afar off this figure looked like himself; but when he reached it, it was a man of so evil an aspect, that, sick at heart, he turned and ran from him, preferring rather the prison and the death at sun-rising to his comradeship. As he re-entered his cell he woke, and seeing the door barred and escape impossible, he momentarily gave God thanks, because of the memory of the dream-man who had watched him from under the palms, and his humble knowledge of his own weakness and folly.

At last the third night came, and with it a sense of great loneliness against which the human longing for comradeship and comfort rebelled. He hid his face on his arms as they rested on the table, and felt the tears smarting in his eyes. He heard the guard without challenge, and heard a voice answer, that made his body shudder while he remained unmoved. Then the door opened slowly, and in the silver stream of the moonlight stood the governor of the province, who visited thus by night the traitor who was to hang at sunrise, because he was his kinsman and his former friend. He stood there silently for a few seconds; then he said:

"Shall I disturb you? Do you want to sleep? Say so, if you do."

"No."

The other sat down, and shivered.

"This place is cold," he said. "Are you not cold?"

"I believe I am. I hadn't noticed it."

The governor of the province caught his breath sharply; he rose and flung wood in the grate, and lit it. It began to crack and sparkle; the days were very hot, but in the early hours of morning it was chilly.

"Do you know from whom I have just come?"

"No."

"From my mother's house."

"She wants you to use your prerogative of pardon, I suppose?"

"She does."

"You refused, didn't you?"

"I did refuse."

"Quite right. Two hours more then."

There was a little silence, which the fire filled by cracking and spluttering.

"You think me merciless, do you not?"

"You? Merciless? No!"

"No? Harsh, at least?"

The prisoner smiled.

"If a man should be judged by his feelings, I don't think you merciless at all."

The other shrugged his shoulders impatiently, perhaps he disliked his feelings to be gauged.

"A man is judged by his actions," he replied.

"Just so. Therefore, what can you do but hang me? If you did not, you would run your head into a hornet's nest. All the same, I should like you to notice I am not a traitor, only a great fool."

The governor answered by a nod of assent, and a half sigh.

"If you pardoned me, you would be a fool, too. I am not sure you would not also be a traitor. I don't mind—much."

He watched the fire thoughtfully, and his companion watched him. Presently he said:

"I don't mind at all."

"You're right," said the other, his voice shaking a little. "What could you do with a—a branded life?"

"That's your view. It's not mine. Life eludes you. How can you see the brand-marks on it? You figure to yourself the scars that might, or should be there, and then insist they are there. Nonsense! Because you think me a traitor, you hang me. Now, I *know* I'm a fool. Does your thought invalidate my knowledge? Do I carry *your* brand?"

"Then, why don't—you care?"

Because he could have chosen life for the man, and had chosen death for him instead, he could not finish the sentence, though his judgment and his sense of duty assured him he was right.

"When you rebuked me for idleness, and for running after pleasures when there were duties to be done, I told you that I ran after pleasure at first for the sake of pleasure, because I was young; and sometimes I found it where I had better not have looked for it. I told you I was looking for myself; I saw my shadow in all I seized. The shadow always—never the substance. I looked always in the same groove, because we are such creatures of habit. You pulled me out, and for that I thank you. You set me hunting on another line; again I saw myself, a less familiar self, in the things I chased. The old shadows I thought were past and done with got hold of me. You know how my chase has ended. Now, if you were not going to hang

me in two hours' time, I should still chase the new shadows; and after them, perhaps, another set. And I am tired of shadows; sick and tired of shadows, especially when they're stronger than myself."

He leaned back and shut his eyes. Neither spoke, till he unclosed them, leaned forward, smiled and laid his hand half pleadingly on his kinsman's knee.

"You think me very hardened, eh? Flippant? With no sense of my present position? I grant the last proposition, because I really don't quite know what my position is. But the first and second I deny. I'm not hardened, and I'll take my oath I'm not flippant."

His former friend laid his own hand on that of the man whom he had condemned to die, and answered more gently than he had ever spoken in their days of closest friendship:

"What right have you to say I think you either? I wish I had left you in your groove."

"I am glad you did not; but you could not have done it, even if you had tried. It isn't in you to leave a man alone when you think you can make him useful elsewhere. I hope you will not think me impertinent when I say you are a perennial fountain of practical utility that plays because it can't help it. I am taking the death-bed privilege of free-speech. I admire you more than anyone I know. Wish you'd left me in my groove! Great Powers! I should be there still, living to a green old age. Do you know it is getting light? You ought to go now. People will see you."

"I do not care—you are right, they had better not see me."

He laid his hands on the prisoner's shoulders, turned him to the light and looked earnestly at him.

"Is there no bitterness on your side?"

"None. You are doing perfectly right."

"There is none on mine," said the other, his voice breaking suddenly. "Do you believe it? *Will* you believe it?"

"I do. Thank you!"

"We can part as friends, and—and—we—shall—meet as friends—perhaps—somewhere—"

The prisoner looked at him with musing, dreamy eyes.

"I felt anger against you," pursued the other earnestly. "It has passed. If it had not passed I would have saved you; I should not have dared to do otherwise. I have tried to do my duty. No one knows what it costs me. If we ever meet again ——"

"We shall meet in peace," said the younger quietly. "Thank you. Good-bye! I don't mind dying; I think I should have chosen another death, but that's childish, for it can't last long, painful or painless, can it? You'd better make haste. The stars are nearly gone. I hear people astir in the city."

Thus these men, who loved each other greatly, parted. The governor went to his palace, a prey to the tumultuous shadows; the prisoner marched between his guards to the scaffold. The sky was pink; the desert sand, without the city, shone; a line of trees on the horizon miles away seemed to be close at hand. The people were very quiet, so quiet that a bird's song, in a bush without the city gates, could be heard. The prisoner heard it; but now all things, people, houses (he saw his own house glimmering far away on a tree-planted hill), desert, sky and himself, were shadows—the shadows of shadows. As he walked his mind grew very clear, and all that had ever befallen him in his life began to be perceived by him, not as memories but as ever-present facts untouched by time. At this point a change seemed to take place in him, without effort of his own; he marvelled at it, with what seemed to be the past dying consciousness of a dreaming brain; barely touched by this wider, clearer sense that was beginning to dawn in him. All that he knew and perceived seemed to be equally valuable; this was true of his actions too, not as to their results, nor in their righteousness or unrighteousness—but in themselves. In his consciousness they stood level; some actions far-reaching in their consequences, some comparatively trivial; but this importance, or slightness of nature, was in the world without, not in the world within. That world within—his very self, it seemed—saw them unmoved; saw them as facts unrelated to itself, facts that affected it not at all. Nothing seemed to be hateful, nothing dear, in the sense of hatred or love as he had, till now, known them. All things were present at the same time in his mind, and all were alike most clear. Nothing was

past—nothing was far—nothing was near—everything was equi-present—equi-distant.

He knew he was standing on the scaffold now; they were making some preparations. He did not heed what they were doing; he was intent upon this new experience—a new experience at last, he said to himself. He remembered nothing like . . . .

"I suppose you think you have found your way out," she said, laughing. "But you are wrong!"

It was the woman who span; she sat at the foot of the rock where the sea-pinks grew, and he sat beside her.

"I begin to think," he answered, without astonishment, for the thing seemed natural enough, "that all my life I have been seeking in the wrong direction. Why did you say I could not find what I had never lost?"

"I wondered when you would remember that. Let me ask you a question. Can the bounded ever know the Boundless? Can that which is without, know that which is within?"

"Cannot the Maker of Shadows know both?" he asked.

"Who shall answer that?" she replied. "Consider only this: Behind the Circle of the Flame there hung a Veil."

"But I—" he said, "I, too, am a weaver of shadows. I, the shadow of a shadow, make and unmake; I rule and am enslaved in a shadow-world of my own fashioning."

"When you perceive that, in deed and in truth," she answered, "when you know the Ruler from the ruled, you shall find your way out; or else you shall find you never entered in. Know yourself—the shadow of a shadow. Know yourself—the weaver and beholder of all shadows. It may be in that day you shall perceive there is indeed but one shadow, one substance, and one Shadow Maker, Source of all that is woven before the Veil."

"Now I dream that I perceive your meaning," he replied. you cannot find what you have never lost. . . . . ."

Suddenly he saw that in the sand without the city there was an open grave; they laid within it the body of one whose face was hidden; they laid it down gently, and began to cover it with the dry dun sand.

MICHAEL WOOD.

DANTE'S SYMBOLISM

Which things are an allegory.

"WHETHER or not the Divine Comedy be, as the great seer believed, or be not, the revelation of a real material heaven, hell and purgatory, it is, at any rate, a tremendous and impressive embodiment in sensible phantasmagoria of inner and ethical order. So do men suffer for sin; such discipline must they undergo, such reward receive. The wheel of Ixion, the stone of Sisyphus, the burden that crushes to earth, the whirlwind of unsatisfied desire, the very bleeding tree—what awakened conscience knows them not? And may not sense-fantasy body them forth hereafter according to their very essence? For truth in the concrete, in the body, is more real and living than truth in the abstract, remaining uninfluential without manifold expression of life, without a countenance radiant as from a vision of God upon the mountain."*

If it be possible that truth embodied is more living than truth in the abstract, then symbols must play an important part in the history of mankind. Carlyle tells us that through symbols men, consciously or unconsciously, live, work, and have their being; those ages being accounted the noblest which can best recognise symbolical worth and prize it the highest. The sacraments of a religion, which are an "outward visible sign of an inward spiritual grace," or the emblems of some national or individual feeling, are all symbols, and have therefore a double existence, for they belong to the world of fantasy as well as the world of fact, and show what really exists but is intangible to the senses.

