THE

THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW

VOL. XXXV JANUARY, 1905 No. 209

ON THE WATCH-TOWER

WE have at last come across a passage which, we believe, affords us an objective point of departure for a reconsideration of Mr. C. W. Leadbeater's statement in his *Christian Creed* (London; 1898), p. 45, that "Pontius Pilate" is a pseudo-historical gloss for πόντος πιλητός (*pontos pilētos*), the "dense sea" of "matter," into which the soul is plunged. (See for a discussion of this hypothesis *Did Jesus live 100 B.C.?*—pp. 423 ff.)

"Pontius Pilate"

In the extracts made by Stobæus from the lost Trismegistic treatise, generally known as "The Virgin of the World," the disciple ("Horus") is represented as receiving instruction in the stage of discipline immediately preceding the mysterious new-birth. The teacher ("Isis"), as the introductory words tell us, is represented as pouring forth for him "the first draught of immortality" only, "which souls have custom to receive from gods"; he is being raised to the understanding of a daimon, but not as yet to that of a god.

* * *

Now all of this seems to have been part and parcel of the Isis

mystery-tradition proper, for as Diodorus (i. 25), following Hecatæus, informs us, it was Isis who "discovered the philtre of immortality, by means of which, when her son Horus had been plotted against by the Titans, and found dead beneath the water, she not only raised him to life by giving him life (or soul), but also made him sharer in immortality."

From the Mysteries of Isis

Here we have evidence to show that in the mystery-myth Horus was regarded as the human soul, and that there were two interpretations of the mystery. It referred not only to the rising from the dead in another body, or return to life in another enfleshment, but also to a still higher mystery, whereby the consciousness of immortality was restored to the memory of the soul. The soul had been cast by the Titans, or the opposing powers of the subtle universe, into the deep waters of the Great Sea, the Ocean of Generation or Celestial Nile, for as the mysterious informant of Cleombrotus told him, as related by Plutarch in his treatise *Concerning the Cessation of the Oracles*, these stories of Titans concerned daimones or souls proper and not bodies.

From this death in the "sea of matter," Isis, the Mother Soul, brings Horus repeatedly back to life, and finally bestows on him the knowledge of immortality, and so raises him from the "dead."

Here, then, apparently we have the faint indications of a point of contact between one factor in the subjective mystical exegesis of the Christian symbol which has been put forward by Mr. Leadbeater as founded on his clairvoyant researches, and the objective evidence of contemporary texts. Let us hope that further research on both sides may make this indication clearer.

* * *

In explanation of the Bushido custom of *harakiri*, to which we referred in our last number, it will be of interest to quote from a very sensible letter of a Japanese gentleman on "Missionary Labours in Japan," which appeared in *The Times* of November 11th, and in the Weekly Edition of November 18th. This letter is written from the standpoint of the widest tolerance, and deserves quotation in full, but we have only space for that part of it which refers to the custom of *sepuku*. The writer does not in any way

In Defence of Harakiri

criticise Christianity but animadverts solely on the over-zeal of missionary propagandists, an over-zealousness which, he says, "is the fruit, I am sure, of the best possible intentions," though he courteously refrains from adding the old adage which makes of the latter an excellent paving for a locality that shall be nameless. Speaking of this over-busy interference by missionaries with the cherished convictions of his fellow-countrymen, the writer says :

Among other things I have of late been assured that they are busily engaged in disseminating among my country people the idea that to die by one's own hand on the battle-field or on the deck of a warship is under no circumstances whatever permissible. This doctrine is laid down, in fact, in the journals published in Japan that are devoted to the spread of Christianity. I am willing to admit that the contention may be fully warranted on the basis of the Christian faith, but it is, nevertheless, indisputable that the bulk of the Japanese people do not approve of this teaching, and those who seek to inculcate it do so to the detriment of their real influence for good. The truth is that to us the theory is irreconcilable with the duties of a soldier, and the conclusion reached is, moreover, illogical. Frankly speaking, we Japanese are no more in a hurry to die than as a rule are Europeans, but we are taught from infancy to recognise that there are things which we should value far above our own lives. And then it is for the majority of my countrymen exceedingly difficult to understand why a brave soldier who dashes upon his enemy in the face of a deadly hail of bullets from machine guns, knowing that he is rushing to certain death, should be exempt from blame for what is virtually, indeed actually, despite its element of noble self-sacrifice, a deed of self-destruction—the terms are here synonymous—and yet stigmatise as a "suicide" the man who, having fought desperately to the very last, despatches himself lest, by surrender, he should fall a prey to an enemy by whom he might, and probably would, be ignominiously treated. The distinction is altogether too fine for our comprehension, and, if we accept the *dictum* that he who may die under such conditions by his own hand commits a sin, then the soldier who advances to the attack under an avalanche of fire is equally a man to be condemned. Needless to say, wanton self-destruction for ignoble reasons is totally repugnant to our creed —quite as much so as it is in the West—but to condemn, *ab initio*, every act of suicide without regard to circumstances as sinful, simply because it is at variance with preconceived notions, is intolerant and bound to do violence to Japanese susceptibilities.