When a visible object represents an idea or feeling shared by a large body of people, it often attains an immense importance, and men will risk their lives for the square of canvas that

* Noel, *Essay on Spenser*.

stands for the honour of their country. Symbols seem to be an almost necessary part of the machinery of religions; each sect possesses its own, easily read by the initiated if unintelligible to the outsider, and rituals survive long after all comprehension of their original purpose of expressing some doctrine has ceased to exist. Another kind of symbols are the signs used by men associated together for definite objects, sometimes preserved with great secrecy, more frequently open to whoever cares to decipher them; as, for instance, figures in mathematics, or badges and coats of arms of families and trades.

Allegorical works putting forward abstract ideas in some form of fable have always been a favourite method of imparting instruction; such *tours de force* were in high favour in the Elizabethan age; we find for instance Spenser's *Faerie Queen* is throughout an allegorical phantasmagory, representing virtues, vices and spiritual events in striking personifications. This was preceded by Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*, which describes the government of an ideal state; but the most familiar instance of an allegory to English-speaking people will be Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, of the succeeding century. Here the inner meaning of every scene and character is made clear by the author; it is in fact a religious drama as well as a tale of adventure. In so far as it tells the history of a pilgrimage it resembles that great allegorical work, Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Both books describe a mystical journey, beginning with the City of Destruction and ending with the City of God, but Dante explains elsewhere* that his main intention throughout is to show forth the work of justice.

Now this much-discussed question was thoroughly thrashed out in Plato's *Republic*, where it is finally concluded that "without introducing the rewards and reputations which justice confers, as Homer and Hesiod do, justice taken by itself is best for the soul also taken by itself." Dante, however, does not treat the subject in any such ordinary or straightforward manner; he gives a series of vivid pictures of the life after death, beneath which inner meanings may be discerned, for the whole composition and imagery of the poem are evidently symbolical. The whole story

* *Letter to Can Grande.*

is elaborately set in the framework of Catholic theology, and as a devout son of the Church, the poet must have believed in some part at least of his various scenic representations; but the religious doctrine is closely interlaced with a vast crowd of metaphors and symbols which never cease from the beginning of the *Inferno*, where Dante finds himself in a thick wood signifying this life, until the end of the *Paradiso*, when he sees all the universe as drawn up into a point in the highest heavens.

Many of these metaphorical expressions are comparatively easy to decipher, others are more abstruse, but in any case a very cursory examination soon shows that the poem is entirely written in the language of symbolism. Some few of these symbols seem to be intended to be read only by those who have special keys to the meanings which appear to be conveyed under various familiar forms of expression. It has, therefore, been suggested that Dante was a member of some secret school, or society, and wished to put forth truths to the world in a veiled form that could not have been taught openly at that time, using for this purpose images with more than one meaning. And, indeed, there are peculiarities of construction in the *Divine Comedy* which might justify such a theory, such as, for instance, the special numbers which run all through the poem. It is entirely built on variations of such significant figures as three, seven and ten. This is to be seen in the triple verse (*terza rima*); the three books, each containing thirty-three cantos; and the three worlds described, these again being severally divided into three, seven and ten. The *Inferno* is in three main divisions, the *Purgatorio* has seven circles, and the *Paradiso* numbers seven heavens called planetary, with three higher, making ten in all. The hundred cantos of the poem form the square of the perfect number, ten; and it can also be divided into a prelude and ninety-nine cantos. Nine, the square of three, is also a number to which Dante attaches great importance, being especially associated by him with Beatrice. He says in the *Vita Nuova*, that it was friendly to her, because the nine heavens were in conjunction at her birth; and that she was herself the number nine, "that is, a miracle whose root is the blessed Trinity."*

* *Vita Nuova*. The nine heavens here exclude the Empyrean, or heaven of rest, which contains all.

Dante and Beatrice first met at the beginning of her ninth year, and at the end of his. The thought of her death came to him on the ninth day of a nine days' illness, and she died on the ninth day of the ninth month, "when the perfect number ten was nine times completed in that century." It seems, then, hard to doubt that what commentators call Dante's "favourite mystic numbers" were intended to convey some hidden meaning by the systematic manner in which they are grouped together.

All the component parts of the *Divine Comedy*, whether lines, verses, or cantos, fit in exactly with each other, and are as carefully placed as bricks in the walls of a house. The reader feels that any change, even the smallest, would be an impossibility, and that this elaborate literary edifice must be designedly arranged in this set form. The subject matter as well as the style is clearly meant to be symbolical of the different meanings conveyed, as is seen, for instance, in the shapes of the worlds described in the poem. The increasing despair and misery of the *Inferno* is as well expressed by the constant descents therein, as is the struggling upward of the penitent soul by the ascent of the steep terraces of the mountain of Purgatory.

The different heavens appear in the *Paradiso* in such forms as the cross of living light in Mars* where "the soldier saints burn upwards, each to his own point of bliss,"† the eagle of Divine wisdom in which the heaven of Jupiter is shaped,‡ the ladder of Saturn where are the contemplative souls,§ while the highest heavens are seen as a rose whose petals are formed of the troops of the blessed.‖ The rose was a well-known emblem of blessedness in the Middle Ages, and the great rose-windows so common in cathedrals probably represented the state of absolute happiness in Paradise.

Emblems such as the cross, the eagle, the ladder and the rose could hardly have been chosen entirely at haphazard, and the geometrical figures that occur so frequently in both the astronomical and theological parts of the book are also doubtless mystically significant. Interesting instances may be observed, such as the point,¶ the intersecting lines forming crosses and

* *Par.*, xiv. 102. † "Statue and Bust," Browning. ‡ *Par.*, xviii. 107.
§ *Ibid.*, xxi. 29. ‖ *Ibid.*, xxxi. 1. ¶ *Ibid.*, xxviii. 15.

other mathematical figures,* the moving circles in which the universe is arranged,† with the spheres, sparks, patterns of dancing lights, and involved figures composed of revolving wheels within wheels in which the beatified souls group themselves.‡

The treatment of the results of various sins often typifies their nature. Thus Dante finds the discontented in the *Inferno* buried in the thick mud, as they were "gloomy and sad when the sweet sun shone on them."§ This muddy fen is a part of the river Styx, surrounding the city of Dis, where the heretics lie awaiting the Judgment Day in burning tombs, but with unquenchable spirit; as shown by the impassioned words of the Florentine patriot, Farinata, who seems to "hold hell in high scorn" (*come avesse l'Inferno in gran dispitto*), when recalling how he stood alone in defence of his beloved native town, and saved her from destruction.‖ Farther on the Styx becomes a river of burning blood, in which the violent are immersed,¶ typifying mad rage and homicidal crimes; while in the *Purgatorio* the corresponding sin appears in the milder form of anger, atoned for in a densely suffocating fog.** Here the proud are crushed by heavy weights, as if burdened by that lower self which they formerly so exalted;†† the eyes of the envious are wired up, as they could not behold the joy of others without sin,‡‡ and the avaricious cannot raise themselves above the ground, for they would not look upward when they might have done so, but gazed only on earthly possessions.§§ The sinful lovers who were tossed about by the winds for ever without home or rest in the *Inferno*‖‖ burn out their passions in flames, fierce as these once were.¶¶ It is remarkable how the sin of the hopelessly bad is distinguished from that of those whose evil was intermixed with good, and who were drawn in consequence to the purgatorial hill. There is so little humanity left in the souls that have attained to Paradise, that these retributive distinctions become impossible for lack of substance through which to express them, though many degrees of advancement exist in the different heavens.

Another point of interest is the manner in which colours are

* *Ibid.*, i. 38. † *Ibid.*, xxviii. 25. ‡ *Ibid.*, xxiv. 13. § *Inf.*, vii. 118.
‖ *Ibid.*, x. 32. ¶ *Ibid.*, xii. 46. ** *Purg.*, xvi. 1. †† *Ibid.*, x. 115.
‡‡ *Ibid.*, xiii. 69. §§ *Ibid.*, xix. 118. ‖‖ *Inf.*, v. 28. ¶¶ *Purg.*, xxv. 112.

treated. The language of colour was well recognised in former times, and we find that the great allegorical poets assigned definite positions to different colours, whether taken separately or in groups. Special representative colours have always been made use of by the Catholic Church and the artists of the pre-Raphaelite School have done much to revive interest in this question at the present day. One of the greatest of these, Dante Rossetti, carried symbolical representation to an almost inconceivable extent in his studies of mediævalism, real and supposed, and among other developments devotes much attention to the colours that are intended to express certain ideas and feelings. His rhymed and painted interpretations of the greater Dante have probably done more to elucidate the poet than many of the more prosaic commentaries.

The beautiful colour descriptions in the *Divine Comedy* are almost entirely confined to the *Purgatorio*, and much stress is laid on different colours, which form an important part of the environment of the story. The *Inferno* is generally sombre and colourless, even the atmosphere having a brown tint, though cases where colour is emphasised occasionally occur, as in the first round, where are the distinguished men who were not Christians, but who are held in honour, dwelling in a noble castle with seven portals, signifying the Trivium and the Quadrivium, the seven branches of the education of that time. These great scholars and poets walk on a meadow of fresh verdure, almost the only tolerable spot in the *Inferno*, and Virgil, who guides Dante in the perilous journey through the under worlds, has his abiding place here. The *Paradiso* appears in a blaze of light, white and shining, showing little differentiation of colour, as all is seen in completed form, unlike the *Purgatorio*, which shows only imperfect parts, life being incomplete and struggling. Light there is divided into its component parts, and the seven colours come prominently forward, becoming indistinguishable later when merged in the fulness of light in Paradise.

The systematised manner in which Dante makes use of emblematic imagery, will be more fully realised if some leading idea is considered as a central point, such as the deliverance of the soul and its ascent to higher life. A connected story can

then be discerned by means of the symbols that conceal and yet reveal the meaning. Beginning with the cleft in the rock, itself a well-known symbol of the narrow way, by which alone man can escape from spiritual death, we find the tired travellers emerging to the light after their imprisonment in the stifling atmosphere of the *Inferno*, where materiality is at its densest.* Most striking is the contrast of the fresh air, the rising sun, the distant sea, and the peace and calm pervading all on this Easter morning, with the gloom and misery which they have endured for the last two days and nights, when they began their long journey on Good Friday.

Cato, the guardian of Purgatory, receives them above ground. He is a typical figure appearing as the sun, his face shining with the light of the four stars of the Southern Cross, which represent the cardinal virtues.† Dante and Virgil treat him with great reverence, and though as a heathen he was unable to enter Purgatory, still as the apostle of liberty he is worthy of being guardian of the place where true liberty is obtained.

The cardinal virtues will be seen once more at the mystical appearance of the Church Triumphant in the Earthly Paradise, when seven virtues surround the chariot in which is Beatrice, personifying Religion or the Church, clothed in white, green and red.‡ These symbolical colours stand for the three theological virtues, faith, hope, and charity, which are added after the passage through Purgatory to justice, fortitude, temperance and prudence, associated with Cato, and all he could possess, as he had not the fuller light. The reed of humility, the only plant that grows on Cato's island, all others being instantly destroyed by the waves, is a suggestive emblem. He directs Dante to cleanse the defilement of the Inferno, and to gird himself with this reed before starting on his pilgrimage, thus showing the grace that must be the first learnt by the penitent, for "before honour is humility."§

An interesting sub-group of symbols includes the three stairs leading to the Gate of Purgatory, coloured white, purple and red, which signify confession, contrition and penance. The

* *Inf.*, xxxiv. 136. † *Purg.*, i. ‡ *Ibid.*, xxix. 43.
§ *Ibid.*, i. 94. *Proverbs*, xviii. 12.

angelic guardian is found seated on a stone like a diamond and in attire the colour of ashes or dry earth, whence he draws the keys of authority and wisdom.

"Whenever faileth either of these keys
So that it turn not rightly in the lock,"
He said to us, "this entrance doth not open.
More precious one is, but the other needs
More art and intellect ere it unlock,
For it is that which doth the knot unloose.
From Peter I have them; and he bade me err
Rather in opening than in keeping shut."*

There is the branding of the penitent on the forehead, with the seven P's, to be erased one by one by other angels as the seven circles of Purgatory are successively left behind, and finally that most mystical ceremony of the initiation to the Earthly Paradise, the culminating test for him who has overcome. Before Dante can attain to this initiation he must pass through the fire to complete his purification, when he can gain his heart's desire, the sight of Beatrice. In Beatrice we have once more the double meaning of the religion or grace, in which the soul finds satisfaction, symbolised here by the figure of the woman whom he had idealised on earth.

Virgil, who has guided him so far, and who represents Human Philosophy, explains that Dante must now take his own will for his guide, and is therefore *crowned and mitred over himself*. These are Virgil's parting words:

"Expect no more or word or sign from me;
Free and upright and sound is thy free-will,
And error were it not to do its bidding;
Thee o'er thyself I therefore crown and mitre."

This means he is now King and Priest, Law and Gospel to himself, and needs no more direction from the powers that formerly ruled his life. Outward restraints can only be safely removed when a man has gained complete self-mastery, and is in no more danger of being led away by temptation. The impulse to action will henceforth come only from within, as he has gained true freedom; all bonds being broken and that wisdom attained, which will guide him now the outside helps are gone. He can

* *Purg.*, ix. 76.

at last enter Paradise, having traversed Hell and climbed the steep mountain of Purgatory with much labour and suffering.*

It is quite possible that the *Divine Comedy* may be intended to represent a drama of Initiation, for the protagonist descends to the depths, rises again on the third day, and after passing through many well-known tests is crowned and mitred, and enters Paradise.

This series of emblems running right through the *Purgatorio* is of very great interest, and might be treated as a scaffolding to aid in building up an interpretation of the whole book. We thus see how symbols can be classed together in groups as well as considered individually, and how the poem is a vast network of inner meanings which well repay close study. Dante had a marvellous facility of manipulation of words, which is shown by the ease and skill with which he deals with the materials at his disposal. The skilful weaving of contending elements into the vast web of his great work is no less remarkable than his masterly treatment of the many and various metaphorical expressions he employs. These he draws from many sources: classical or contemporary literature, old traditions, the common use of his day, the veiled language of secret societies, or his own supreme originality. But throughout all these fantastic combinations of words, lines and rhymes his main subject is never obscured nor the meaning left uncertain. He tells the story fully and clearly, with few digressions, and with a command of language that is almost unparalleled. It is related of Dante that he said that "never a rhyme had led him to say other than he would, but that many a time and oft he had made words say in his rhyme what they were not wont to express for other poets."†

CAROLINE CUST.

* *Purg.*, xxvii. 130 (Longfellow's translation).

† *L'Ottimo Comento.*

TO THE LAND OF IDEALS

A Vision

I was sorely tried, weary with disappointment, aching with the uselessness of all effort, when, throwing myself down on the green, fresh, grassy sward, a sudden languor, exquisite in feeling, took possession of my whole being.

It was as though a spirit had thrown over me a curtain of sleep, for every fibre of my body seemed to cease its functioning for the nonce, and I was bathed in rest.

It was as though I were losing my hold upon this world, with its cares, its false friendships, its assumed interest, its bitter disappointments, its self-satisfaction stifling all progress, its threateningly overpowering obstacles thrown in the face of earnest, right-seeking workers; and I breathed with a sense of freedom, that all such powers of evil were passing from me, that never more—for this I felt—should I have to think and toil and suffer, the while I was striving to work, in the highest sense, and for the best of motives.

But no seeming success had attended my efforts. I loved peace; the whirlpool of strife had surged around me till I had well-nigh lost my hold upon the cord of faith.

Happiness, brightness, earnestness, even helpfulness, were looked upon as unnecessary virtues, if not out-and-out faults, by the friends in whose midst my lot had been cast, and had been so discouraged, that gradually the spirit that longed for such was burnt out, and all desires had smouldered to nothingness. All these phases of my life flitted across my brain as I lay in the warm embrace of sunlight.

Quietly and gradually my intense weariness fell from me, and a strange sensation pervaded not myself, but more the atmosphere around me.

I was perfectly awake, yet shadowed by sleep. My limbs were at rest, yet I was moving. It seemed as though a sheet of air had been slid between myself and the ground on which I lay, and was gradually uplifting my body from its resting-place.

No! this light, airy substance that curtained me was nothing of flesh and blood surely; for did not the sunlight, as I rose, pierce through my being? I beheld myself, as it were, in a raiment of cloudy whiteness, moving rhythmically to music heard in the far distance, but on all sides. And gazing wonderingly around, I knew I was among the clouds, in the blue and boundless ether I had so often soared to in spirit. Spirit! that was it. I was no longer a body, but a spirit, flawless, delicate, yet powerful, able to ascend or descend; to alight on a billowy, feathery cloud, and be whirled through space; to challenge the wind in swiftness. Oh! the intensity of this etheric region! I drew in deep breaths of life, and stretched out my arms to embrace the purity of space.

"It is beyond thee," said a golden voice at my side.

Turning, I saw no one, only heard the voice.

"Where am I?" I asked. "Or rather, whither am I going?"

"To the land of your Ideals," the voice answered.

* * * *

Finding myself in what was a strange, yet withal a familiar land, I wandered on in search of—I know not what; and presently, feeling I was not alone, I turned to see who had joined me. As I gazed I throbbed with joy, for at last my eyes beheld one in all the true majesty of manhood. Ah! how often had I tried to imagine such an one in the life I had passed through; and what terrible substitutes I had found!

Clothed as myself, in flowing robes of white, his whole presence embodying power, truth, courage and helpfulness, the man at my side was truly ideal.

In thankfulness I laid my hand in his, saying: "Why have we not met before?" In my heart there was no doubt as to what he was to me—all in all, from this moment, on and on until —but who can count the until?

In calm assurance, he smilingly answered;

"We could never meet on earth, that land of vain longings and bitter disappointments; where the seed of all greatness is trodden under foot, lest it should grow and bear fruit; where poverty is deemed a crime, deeds of kindness weakness; where the only true success is wealth; where the people in power oppress the weak, and kneel to money, thereby preparing for themselves a hell, rather than the heaven intended for them by a loving Creator. No, thank God, I have been granted the blessing of bringing you here, rather than the pain of dwelling amongst the poor blind ones on earth."

"But I am afraid my life has been a mistake. Surely I have lived in vain!"

"You will see you have not!"

"Have I not?" I cried, eager to hear more. "But none would listen to me. The good I endeavoured to do, ever turned out a failure. I was misunderstood, and passed by on all occasions; I ——"

"Yes, I know it all."

"You know it all! But how? You—you have been here, whilst I—! It is a mystery; I do not quite understand."

"No? Then, know this, that it has been my willing and pleasurable mission during your life on earth to watch over you, to guide you, to help, sustain and comfort you, and finally to bring you here at the Master's command, when your battle was well fought out."

"And you have always been expecting me here, and awaited my coming with a loving welcome?"

"Assuredly." And, with a winning smile, "Are you satisfied?"

"Satisfied, yes."

"And no 'mystery' remains?"

"Alas! yes. How have I come; why am I here? Surely ——?" Then a gentle light cleared my cloudy mind, and I again questioned my companion. "Tell me, am I what is known as dead?"

"To the earth, and those on earth—yes; but alive really; alive to all the beautiful thoughts and wishes you have ever conceived?"

"But my wrong thoughts, my selfish desires, my mistakes, have they come with me?"

"Evil repented of is dead for all time."

Anxiously, inquiringly, I looked up at him.

"Who am I, you wish to know?" he said.

That was my unspoken thought.

"I will tell you. I am your helpmeet, as you are mine. Created by God to watch over you, to be ever by your side, to cheer and love you."