That suicide, in spite of *harakiri*, moreover, is less prevalent in Japan than elsewhere may be seen from the statistics given by a writer in the *Monthly Review* for November, according to whom

the average number of suicides per million inhabitants is in France 246, in Denmark 238, in Switzerland 233, in Germany 206, but in Japan only 177.

With regard to the admirable article on Bushido to which we devoted the major part of our "Watch-Tower" notes last month, we are pleased to see that *The Times* has now printed it apart as a pamphlet under the title "The Soul of a Nation" (price 2*d.*), and that it has already run into a number of editions.

* * *

Revivalism

WITH regard to the extraordinary religious revival in South Wales of which we have heard so much lately, and which owes its initiative to a young Calvinistic Methodist student named Evan Roberts, it is of great interest to us, as students of psychology and the phenomena of religious enthusiasm, to learn the nature of the personal experience which decided the young preacher that he was a chosen instrument. At the concluding meeting of a week's mission at Pontycymmer Mr. Roberts closed his labours with a dramatic narrative of a vision seen by him while at school in Newcastle Emlyn before his departure on his crusade. He is reported to have said as follows (*Times*, November 21st):

"A few days before I left Newcastle Emlyn, I was lamenting over the apparent failure of modern Christian agencies, and I felt wounded in the spirit that the Church of God should so often be attacked. While in the slough of despond I walked in the garden. About four o'clock in the morning, with remarkable suddenness, I saw a face in the hedge, full of scorn, hatred, and derision, and heard a laugh as of defiance. It was the Prince of this world who exulted in my despondency. Then there appeared with equal suddenness another figure, gloriously arrayed in white, bearing in his hand a flaming sword borne aloft. The sword fell athwart the first figure, and it instantly disappeared. I did not see the face of the sword-bearer. Do you not see the moral?" asked Mr. Roberts of his huge congregation. "It is the Church of Christ which will be triumphant." He added: "There was no mistake about the vision, and, full of the promise that vision conveyed, I went to Loughor, Aberdare, and Pontycymmer. What do I see? The promise literally fulfilled, the sword is descending on all hands, and Satan is put to flight, Amen." The congregation thereupon burst out with one accord, "Hallelujah, hallelujah, praise the Lord!"

* * *

WE do not for an instant doubt the truth of Mr. Roberts' narra-

tive; but if all of us who had visions of a similar nature were instantly to set to work to stir up the hopes and fears of our fellows with such feverish insistence as Mr. Roberts has done, the long-suffering world would soon be plunged into a hysterical state that would speedily submerge all reason in emotion. Visions are two-edged swords; they have ever been so. Mr. Roberts, confirmed by his vision, has certainly been the means of liberating very powerful forces of a revivalist nature, and strange things are happening owing to his ministrations; but if these fevers are not cooled by some common sense, if they are allowed to run riot, madness follows their path, and the topers are left drunk and incapable with the excess of their emotions. So we read in the *St. James's Gazette* of November 24th:

The Danger of Visions

Besides the two religious revivals in Wales, there is one in the Midlands. This unhealthy excitement is having its natural result. Mr. Edward Edwards, a brick manufacturer of Rhos, a mining village of Denbighshire, and leading deacon of a Methodist chapel, attended all the meetings without intermission for four days, and read the Scriptures when he should have been asleep. Yesterday he was found under the bed, shouting wildly about "Salvation," and two policemen were called in to restrain him. He fought so violently that six more men were called in. He was pacified by being allowed to write words of exhortation on the floor, and he declared that he had performed a sacred task imposed upon him by an angel in a vision. A doctor examined him with a view to his removal to a lunatic asylum, but he was so ill that this was deemed inadvisable. Fears of a similar fate are felt for an insurance agent and a young woman.