"And I," I cried, clinging to him in ecstasy, "have found my Beloved. Thank God," I cried again, "as you are to me, so will I be to you. For all time, *we* are one!"

* * * *

We now stopped before a gate of pearly whiteness, which opened on to a lawn of the purest green, beautifully even and refreshing in its life-giving verdure. Trees bounded it, such trees as hitherto existed only in my imagination. As I looked, spell-bound with their beauty and strength, I saw birds of every imagined colour flit in and out. They almost risked a breakage of their wondrous throats in their blithe welcome. They had no fear, but would gather at our feet, or perch on our hands in careless confidence.

"Does no one ever slay them for their plumage?"

"None ever. Here all are thankful to God for His mercies and gifts. We could not be so base, so unworthy, as to destroy what He has so wondrously created."

"Then beauty appeals to you?"

"Certainly, and you will find here all your longings for the beautiful, in whatever form, have been provided for; all beauties await your pleasure, for beauty is an attribute of Heaven."

We now entered the place which was to be our future home. Peaceful, happy quietude reigned everywhere, and my Beloved, seated by my side, began to unravel the mystery surrounding my new life.

All work was here "well paid." Those who, by dint of greater perseverance and knowledge had attained to positions of power, strove to encourage their weaker neighbours.

Art was encouraged for its own sake. All had a free and

equal chance of success, and the greatest success was to the greatest artist, who in his turn was expected to help on by wise counsel his less fortunately gifted brothers and sisters.

Animals had their duties as on earth. Their owners loved them, and handled them gently. Thus their faculties were trained; and in return for this kindness their masters reaped from the noble creatures quiet obedience to their commands. They formed no part of the diet of the people, who were sustained by the life-giving qualities in the atmosphere, supplemented by fruit and vegetables, which grew in abundance for the requirements of all.

"Is it possible," I asked, "to re-visit earth, and tell them all this?"

"Your earnest desire to do them good will work its effect. However, you are permitted to visit it in spirit, and you can impart comfort to them there simply by the sending out of good and helpful thoughts. Look into this. What do you see?"

"A funeral! and oh! how sad they all look! They—they are, yes, surely they are my own people. Oh! why are they so sad?"

"It is your own funeral."

"Oh, but I must, I must speak comfort to them; I am so much, so very much happier and satisfied here. Speak! can I not let them know that we shall meet again!"

"Can you not see that you have already spoken comfort? Look, they know and are happy."

"Yes, indeed you are right. There is no need for earth's children to mourn the departed."

"Beloved, your thoughts have reached them. In the days before you, you will know you have not lived in vain, for none do that, who, by prayer, ask God's blessing on their earnest endeavours daily. Be the task great or small it is the same; for in God's sight the smallest deed becomes great, if done in love, and the greatest least, if without love."

L. B.

OBLIGATION

A Study in Ethics

I. *The moral principle; some erroneous views thereon.*

Many have been the attempts to describe the nature and trace the origin of moral action, or discover the principle whereby man comes into possession of what are called moral ideas, and feels himself impelled to realise these ideas in his conduct. Some with Hobbes and Helvetius regard the pursuit of self-interest, motived by the principle of self-love, as the cause that schemes of morality have been fabricated and are carried into effect by the individual. This view, however, is untenable because at variance with the facts it is adduced to explain, the most prominent trait of moral action being the feeling on the part of the agent that he should act thus even though he be a loser thereby. Others like Hume consider benevolence, or like Schopenhauer compassion, as the principle leading man to do what is helpful and avoid what is harmful to the well-being of his fellow-creatures, and to value from a kindly interest in the species all qualities likely to contribute to the happiness, or lessen the suffering, either of their individual possessor, or of others with whom he comes in contact. This view, though far less at strife with the facts of moral consciousness than the repulsive egoism of the Hobbes' school, and though directly appealing to the softening and ennobling instinct of humanity, must nevertheless be regarded as incorrect, because it leaves out of account the fact that the sense of duty is different from the feeling of a desire to benefit our fellow-creatures arising out of a love to them and a consequent wish to promote their interests.

We clearly recognise duties as owing to those who for some reason cannot become objects of our affection, and in some cases are the very reverse; besides, the sense of duty is unlike any inclination leading us to gratify a taste or to do something

we have a liking for, and even where duty and natural propensity, like the Rhone and Rhine at Geneva, happen to flow together, the individual agent easily perceives the difference in the streams. Indeed had morality to depend upon such a varying principle as taste or good pleasure, its practice would be very insufficiently ensured, for in nothing do men differ more than in their tastes and likings, and especially in those that have regard to their fellow-creatures.

II. *The moral principle not definable as an inclination.*

The views above discussed agree in referring the source of moral action to a natural impulse on the part of the agent, Hobbes defining it as love of self, Hume as love of others.

Such an impulse, however, would exactly resemble all other impulses of our nature in being merely a propensity towards an object. But the sense of duty has the peculiarity of making us regard the gratification of all our natural propensities as subordinate to its own claims, thus often happening to cut across one or other of our inclinations, say the desire of revenge or the love of drink; and since on such occasions the propensity in question is the force naturally inclining us to act, whereas the sense of duty, as the principle opposing this propensity, is the force compelling us not to act, it follows that the latter is not an inclination—*i.e.*, a structural tendency seeking to realise itself—but a compulsion—*i.e.*, something interfering with the exercise of such tendencies. Nor does the fact that as the moral character improves, the sense of duty operates without our feeling so distinctly its magisterial and compulsory nature, prove that it ever becomes an inclination; for the increased ease with which it is obeyed arises from the feeling of its authority having been developed by the habit of obedience, whilst the repeated subordination of the particular propensities has lessened their natural force. Nor, again, can it justly be said that the interference of the sense of duty with the exercise of an inclination resembles the interference which often occurs between one inclination and another, for in the rivalry of inclinations liking is common to all, but the one liked most gets the preference; whereas when the sense of duty opposes a particular inclination the difference is between the authoritativeness of the former and the agreeableness of the latter.

III. *The moral principle a law announced through the sense of duty, but evidenced by and grounded upon reason.*

The foregoing remarks show that the sense of duty should be regarded not as an inclination, but as the expression of a law supreme over all inclinations. If it be said that as men often disobey the moral principle, it is not universally operative, and therefore cannot be regarded as a law, because lacking the criterion of universal effectiveness common to all natural laws, it can be replied that the character of moral law differs in one respect vitally from that of all natural laws, and thus puts it out of comparison therewith; for, unlike the latter, it is a law not of *things* either living or inanimate, but of rational beings, and, therefore, it could not be regarded as inoperative, or its native authority as impaired, even though such beings conspired to ignore it, since in spite of their disobedience it would still remain valid in reason, as the standard by which they *ought* to regulate their conduct. Hence the fact that the determining principle of moral action is grounded in reason, and does not spring out of the idiosyncrasies of human nature, secures for it, despite all contrary appearances, that character of universality which is one of the distinguishing marks of a law; and the perception of this character is the reason why a moral agent realises that the claims of duty have nothing whatever to do with his individual likes or dislikes, but that the latter must either square with the former, or be left out of account altogether. This, again, enables us to see the difference between moral and other kinds of action. For in the former case the action is prescribed to the agent by a law existing apart from himself, and claiming allegiance irrespectively of its bearing upon his personal interests or inclination; whereas in the latter the source or motive of action is within the agent, being really nothing more than his particular nature seeking to realise what is congenial to it. Hence to moral action is applied the term obligatory, as implying something laid upon, or exteriorly determining the agent with respect to his conduct; whilst other kinds of action are spoken of as purely natural, in the sense that they are but the outcome of inherent tendencies. Thus the gratification of any propensity is a natural action flowing out of the very constitution of man; but the effort made by an indivi-

dual, endued with such a propensity, to limit the gratification thereof, so that it shall not injure others, or violate the economy of his personal being, is a moral action originating from the restraint imposed upon him by a law valid in reason to define the bounds and general conditions to which the gratification of the propensity should be subjected.

The essential nature of obligation, therefore, is the claim of reason over a reasonable being in compelling him to consider as the ultimate test of actions, not their fitness to gratify his individual desires or further his particular interests, but their congruity with universal principles empowered to prompt, restrain, or prohibit the several acts composing, or capable of composing, not his conduct alone, but that of all other beings situated like himself.

The apprehension of this truth teaches a moral agent to regard as the final motive of conduct, not the realisation of his private ends or personal desires, but the obedience of a law dictating, restraining or prohibiting his individual actions, as well as those of all other beings existing in the same circumstances. Hence the true source of obligation is in the reason, being the connection between a moral agent and the conduct which as a reasonable being he knows to have been antecedently mapped out for him by the nature of things.

Apart from this, obligation is impossible. There may indeed be forces impelling conduct such as the natural desires, but these forces rule *de facto*, not *de jure*, they have no validity in reason and their authority ceases with their activity, while that of obligation remains even when inoperative.

IV. *The moral principle as expressed and enforced by the sense of duty, or the difference between obligation and the phenomenon of its perception in our consciousness.*

But although obligation be thus grounded in reason, yet its authoritative force is expounded to our consciousness by other means than reasoning processes. A man perfectly reasonable would infallibly perceive the obligation of acting in accordance with the general ends prescribed by reason, and of allowing them their due supremacy over his own private interests and desires; but owing to the constitution of human nature it would not necessarily follow that we should find the man in question yield-

ing a practical obedience to the obligation thus perceived. For the strength of his natural impulses might be so great, or his will to be good so feeble, that he could not put forth the necessary effort to fulfil the requirements of the obligation. Now, as a safeguard against such a breach in the coincidence of reason and will, the emotional nature of man affords with respect to duty, a counterpart to what is afforded by his rational nature. Through reason we are compelled to recognise the validity of moral obligation; by the sense of duty we are impelled to fulfil that obligation. For as our active nature is governed by our emotional, the sense of duty is the mode whereby moral law interprets itself to the latter, so as to enforce its claims upon the former. The sense of duty, therefore, is to one part of our nature what the perception of obligation is to another; and hence they are but two different phases of the self-same law. This fact accounts for the likeness visible in the two expressions. We perceive the validity of obligation, feel the authoritative force of duty, and realise in both instances the character of a law. In this simple manner Locke's statement that moral law is only conceivable as a positive command deriving validity from the rewards and punishments backing it up, is at once seen to be fallacious. For moral law appeals to man through his twofold capacity as a rational and emotional being, and its dictates as based upon the nature of things are reasonable and not arbitrary; hence such a law has all the marks of interior validity, and can only accidentally require the support of external agencies such as rewards and punishments.

V. *The moral principle as viewed disjunctively in relation to its form and content.*

After thus obtaining a general idea of the moral principle as a law of conduct grounded in reason and brought to bear upon the human will through the sense of duty, we may now proceed to a closer examination of its form and content.

The perception that the conduct of the individual ought to be governed, not by his particular idiosyncrasies, but in accordance with universal principles, and the sense of duty accompanying and expounding this perception, constitutes the universal form of the moral principle.

The phrases, "it would not be right," "it would not be reasonable, and so I feel it ought not to be done," convey a popular expression of the manner in which the sense of duty and its correlative emotion are everywhere experienced. The same phrases show likewise that what first and most frequently comes to our consciousness is not the abstract conception of moral law, but its practical embodiment in individual precepts, under which it appears as the form with the content, or as the universal inherent in the particular. Ordinarily we experience the sense of duty in connection with individual acts, with the particular precepts to which these acts are severally referable, or with the dispositions arising from the habitual obedience to such precepts; these dispositions being regarded as qualities of the mind and termed virtues. In reality, however, the sense of duty has only a vital union either with a precept or a virtue, as its connection with individual acts results simply from the associative principle; for being so many applications of a given precept or expressions of a particular virtue, these acts in time become invested with the character that properly belongs only to the precept or the virtue that gave rise to them. Inattention to this important truth has been manifoldly injurious both to moral theory and moral practice.

For on the one hand ethical sophists have often sought to undermine the validity of moral law, by pointing to the fact that the sense of duty prompts to actions diametrically opposite in their character, whereas the truth is that these conflicting actions are usually only different applications of the selfsame precept; as for instance in countries where population increases out of all proportion to the means of sustenance, the sense of parental responsibility causes infanticide, whilst in more happily situated lands it leads to the careful nurture of children.

On the other hand, the fact of the sense of duty having been transferred from a precept or a virtue to certain acts whereby under specific circumstances the precept was correctly applied or the virtue rightly exercised, has occasioned various misfortunes and placed many stumbling-blocks in the path of civilisation, especially in connection with social and political institutions; though perhaps its worse effect has been in preventing men from

seeing that, although the fundamental precepts and cardinal virtues are necessarily unchangeable, the application of the one and the exercise of the other ultimately depend upon the nature of particular circumstances. As to the content of the moral principle, this is made up of those several precepts and their corresponding virtues which are not referable to other precepts or virtues as means to ends, or as subordinates to a common species. All such precepts and virtues, owing to their being the actual content of the moral principle, participate in its universal form and hence possess unconditional validity over all beings subject to the law in question.

As regards the application of these precepts, reason has to decide, from the nature of the particular circumstances, what conduct is most agreeable to them. The results of this decision constitute what is termed morality, which being merely a current mode of approximately applying the moral precepts, is necessarily variable in its character, because dependent upon conditions a change of which would involve a re-adjusted application of the self-same precepts. Hence the genesis of morality and the nature and conditions of its development can be historically and scientifically traced with more or less accuracy; whereas to seek an origin for the moral principle itself would be as fatuous as to seek one for the principle of gravitation, since though we may hope to get behind a phenomenon and discover the laws that determine it, as Newton did in the case of the falling apple, yet we can never hope to reach the back of Beyond, and find out how a law becomes a law, but have to rest satisfied with knowing that it must either be *à priori* respectively to the persons or things it governs, or else be involved in their nature as a reality necessarily co-existing with them and defining the mode of their activity. The fact that morality is of a changing character does not imply any uncertainty respecting the manner in which the moral precepts should be applied.

For as regards any individual case there must exist in reason a given course of action which relatively to that case is the best possible, in the sense of being the most correct application of the particular moral precepts to which the decision of the case is referable. This best possible course is determined by the laws

of reason, just as inevitably and universally as any particular phenomenon in nature is caused by the operation of given principles upon given conditions.

That the course which thus actually exists in and is defined by reason, very often remains unknown to man, no more disproves its reality, than the ignorance of the savage respecting mathematical truths invalidates the reality of those truths.

Hence moral law contains not only the supreme precepts, such as justice, benevolence, self-restraint, and so forth, but also the full scheme of adjustments wherein these precepts and all others subordinate to or dependent upon them find their proper application as regards the various relationships of life.

In conclusion be it said that the question whether with respect to man the moral principle be autonomic or heteronomic, cannot be answered categorically but only hypothetically. For, since moral law is identical with reason and man is a reasonable being, this law must be regarded as an autonomic principle of his nature. Since, however, he does not always act upon it, and yet in spite of this it retains authority over him, it must in all such cases be regarded as standing in an heteronomic relationship to his will. Hence respectively to man as man, the moral law is an autonomic principle ; whilst respectively to the individual, it may become heteronomic. To secure that this autonomy, the divine birthright of man, shall be universal and eternal, and that through the perfect identity of reason and will all trace of heteronomy shall be for ever banished, is the one supreme aim consciously or unconsciously animating every moral and religious system that deserves the name. Every act of self-sacrificing devotion to duty, no matter however fatuous or mistaken its end may be, is an effort in the same direction, and contributes its share to the final triumph of that day when the individual shall be lost in the universal, and the life of self with its pitiful strivings, endless as the surge of a moaning and unrestful tide, shall lie at peace for ever within the calm unfathomed ocean of the Eternal Will.

C. C. Dove.

THE STORY OF AN ÂKÂSHIC RECORD

THE Lords of Fate sat in consultation. The question concerned the rebirth of a soul. It was no ordinary individuality; it had been through many incarnations and had benefited but little thereby. It now stood shivering on the astral plane awaiting a new etheric double. The Lords of Fate eyed it in some perplexity.

"Come hither, O man," said one of them, and his voice was translated into the astral colour language by means that will readily be understood by the advanced Theosophical student (and I write not for the ignorant). "Thou hast been here before."

"Many times," said the soul.

"Who art thou?" said the second Lord.

"An Assyrian scribe, a Pharisee, a Parobolanus of Alexandria, a Schoolman of Rome, an Inquisitor of Spain, a Tractarian of Oxford, and several other things," said the soul.

"Summon the Arch-Elemental of the Latin Race," said the third Lord.

A councillor touched an astral bell at his side. Its ring was accompanied by earthquakes, railway accidents, etc., on the physical plane (a phenomenon well-known to the Theosophical student). The Arch-Elemental appeared. "Brother," said the fourth Lord, "knowest thou this man?"

"I do," said the Arch-Elemental.

"He has been on thy current in many incarnations, I believe," said the fifth Lord.

"He has," said the Elemental.

"Is it true that he had much to do with the formulation of the Substance and Accident theory?" said the sixth Lord.

"He had, bless him!" said the Elemental.

"Art thou sure, or dost thou *think* so?" said the seventh Lord.

"We *never think* on *our* current," said the Elemental, and flames of pride played vividly in the astral plane.

"What in thunder do you do then?" said all the Lords.

"We *formulate*," said the Elemental.

"Stand down," said the first Lord.

A councillor turned sadly to the âkâshic records:

"It is so, my Lords," he said. "It is indeed."

The Lords of Fate turned to the soul:

"Listen, O man," they said. "The Law of Karma is inexorable. Thou hast hitherto preferred definition to thought, systematisation to research, formulation to enquiry. *Now* the power of thought is forbidden thee. Thou hast in one of thy mediæval incarnations stated that whereas a man's head could be passed into a rabbit hole, the *bigness* of his head could *not*. Now, therefore, thy foolishness shall enter men's minds, but the hugeness of thy foolishness shall not dawn on them. Thou hast hitherto formulated orthodoxy, now thou shalt formulate heresy. What thou hast stated as untrue without knowledge, thou shalt now define as certainly true—also without knowledge. Thou hast advanced many dogmas in bad Latin—thou shalt advance many more in bad Sanskrit. Thou art a Theosophist. Next case, please."

X. Y. Z.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

China and the West

Letters from John Chinaman. (London: R. Brimley Johnson; 1902. Price 1s.)

Four of these eight letters were published in *The Saturday Review* at the time of the recent outburst in China. They purport to be the views of a Chinaman long resident in Europe on the reasons for the fundamental antagonism between Eastern and Western civilisation. They would be of greater value if we could really assure ourselves that they were written by an actual Chinaman; but of this we can hardly persuade ourselves. They are written from a standpoint and

in a style that seems to be not unfamiliar to us, but which is hardly that of an Eastern. Nevertheless they put forward views which in the main an educated Confucian might be very well supposed to hold by one who had greater sympathy for other nations than for his own people. There is undoubtedly truth in some of the writer's main contentions, but in others, and on many subordinate points, there is great need of taking into account many other factors before we can arrive at a really impartial judgment.

In the first letter "John Chinaman" is made to put his case as follows:

"Our civilisation is the oldest in the world. It does not follow that it is the best; but neither, I submit, does it follow that it is the worst. On the contrary, such antiquity is, at any rate, a proof that our institutions have guaranteed us a stability for which we search in vain among the nations of Europe. But not only is our civilisation stable, it also embodies, as we think, a moral order; while in yours we detect only an economic chaos. Whether your religion be better than ours, I do not at present dispute; but it is certain that it has less influence on society. You profess Christianity, but your civilisation has never been Christian; whereas ours is Confucian through and through. But to say that it is Confucian, is to say that it is moral; or at least (for I do not wish to beg the question), that moral relations are those which it primarily contemplates. Whereas, with you (so it seems to us) economic relations come first, and upon these you endeavour, afterwards, to graft as much morality as they will admit."