* * *

BUT what absurdities will not be indulged in when untrained folk "let themselves go" in religious enthusiasm without the remotest conception of the alphabet of psychic science? Corybantic revels and Bacchic orgies, the whirling of the Dancing Dervishes, and the perpetual bowing of a Simon Stylites, are all phases of the same phenomenon. Endless are the records of this thing. There is a psychic drunkenness physically engendered, very different from the philosophic ecstasy which Philo describes as practised amongst the Therapeuts, ending his description with the words: "Thus drunken unto morning's light with this fair drunkenness, with no head

Ecstasis

heaviness or drowsiness, but with eyes and body fresher even than when they came to the banquet, they take their stand at dawn, when, catching sight of the rising sun, they raise their hands to heaven, praying for sunlight, and truth, and keenness of spiritual vision. After this prayer each returns to his own sanctuary, to his accustomed traffic in philosophy and labour in its fields."

* * *

The "Pentecostal Dancers"

Look on this picture, and on this which is to follow,—a graphic and humorous report of the performances of a new sect which have invaded the "wilds" of Camberwell from that great Western city of ever-new sensations called Chicago. We take it from *The Daily Mail* of December 3rd, which heads its account somewhat moderately with the following superscriptional combination: "Pentecostal Dancers: Audience bewildered by the new 'Revival': Shrieks and Ecstasy." Its rival, *The Daily Express*, is less restrained, but unwittingly more intuitive, for its heading is the "Holy Cake Walk," and the so-called "Cake Walk" is the degenerate descendant of the original Mystery Dances of the West-Coast Africans. Here, then, is the picture as caricatured by the reporter, but not ill-naturedly:

The Pentecostal Dancers had a moderate audience at the Camberwell Public Baths last evening. From the dressing-boxes a stony audience gazed unmoved at the laboured contortions of the Rev. Mr. Kent-White, the whirling jig figures of the Rev. H. L. Harvey, and the solemn or ecstatic perpendicular jumps of the ladies.

"We were told," Mr. Kent-White explained to a representative of *The Daily Mail*, "that Camberwell was about the toughest section of this City. So we reckoned to open the mission right here. Seems to me it's a ripe harvest."

But it has resisted so far the appeal to its emotional side which the Pentecostal Dancers do their best to address. The cake-walk, the fling, the hop, the set-to-partners, the breakdown, and all the rest elicited only gasps of utter bewilderment, which gave place later to laughter and delighted applause. The Pillar of Fire and the Burning Bush are going to have a magnificent vogue when their fame has gone thoroughly abroad.

The meeting opened with a hymn, and the dancers went straight to business. No sooner were the first notes sounded than the Rev. H. L. Harvey slipped himself from leash, and went down the stage, singing

vociferously and giving a good exhibition of the sand dance. Mr. Kent White, known to local fame as Obadiah, stood aside for a while and confined himself to the hymn, but when Miss Sadie Walker (of Chicago, Ill.), joined in the mazy dance he became infected, and yielded to the seduction of the moment. His was the kind of step dance which is performed by jumping slowly from one foot to the other, a performance sensibly enhanced by the iron gravity of his face all the time.

A slender little woman in brown, who carried off all with a face radiant with sheer ecstasy, hopped into favour at once. She is going to India as a missionary, and is qualifying to astonish the natives. She pirouettes with an almost professional grace, and now and again relieves pressure with shrieks. Those in the dressing-boxes testified their sympathy by shrieking weirdly also. . . .

The sermon which Mrs. Kent-White delivered was, to say the least of it, a fine example of the direct style. She told of converts to the order who recollected with grief days when they had omitted to pay their fares on tramway-cars.

She has no patience with the baser side of Church life.

"Chicken suppers an' doughnut socials an' oyster stew—oh, my dear people, I do hope 'n trust you don't hev' none o' them over hyar.

"Seems to me most of the holiness that's abroad has gone into the cookin' business."

Of divorce, she admitted: "In America we have thousands of divorce cases—the rottenest cases you ever heard." The audience cheered this.

The Pentecostal Dancers are a sect claiming parentage from the Methodists. They are some three years old, and their headquarters are in Chicago, where the Rev. H. L. Harvey shares control of the order with a convinced and converted banker.

* * *

Kipling and the Aura

THE following extract from Rudyard Kipling's latest volume, *Traffics and Discoveries*, will speak for itself to all readers of Theosophical literature. It is taken from a beautiful and pathetic story, called "They." The persons of the dialogue are a blind lady, blind from early childhood, and the teller of many tales. Something she has said has made him wrath within, righteously wrathful with the "brutality of the Christian peoples" who know not the things of the soul.