Most of this has been said of our Western civilisation *ad nauseam* for many centuries by hundreds of thousands of its members; and if we are not mistaken, the same criticism has been made on the conditions in China by enlightened Chinamen for even a longer period. As to "stability," is it to be preferred to growth? There are young nations and old nations, and the just comparison lies between nations at similar periods of their life-spans.

In his second letter our author proceeds: "Left to ourselves, we should never have sought intercourse with the West. We have no motive to do so; for we desire neither to proselytise nor to trade. We believe, it is true, that our religion is more rational than yours, our morality higher, and our institutions more perfect; but we recognise that what is suited to us may be ill adapted to others. We do not conceive that we have a mission to redeem or to civilise the world, still less that that mission is to be accomplished by the

methods of fire and sword; and we are thankful enough if we can solve our own problems, without burdening ourselves with those of other people."

This is written from the supposed standpoint of the Confucian rationalist, the official ruling caste of China. We are in entire sympathy with this non-proselytising attitude, but, if we remember rightly, it was not Confucius but Chuang Tsŭ, the later disciple of Lao-tzŭ, who preached the doctrine of "letting alone," and averred that all the trouble in his time had arisen from the hysterical activity of the followers of the Confucian doctrine of "charity and duty to one's neighbours." Again, the "left to ourselves" is indicative of some confusion of thought; the individual may attempt to leave others alone, but it seems opposed to the very nature of things that humanity should leave him or his nation alone. Together we must stand or fall; such appears to be the "higher socialism" of the leaders of humanity.

In his fourth letter our pseudo John Chinaman proceeds to paint a picture of the "average English citizen." We admit his imperfections and his *bourgeoisie;* but surely there is something more in him than this? He cannot rightly be despised, for he is the backbone of the nation of which for the moment much is expected. But hear the verdict of what seems in this instance to resemble the self-confidence of a youthful student of human affairs rather than the mature judgment of a really instructed mind. "When I review my impressions of the average English citizen, impressions based on many years' study, what kind of man do I see? I see one divorced from Nature, but unreclaimed by Art; instructed, but not educated; assimilative, but incapable of thought. Trained in the tenets of a religion in which he does not really believe—for he sees it flatly contradicted in every relation of life—he dimly feels that it is prudent to conceal under a mask of piety the atheism he is hardly intelligent enough to avow. His religion is conventional; and, what is more important, his morals are as conventional as his creed. Charity, chastity, self-abnegation, contempt of the world and its prizes—these are the words on which he has been fed from his childhood upwards. And words they have remained, for he has neither anywhere seen them practised by others, nor has it ever occurred to him to practise them himself. Their influence, while it is strong enough to make him a chronic hypocrite, is not so strong as to show him the hypocrite he is. Deprived on the one hand of the support of a true ethical standard em-

bodied in the life of the society of which he is a member, he is duped, on the other, by lip-worship of an impotent ideal. Abandoned thus to his instincts, he is contented to do as others do, and, ignoring the things of the spirit, to devote himself to material ends. He becomes a mere tool; and of such your society is composed. By your works you may be known. Your triumphs in the mechanical arts are the obverse of your failure in all that calls for spiritual insight. Machinery of every kind you can make and use to perfection; but you cannot build a house, or write a poem, or paint a picture; still less can you worship or aspire. Look at your streets! Row upon row of little boxes, one like another, lacking in all that is essential, loaded with all that is superfluous—this is what passes among you for architecture. Your literature is the daily press, with its stream of solemn fatuity, of anecdotes, puzzles, puns, and police court scandal. Your pictures are stories in paint, transcripts of all that is banal, clumsily botched by amateurs as devoid of tradition as of genius. Your outer sense as well as your inner is dead, you are blind and deaf. . . ."

And so on, all a very pretty exercise in invective for a youthful Western professed reformer, who is himself striving to get out of the conditions he paints in such glowing colours; but surely written by no Chinaman, and surely not an unprejudiced picture of our many friends who are just ordinary average Englishmen. They, we know, are made of sterner stuff within; they are not artistic, it is true, but on the average in honesty and straightforwardness they can compare favourably with any other of the world's citizens. If they were nothing but what "John Chinaman" depicts, England would long ago have ceased to be a dominant factor in the immediate counsels of the nations.

Ere closing this lengthy notice, we must reproduce the views of our author on Confucianism and Christianity. Prefacing his remarks with the admission that "among the masses of China superstition is as widely spread as among those of any European country," and that "Buddhism and Taoism lend themselves with us to practices and beliefs as regrettable and absurd as any that are fostered by Christianity among yourselves," he continues:

"Confucianism, it is sometimes said, is not a religion at all; and if by religion be meant a set of dogmatic propositions dealing with a supernatural world radically distinct from our own, the statement is, no doubt, strictly true. It was, in fact, one of the objects of Confucius to discourage pre-occupation with the supernatural, and

the true disciple endeavours in this respect to follow in his master's footsteps. 'Beware of religion,' a Mandarin says, meaning 'beware of superstition'; and in this sense only Confucianism is irreligious. Again it is said that Confucianism is merely an ethical system; and this, too, is true, in so far as its whole aim and purport is to direct and inspire right conduct. But, on the other hand—and this is the point I wish to make—it is not merely a teaching, but a life. The principles it enjoins are those which are actually embodied in the structure of society, so that they are inculcated not merely by written and spoken word, but by the whole habit of everyday experience. The unity of the family and the state, as expressed in the worship of ancestors, is the basis not merely of the professed creed, but of the actual practice of a Chinaman. To whatever other faith he may adhere—Buddhist, Taoist, Christian—this is the thing that really matters to him. To him the generations past and the generations to come form with those that are alive one single whole. All live eternally, though it is only some that happen at any moment to live upon earth. Ancestor-worship is thus the symbol of a social idea, immense in its force to consolidate and to bind. Its effect in China must be seen to be believed. . . .

"This, then, is the first and most striking aspect of our national religion; but there is another hardly less important in its bearing on social life. Confucianism is the exponent of the ideal of work. Your eighteenth century observers, who laid so much stress on the ritual of the Emperor's yearly ploughing, were nearer to the heart of our civilisation than many later and less sympathetic enquirers. The duty of man to labour, and primarily to labour on the soil, is a fundamental postulate of our religion. Hence the worship of Mother Earth, the source of all increase; hence the worship of Heaven, the giver of light and rain; and hence also that social system whose aim is to secure a general access to the soil. The willing dedication of all, in brotherhood and peace, to labour, blessed by the powers of heaven and earth, such is the simple, intelligible ideal we have set before our people, such is the conception we have embodied in our institutions. And if you seek more than this, a metaphysical system to justify and explain our homely creed, that too we have provided for our scholars. Humanity, they are taught, is a Being spiritual and eternal, manifesting itself in time in the series of generations. This Being is the mediator between heaven and earth, between the ultimate ideal and the existing fact. By

labour, incessant and devout, to raise earth to heaven, to realise, in fact, the good that as yet exists only in idea—that is the end and purpose of human life; and in fulfilling it we achieve and maintain our unity each with every other, and all with the Divine. There, surely, is a faith not unworthy to be called a religion. I do not say that it is consciously held by the mass of the people, for in no State does the mass of the people reflect. But I claim for us that the life of our masses is so ordered and disposed as to accord with the postulates of our creed; that they practise, if they do not profess, the tenets of our sages, and that the two cardinal ideas on which every society should rest, brotherhood and the dignity of labour, are brought home to them in direct and unmistakable form by the structure of our secular institutions."

This is all very good and an admirable ideal; but surely the West is also laborious enough in all conscience! *Laborare est orare* was and is also even a monkish ideal in the West. Such is the ideal of Confucianism, as it is said to appear to an educated Chinaman. The writer then proceeds to give his view of the relation of society with religion in the West.

"While, on the one hand, your society has evolved on a purely material basis, on the other religion has not ceased to be recognised among you. Only, cut off from its natural root in social institutions, it has assumed forms which I cannot but think to be either obtuse or dangerous. Those who profess Christianity—and there are few who, in one way or another, do not—either profess it only with their lips, and having in this way satisfied those claims of the ideal from which no human being is altogether free, turn back with an unencumbered mind and conscience to the pursuit of egotistic ends; or else, being seriously possessed by the Teachings of Christ, they find themselves almost inevitably drawn into the position of revolutionists. For those Teachings, if they be fully accepted and fairly interpreted, must be seen to be incompatible with the whole structure of your society. Enunciated centuries ago, by a mild Oriental enthusiast, unlettered, untravelled, inexperienced, they are remarkable not more for their tender appeal to brotherly love than for their aversion or indifference to all other elements of human excellence. The subject of Augustus and Tiberius lived and died unaware of the history and doctrines of imperial Rome; the contemporary of Virgil and Livy could not read the language in which they wrote. Provincial by birth, mechanic by trade, by temperament a poet and a mystic, he enjoyed in the course of his brief

life few opportunities, and he evinced little inclination, to become acquainted with the rudiments of the science whose end is the prosperity of the State. The production and the distribution of wealth, the disposition of power, laws that regulate labour, property, trade, these were matters as remote from his interests as they were beyond his comprehension. Never was man better equipped to inspire a religious sect; never one worse to found or direct a commonwealth Yet this man it is whose *naïf* maxims of self-abnegation have been accepted as gospel by the nations of the West, the type of all that is predatory, violent, and aggressive. No wonder your history has been one long and lamentable tale of antagonism, tumult, carnage and confusion! No wonder the spiritual and temporal powers have oscillated between open war and truces as discreditable to the one as to the other! No wonder that down to the present day every man among you who has been genuinely inspired with the spirit of your religion has shrunk in horror from the society which purports to have adopted its principles as its own! It is the Nemesis of an idealist creed that it cannot inform realities; it can but mass together, outside and in opposition to the established order, the forces that should have shaped and controlled it from within. The spirit remains unembodied, the body uninformed. So it has been and so it is with this polity of yours. It purports to represent a superhuman ideal; in reality, it does not represent even one that is human. It is of the earth, earthy; while from heaven far above, cries, like a ghost, the voice of the Nazarene, as pure, as clear, as ineffectual, as when first it flung from the shores of Galilee its challenge to the world-sustaining power of Rome."