"Don't do that!" she said of a sudden, putting her hands before her eyes.

"What?"

She made a gesture with her hand.

"That! It's—it's all purple and black. Don't! That colour hurts."

"But, how in the world do you know about colours?" I exclaimed, for here was a revelation indeed.

"Colours as colours?" she asked.

"No. *Those* Colours which you saw just now."

"You know as well as I do," she laughed, "else you wouldn't have asked that question. They aren't in the world at all. They're in *you*—when you went so angry."

"D'you mean a dull purplish patch, like port wine mixed with ink?" I said.

"I've never seen ink or port wine, but the colours aren't mixed. They are separate—all separate."

"Do you mean black streaks and jags across the purple?"

She nodded. "Yes—if they are like this," and zig-zagged her finger again, "but it's more red than purple—that bad colour."

"And what are the colours at the top of the—whatever you see?"

Slowly she leaned forward and traced on the rug the figure of the Egg itself.

"I see them so," she said, pointing with a grass stem, "white, green, yellow, red, purple, and when people are angry or bad, black across the red—as you were just now."

"Who told you anything about it—in the beginning?" I demanded.

"About the Colours? No one. I used to ask what colours were, when I was little—in tablecovers and curtains and carpets, you see—because some colours hurt me and some made me happy. People told me; and when I got older that was how I saw people." Again she traced the outline of the Egg which it is given to very few of us to see.

"All by yourself?" I repeated.

"All by myself. There wasn't anyone else. I only found out afterwards that other people did not see the Colours."

This is the highest compliment that Mr. Leadbeater has as yet had paid to his "Man Invisible." If only our seers had a Kipling to word-paint what they see!

I HAVE noticed that when one is painting one should not think. Everything then turns out better.—RAPHAEL.

THE FUNDAMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SWEDISH PEOPLE

ONE day, during the last summer of his life, when the sky was blue over Ekeliden's green trees, Viktor Rydberg wrote the poem that was to be his last greeting to the Swedish people:

> Thou wondrous, mystic cloudlessness,
> Thou heavenly blue, that smilingly
> Stoops down to me, and lifts my soul
> To spaces cool, and holy calm.

In this poem, over which broods the wonderful transfiguring glow of prescience, the reflection of the poet's premonition that he stood at the gates of that Salem for which during his whole life he had so longed, the rhythm, through which we can hear the far-off echo of celestial bells, is broken by another, through which thunders the jubilant echo of the triumphal song, to whose sound the warrior hopes to die:

> I know myself your kinsman, sons of heaven!
> With Âryan blood, the purest and the oldest,
> Ordained a Swede, by some kind Norna given.
>
> My race, for symbol of their fathers' story,
> Have heaven's blue in the fair eyes of childhood,
> And heaven's blue in standards crowned with glory.

With these words, among the proudest and most beautiful ever penned by Swedish hand, has Viktor Rydberg—he, who during the latter half of last century has been, of all others, the one to point our people to the road that leads to the Jordan of the ideal—told us, what we ought never to forget: that every race, in its desert wanderings, has *its own* road to travel; that the ideal striving must also be the national striving; that our race belongs to the nobility of humanity, and that it must be faithful to its lofty lineage, so that the true-hearted, blue childish eyes may ever be able to look up with the same unfailing pride to Svea's "standards crowned with glory."

No parting words of more deep and significant meaning have ever been uttered to the people of Sweden by any seer. For we had half forgotten that a people, like an individual, must learn to listen to the inward voices, if it is ever to reach that lofty goal which for the nation, as well as for the individual, glitters on far-off golden pinnacles.

The inward cohesion of a nation, the significance of blood, lineage, and mutual ideals, has been long enough relegated to the category of those truths which the strife of the hour, and the material hubbub of the day, have caused us to forget. It is time that we should listen to the words of the seer, that we should seek to make the truths he has taught us bear fruit. For Viktor Rydberg is a seer, a prophet, an educator, for his people; he is the Armourer who has forged for us weapons against materialism, the Bard who has for us seen heavenly visions. We are still too near him to be able rightly to appreciate him; the visual angle is still too great. But when comes that day in which we are able to survey the mighty work he has wrought, in which we shall fully comprehend the war he waged, and the victories he won, then it will be clear to us all that he was, in veriest truth, a real educator, one of those prophets whom the Lord in all ages has sent to His chosen peoples. It is thus that we should seek to understand him. But in order rightly to understand what manner of man he was, who is perhaps the choicest expression which the Swedish national spirit has ever assumed in the history of the civilisation of the North, we must first endeavour to form a conception of the character of this people, of its formation and its development, before it could give itself such an expression as Viktor Rydberg.

* * * *

At an early date, among the people who inhabited the country between the North Sea and the Baltic, that trait was prominent which, of all others, is the sign of nobility among the Âryan races,—the perception that there is another world than that of the senses, a higher goal for which to strive than the earthly goal,—the *religious feeling*, which from a dim natural mysticism developes into ever-increasing brightness. That this feature, even at the very earliest dawning of the Swedish

national feeling, was for our race the over-mastering sentiment, is evident from the manner in which Olaf Trygvason—although abusively—characterised his Swedish adversaries in the fight at Svoldern, according to Snorre Sturloson; but in later history, this feature was expressed in a clearer and better fashion. It is seen in our ancient laws. It was this indwelling conviction in our race—that there is something which is *right*, and something which is *wrong*, that there are laws according to which mankind is commanded by God to live—which made our forefathers regard a code of laws as the first necessity of society, and which made them devote their highest mental powers to legislation and administration. The circumstance that Sweden possesses more numerous and better regulated codes of law than Denmark, Norway and Iceland all put together, is only an expression of a sense of justice, arising from a living feeling of religion—a feature which, at an early date, distinguished the Swedish people from the other Northern races.

But law-giving was not the only expression of this feeling. There was a wealth of legends, songs, and stories, now lost, but which we can still plainly trace. We had no Snorre Sturloson or Sæmund, and so these treasures were not preserved, and the myths of our fathers have crumbled into ruins. But doubtless, in Svithiod also, songs were sung in honour of the gods, songs which had their own peculiar Swedish ring. It was the natural features of the country which gave birth to the singers. It was the eternal mystery of nature, the thunder of the cataract, and the sighing of the fir-tree, in the "great, wide forest, wide for sixty miles," which gave to the character of the Swedish people that mysterious leaning towards the supernatural which ever afterwards—even in the days of over-powering spiritual indifference—distinguished its foremost typical figures.

But ancient Sweden was not merely a vast inland forest; it possessed also extensive coast-lines, where the free, boundless, blue sea rushed up into the deep bays, and where the roar of the strong winds made ceaseless music for the heart of mankind. And here, nature brought forth another type, of equal primeval antiquity in the character of the Swedish race. This was "*dæringdo*"—the longing for brave ventures, for fields for

brilliant exploits; and it found an early expression in the Viking cruises—the voyages to Holmgård, Gårdarike, and Miklagård, to the Särkland of romance—the country of the Saracens. It was not alone by visible means, as on the old marble lion at the Piræus, that these Swedes graved their runes. They graved them in their actions as well. The stories of the Varärger dominion in Novgorod and Kijev, of the Väringer in Byzantium, preserve in history the memory of these early manifestations of Swedish power of action. When the introduction of Christianity put an end to these expeditions this characteristic found expression in other ways. The Swede was not slow to act when it was a question of defending what was dear to him. Engelbrekt took up the sword for right and freedom. In this, the warfare of the Swedish peasants, the goal of the ideal—the country's freedom—bestowed for the first time on the outward expression of the national fundamental character a gleam of spiritual brightness. Its two chief characteristics are no longer opposed to each other. During the strife for the existence of a political Sweden, the Swedish national spirit increases its internal unity.

If, during the days of the Vikings, the lust of action was the overmastering feature of our race, in the Middle Ages it was the mystical, religious characteristic that was most prominent. The spirit of the age was first and foremost a spirit of a religious feeling; and it was therefore natural that the bent of the Swedish people in this direction should at this period reach its highest pitch of development. The first time that the Swedish name arrested the attention of the whole of Europe was by means of a woman widely renowned for her piety and her visions, Saint Birgitta. But we had already had before her a mystic of the purest type in Petrus de Dacia.