Surely this was written by no Chinaman! There is truth in it, that is to say, some points are well taken; but there is a far greater proportion of those half-truths which are more dangerous than falsehoods. Could we really persuade ourselves that these letters had been penned by a genuine Chinaman, our judgment would be different and we should value at greater worth some of the points brought forward; but, as it is, we regard the criticism as written by a Western hand, and this very fact is an indication of the superior practicality and determination of the Western intellect over the lethargy of modern China, though we cannot but regret that these qualities in our author are considerably discounted by the lack of straightforwardness concerning his own identity. We are eagerly anxious to understand the real John Chinaman and his point of view,

and doubtless our pseudo "John Chinaman" has brought forward many points of service in this connection, but we should prefer to hear our Chinese brethren speak for themselves.

G. R. S. M.

Man's Life History

Man's Place in the Universe. A Summary of Theosophic Study. By the Author of the *Story of Atlantis*. (London and Benares: Theosophical Publishing Society; 1902. Price 2s.)

This little book is intended to offer to the enquirer a fairly simple and complete exposition, according to Theosophy, of the nature and evolution of man and his relations with his surroundings. It is meant to serve as an introduction to more abstruse works, and thus to smoothe the first somewhat rugged steps over which the would-be student is a little apt to stumble. We think, however, that it is not so suitable for the beginner as for the fairly advanced student, to whom it gives a very useful summary of our present knowledge.

Brief explanations of the terms Spirit and Matter, and of the general working of the Law of Karma, form an introduction to the first chapter of the book, "Man's relation to God." This gives a luminous expositio nof the nature and work of the Three Logoi, as illustrated in the activities of the triple Solar Logos of our system, and the three outpourings of the Life—the Life-Waves now familiar to the theosophical student. The second chapter on "The Planetary Chains" will prove a very difficult one for the ordinary reader, and we could therefore almost wish that it came at the end of the book instead of at the beginning; it speaks with much detail on the seven chains, and thus touches points on which theosophical students are much divided.

Students will find much to interest them in the two succeeding chapters on the "Downward and Upward Arcs" and the "Karma of failure." These four chapters cover the outline of human history on the large scale, and from this our author turns to the evolution of the individual. Under the heading, "Vehicles of Consciousness and Reincarnation," we have first the definition of "the real man," and then the description of the veiling of this man in successive sheaths, formed out of the matter of the planes on which he is to function. These "sheaths" become "vehicles of consciousness," and these are transformed into "bodies," *i.e.*, forms that can be used by the man for active functioning on the planes to which they belong. This

nomenclature is, we think, new, in the West, in the precise definition given to each term, and in this precision lies a distinct advantage for the student, though it may add to the initial difficulties of the casual reader. Our author next traces the evolution of consciousness and its relation to its vehicles during and after a physical life, and its return to this globe to carry on its evolution.

The sixth chapter describes the "After-Death Conditions," and explains the various states of the man in Kâmaloka and Devachan. The devachanic life is singularly well described, and its value is rightly insisted on.

Chapter VII., entitled "The Goal of Humanity," is a lucid and inspiring description of the self-realisation of consciousness on the nirvâṇic plane, and of the steps which lead thereto on the Path, trodden by the more eager aspirants. These show in their characters a growing "aloofness from earthly interests, while yet all earthly duties are being discharged to the full," and the attitude of the aspirant is well described, as regards his emotional development, in the following passage:

> Now, this love is no mere sentimental goodwill, no mere vague and undefined affection for humanity in general. It is a personal love for each, a perfect recognition of the claims of man as man on all we have and all we are; a passionate giving out of our best in practical response to each personal claim, just as though the one person whose claim may come before us, at any given moment, were our nearest and our dearest, our closest and our best. It means, in fact, the widening of personal or individual love, till it embraces *all*, so that to one who needs us is freely given all that before was given but to the one or to the few.
>
> Such a love fitly crowns the edifice of wisdom and power. It is the culminating achievement, the final and crowning result of the effort of ages.

Personally, I should prefer to eliminate the word "passionate" in the above description, as passion—connoting, as it does, whirl and disturbance—has no place in the serenity at which we aim; but, with this slight exception, the passage is both true and beautiful, and the aspirant may test his progress by the extent to which he realises this ideal.

May this little book aid the struggling steps of the learner, and thus realise the wishes and reward the labours of the author.

ANNIE BESANT.

Eastern Teachings

A Study of the Bhâgavata Purâṇa, or Esoteric Hinduism. By Purnendu Narayana Sinha, M.A., B.L. (London and Benares: Theosophical Publishing Society; 1901. Price 4s.)

Few works have come from the pens of our theosophical brothers in India that deserve more careful study than this weighty volume. It is scarcely a book that one can recommend to the general reader, as it is one which demands slow reading and sustained thinking; but the student of Eastern thought can scarcely afford to be without it, and it offers a good example of the value shed on ancient Scriptures by theosophical teachings. The writer is a man learned in the Shâstras, drawing on a mind well stored with Hindu doctrines; he is also well versed in theosophical thought, and the combination—only too rare—gives its peculiar value to this work.

The plan of the book is simple and well designed; a translation is given, "reproducing the text in its essential features," omitting all non-essential. This has the advantage of giving us a consecutive account, but, on the other hand, some of the loveliest portions of the original disappear. The author adds his own comments and explanations within brackets, and it is these, as said above, which give this book its great value.

The object of *Shrîmad Bhâgavata* is to arouse Bhakti, devotion, by describing the actions of Bhagavân, the Lord, named herein Vishṇu. It is intended to lift the devotee to the higher planes of existence, beyond the Trilokî, the three worlds in which men revolve on the wheel of births and deaths, and to this end it fixes the heart on Bhagavân and His supreme abode. This is the secret of its perennial popularity, of its hold on the hearts of Hindus. It is the Purâṇa which awakens, stimulates and nourishes spiritual love.

It is Nârada, the typical devotee, who urges on Vyâsa the writing of this Purâṇa; having, by devotion to Bhagavân, gained the Nirmâṇakaya vesture, he does not perish with the three worlds: "The mind fixed in Me is never destroyed in creation or pralaya, nor does the memory fail." He, in his deathless body, is indrawn when Brahmâ sleeps, and comes forth on His awakening. In order to help others to gain this state, Nârada bids Vyâsa write the *Bhâgavata*.

After a chapter on Yoga, an account of the creation is given, and it is interesting to see here how the *Bhâgavata* with its Three Puruṣhas confirms the theosophical teaching of the three life-waves

—a point, we may note in passing, that is even more plainly put in the *Devî Bhâgavata*, a work full of occultism, never yet, so far as we know, translated. Students should read very carefully the comments, pp. 21-23, on the manifestation of the Logos in man.

The part of the tâmasic and râjasic attributes of matter in the work of creation is illustrated by the allegory of Hiraṇyaksha and Hiraṇykashipu, the tâmasic and râjasic representatives of Jaya and Vijaya, the ingoing and outgoing Prâna of the Lord. The tables constructed with great care, and partially explained, will repay study, remembering that they are not the mere genealogies they appear to be, but a history of kosmic evolution. The student may be aided to understand the Paurâṇic system by noting the explanation given by Nârada of the story of Puraṇjana, as well as by assimilating the valuable comments of our author, who has well worked out the limited principles given in the Purâṇa itself.

Out of these Paurâṇic stories, also, arises the great lesson of the content which accepts the Law whether it gives gain or loss. The sages come under a kârmic curse; they work it out as readily as a kârmic blessing. Nothing shakes them, for their wills being fixed to reach Viṣhṇu, they quarrel not with the incidents on the way, nor dream ever of failure, whatever may befall.

The Tenth Skandha and our author's illuminative comments should be reprinted separately as a pamphlet for Indian circulation. We have seen nothing more likely to defend Indian youth from the misapprehensions of this Skandha which arise from modern prurience and alien suggestions.

Our author concludes with an admirable summary of evolution, that will repay most careful study, a final proof of the value of the blending of Paurâṇic and theosophical learning. And of one thing we feel sure: they who study this book most carefully will be those who will value it most highly.

ANNIE BESANT.

OBSCURE PROBLEMS OF KARMA AND RE-BIRTH

Transactions of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society No. 36; April, 1902. By A. P. Sinnett. (London: Theosophical Publishing Society. Price 1s.)

UNDER the above title Mr. Sinnett publishes the substance of a series of lectures given to the London Lodge during the months of February and March of the present year, and deals chiefly with such enigmas

as sex in incarnation and idiot births. We congratulate our Vice-President on the intelligent way in which he has sketched a number of most interesting problems connected with these subjects, and on the care with which he protects his readers from falling into those crudities of thought which usually characterise the earlier stages of theosophic study. Mr. Sinnett is as usual ingenious and interesting and very able in drawing deductions from the investigations of our "clear-seeing" colleagues. As he implies himself, however, we have not as yet sufficient data to enable us to work out even a tentative solution of most of these "obscure problems," and we should like to add that much of the data to hand also requires very careful revision.

G. R. S. M.

Mrs. Besant's Adyar Lectures

The Religious Problem in India: Four Lectures delivered during the Twenty-sixth Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society at Adyar, Madras, 1901. By Annie Besant. (London: Theosophical Publishing Society; 1902. Price 1*s.* 6*d.*)

Mrs. Besant's recent lectures at Adyar are practically in continuation of her series *Four Great Religions*, in which she treated of Brâhmanism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and Christianity. To these she has now added lectures on Islâm, Jainism and Sikhism, and has rounded off the whole with a fine exposition of that Wisdom which unifies all faiths.

The key-note of our colleague's method is given in her own words on p. 20: "Judge a religion by its noblest and not by its worst, and then we shall learn to love each other as brothers, and not hate each other as bigots and as fanatics." We have, then, before us eloquent panegyrics on the founders and teachings of the great faiths under consideration, and what is most astonishing is that Mrs. Besant, who was almost too weak to stand, should have been able to speak with such marvellous spirit as is displayed in her lectures on Islâm, Sikhism and Theosophy, and even on so sedate and philosophic a theme as Jainism.

In pursuit of her purpose our colleague has naturally sought in Syed Ameer Ali's eloquent defence of Mohammedanism her authority for that ideal "Spirit of Islâm," which was doubtless intended by the giver of that Faith, but which, as was to be expected, owing to the common imperfection of human nature, the followers have but seldom realised. In the lecture on Jainism there is some interesting informa-

tion on the inner discipline of the disciple, gleaned from personal conversation with Jaina friends, and also from translations from the Prâkrit made for Mrs. Besant by our colleague Babu Govinda Dâsa. The lecture on Sikhism is also rendered specially useful by a large number of extracts from the *Âdi Granth*, classified under headings, on which Mrs. Besant had asked for specific Sikh teaching. The passages were translated by Sirdars Umrao Singh and Harbans Singh.

The Martha of "history" who is troubled with much "critical" serving, has not such an easy time down here as the Mary of devotion who sits at the feet of the Lord and sees all things *couleur de rose*. One supplies the food of the intellect and the other the food of the spirit; the story, however, tells us that they were *sisters*, and that *both* loved Him. Our colleague has now told us what her Mary has to say, and say most beautifully, concerning these seven great religions, and we hope that some day she may be induced to let us hear what her Martha has to tell about so many things which puzzle us in the origin and history of the world-faiths.

In any case these lectures are a fitting sequel to the four previous ones which gave so much pleasure, and the whole eight might very well be printed together in a subsequent edition. G. R. S. M.

Some Essays

Philosophy and Life, and Other Essays. By J. H. Muirhead, M.A. (London: Swan Sonnenschein and Co., Ltd., Paternoster Square; 1902.)

The essay which gives the title to this volume is a plea for the study of philosophy—rightly separated from psychology as a department of thought—and defined as a speculative science of mind, or the theory of reality. Its value is alleged to be that it keeps us in touch with the whole, however much we may otherwise specialise. "To do this on easy terms, and superficially, is what is commonly known as culture; to do it seriously, systematically, deeply and effectively, is what we mean by philosophy."

The second essay deals with Professor William Wallace, and the third expounds pleasantly R. L. Stevenson's philosophy of life. Of the remaining, the essay on "What Imperialism means" is perhaps the most interesting and useful.

The last four essays, distinguished as "logical" from the preceding nine "ethical," will repay reading. Annie Besant.

Magazines and Pamphlets

Theosophist, April. "Old Diary Leaves" are brought up to the end of 1892. In his retrospect of the ten years the Colonel says: "Although attention has been called before to the fact that the history of the Society proves that its strength is quite independent of personalities, I think that it is profitable to emphasise this instructive truth from time to time. . . . . Even under the staggering blow of H. P. B.'s sudden removal, statistics show that the Society went on its way as unimpeded as the stately frigate is by the ripple that spends itself against her bow. For my part the knowledge of this law gives me constant pleasure, for I thus know that when my time, or even Annie Besant's, comes to leave this plane the only shock that will be felt will be in individual hearts, and not in our corporate entity." S. Stuart concludes his practical and valuable paper "Concerning Occultism"; G. Ramachandra Rao commences a series in which, under the title of "The Temple of God," he "attempts to deal with the very fundamentals of the philosophy of religion, especially of Hinduism"; Mrs. Hooper gives us an interesting statement of the Hawaiian Creation Myth, showing, as the creation stories of savage tribes so often do, strong resemblances with the account in the *Secret Doctrine;* W. A. Mayers concludes his treatment of "Jesus, called the Christ," with chapters on "The Martyrdom" and "The Theophanies of the Master." "The Weird Snake Dance of the Mokis" is concluded, and Mr. Tepper's "Nature of Gravitation" advanced another stage; whilst "Thoughts on the word Zoroaster" and a brief notice of the "Institut Psychologique International" complete a good number.

Prasnottara for April, besides the usual Activities, has the continuation of "Stray Thoughts on the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*," and brief papers on "The Status of the Kshattriya," "Adwaita Yoga," and "The Destruction of Personality."

Central Hindu College Magazine, April, announces a series of school books on the Hindu religion under the title of *Sanâtana Dharma*, which should find a sale here amongst our members as well as in India. We think and speak much of Hindu religion without noticing how very fragmentary our knowledge of it usually is. Hitherto it has not been entirely our own fault, for the materials of such small study as most of us can give to it have been wanting; but this new text-book should bring it within the reach of all. Mr. Harry Banbery furnishes a valuable paper entitled "How do we differ from other

Colleges?" which should be read by those of us who desire to understand the importance attributed to this work by Mrs. Besant and the others who take part in it.

Also from India: *The Dawn*, containing a paper on the "Training of Youths in Ancient India," up to the time when "Buddhism arose as a cloud to darken the bright prospects of Hinduism." The author (a Professor of Hindu Law) honestly confesses that "at that time the Hindu social leaders discarded as not of Vedic origin all those customs which destroyed the distinction between a Hindu and a Buddhist, and without the least hesitation excluded from the curriculum of studies all those Smṛitis which were held in contempt by the hostile Buddhists as evincing proofs of avarice, deceit, ignorance." In other words, as always happens, the Religion, in presence of opposition, re-organised itself as a Sect. *Awakener of India; Siddhanta Deepika; Dharma;* the *Indian Review*, which contains an appreciative account of the article in our March number on Râmakṛishṇa Paramahamsa; *East and West*, and the Fifth Report of the Rangoon T.S.

Vâhan, for May, contains a correspondence with Mr. Leadbeater on the question whether the Law of Karma allows us to conceive of "undeserved suffering." The "Enquirer" is mainly occupied by a long answer from B. K. to the question "What is meant by 'sinking into unconsciousness'?"

Revue Théosophique, April, is a very solid number, having Mrs. Besant's paper on "The Power of Thought," the continuation of Dr. Pascal's "The Great Instructors of Humanity," and T. H. Martyn on the Bible; only relieved by a short anecdote by M. Largeris, and answers to two questions by C. W. L.

Théosophie, May, has Mr. Leadbeater's 1900 lecture on H. P. B., and Guymiot's "Science and Religion."

Theosophia, May, besides translations from H. P. B.'s "Occultism or Magic," Mrs. Besant's "Thought Power," and A. Fullerton's "Theosophy the Religion of Jesus," gives us original papers by H. Ceroop Koopmans-Waller on Theosophy for little children, and by J. van Manen on "Theosophical Propaganda-writings," in the shape of a detailed criticism on M. Boissevain's *Introduction to Theosophy*.

Teosofia, April, has a lecture given by Mr. Leadbeater, at Rome, on "The Possibilities of Human Consciousness," "Some Problems of Religion," by Mrs. Besant, and "Wisdom and its Adorers."

Teosofisk Tidskrift, April, has an address delivered to the Stockholm Lodge on Idealism, and A. Besant's "Limits of Evolution."

Sophia, April, contains translations from Mrs. Besant's *Esoteric Christianity*, and "*How Isis Unveiled* was written"; Sr. Arturo Soria gives us a singularly original and thoughtful paper entitled "Spiritual Mechanics—Education"; A. F. Gerling (Mexico) contributes a study on the ancient Greek text of the Pater Noster; "A Fragment of Flaubert" introduces us to a dialogue between the Buddha and SS. Antony and Hilarion; whilst the number is completed by a "Legend of the Azores" and more of H. P. B.'s *From the Caves and Jungles of Hindustan*.

Theosophy in Australasia, March, contains the farewell of the late Secretary, Mr. H. Arthur Wilson, who is leaving Australia for India. The articles are: "Practical Theosophy," by E. G. Russell; "Justice and Faith," by M. J. Whitty; "Necessary Virtues," by J. M. Davies; and "Prayer," by F. C. Ramsay.

New Zealand Theosophical Magazine, March and April. The General Secretary's Report to the Convention announces that the numbers of the Section have risen from 194 to 209, but that "a great many annual dues are still unpaid." His experience is the universal one; everywhere so much could be done if we only had the means.

Theosophic Messenger for April continues Mr. Leadbeater's Amsterdam lecture on clairvoyance, and reprints some answers from the *Vâhan*. We note that the next convention is fixed for September 28th, and that Mr. Leadbeater is to be present.

We have also to acknowledge: *Theosofisch Maandblad; Revista Teosofica; Modern Astrology; Light; Metaphysical Magazine; Mind; Humanitarian; Il Nuovo Risorgimento; La Nuova Parola; Notes and Queries; All Nations; Light of Kosmon; Psycho-Therapeutic Journal; Sierra Leone Weekly News; Animals' Friend; Rosa Alchemica; Review of Reviews.*

The Gospel according to Gautama (Northern Publishing Co., Bolton, price 1s.), consisting of four short poems, is not a booklet we can recommend. It challenges *The Light of Asia* in its title, and *In Memoriam* in its metre. The challenges are not successful.

ERRATUM.

IN the review of Mr. Clarke's work *The Eternal Question* in our last issue, the place of publication should have been given as *Bolton*, not *Boston*.

G. R. S. M.

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