Our own time, which is animated by the same spirit of enquiry that distinguished the Renaissance, has called forth the saintly Gotland Dominican from the tomb of parchment in which, for six hundred years, in the church at Jülich, had been preserved the work whereby he—as Dante for Beatrice—idealised the heavenly bride of his heart, the maiden from Stumbelen, Saint Kristina. The pure, simple tale of love—if, indeed, such words may be applied to it—which was told in the little German

village about the year 1266, has touched us all. We have seen, as on the canvas of some Pre-Raphaelite master, the youthful, dreaming, innocent, affectionate Petrus de Dacia, by the glow of the evening fire, or in the tender light of the spring evening, conversing with the visionary, wondrous peasant-maiden concerning God and the Saints. and the innermost essence of love; and when we have read his letters, from which breathes a mystic flame, our thoughts have been irresistibly drawn to that almost contemporaneous work, so near akin, the *Vita Nuova* of Dante. But only the most clear-sighted of us have seen, in the dreamer's labours, the first distinct expression of one of the choicest features of the soul of the Swedish people.

And this feature was even more distinctly marked in the personality of Saint Birgitta; but it developed itself in a practical direction, that of working for the good of humanity. In her case, the religious feeling is combined with the love of labour, the tremendous energy which aroused the admiration of the time. She makes a pilgrimage to Spain, to the tomb of San Diego at Compostella; she sternly reproves Magnus Erikson, King of Sweden; and in spite of every difficulty, she organises a crusade against the Russians. Not content with influencing the politics of Sweden, she attacks, with her fearless tongue and the whole force of her revelations, no less a person than the head of the Christian Church, the Pope himself, now the tool of the French Kings at Avignon. In order to persuade him to quit his ignominious position and return to Rome, and with the view of obtaining the consent of the Holy Father to her favourite plan, a new Swedish conventual system, she sets off for Rome, to which, after seventeen years of waiting, she at last sees Urban V. return. Two years later she receives his consent to her conventual system; and finally, at the age of seventy, she undertakes a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

But her naturally weak and sickly body is urged to all this tireless labour by a soul of fire, whose burning enthusiasm is kindled by an inflowing spiritual power. Her inward sight is made clear; she sees wondrous visions, and dictates them to her confessor. Through the revelations of Saint Birgitta, the noblest feature of the spirit of the Swedish people for the first time

beamed forth over Europe. Of her, as of Dante, it may be said that she was "the voice by which speaks a people, who for ten silent centuries have held their peace." Hers is the first personality which, from the midst of the deeply religious, and dreamy, mystically-minded race of the far north, emerges on the broad highway of the world's history; and the nimbus of the saint surrounds a head of pure Swedish type.

The Church which received the dust of the aged pilgrim, enshrined her name amongst those of its saints. The story of her life and her visions is read in Catholic countries to this day; but it is no longer read amongst her own people. This is a pity; for she is one of the noblest, most typical figures of our race.

Towards the end of the Middle Ages the course of events led the Swedish nation to tread a path that, for a people of lesser vital force, right-mindedness, and power of achievement, would have been the road to ruin. But happily for her Sweden possessed a race of peasants who knew, it is true, that right, honour, and freedom are ideal things—but that it is still worth while to die for them and for one's country. Happily for Sweden there were men who, in the hour of storm and peril, did not hesitate to grasp the helm of circumstance, and who understood how to steer the course which, steadily pursued, would finally lead to deliverance.

Engelbrekt, the man of the people, and the two Stures, the noblemen, are the brightest Swedish figures of these dark times. A living faith, and a never-failing trust that God would ultimately give victory to the right, were the steadfast foundations of their achievements. But their progress was not continuous, the fruits of conquest were not lasting. The clouds closed in ever more darkly, and ruin seemed imminent. But suddenly a youthful hand grasped the helm of the disabled ship. The helmsman belongs to the purest, fairest type of the nobility of his race. The daring of the Viking glows in his face; and through all the perils of the breakers, he brings the vessel safely to her desired haven.

Gustaf Vasa—he who saved his country from ruin, and who built up the Swedish state from the very foundations—gave to the world the first brilliant token of what Swedish strength of

purpose was mighty to accomplish. He was a man of deeds, such as before him had arisen none—a man of never-flinching courage, and of tireless power of labour.

Beside his glorious name shines another—the name of a personality in which the second fundamental feature of our race found expression. Gustaf Vasa's power of action was equally matched by the religious feeling of his chancellor, Olaus Petri. The sermons of Luther at Wittenberg kindled in his soul the sacred spark. He brought to Sweden tender shoots of the green olive tree of the young Reformation, as it was before internal discords had begun to gnaw its roots. In his native land, Olaus Petri planted these shoots, from among which should hereafter spring so mighty a tree. He was animated by that never-resting desire to declare the truth, to guide the wanderer into the right way, that is the mark by which every true reformer may be known. The fundamental principle of the new teaching set forth by him was, that the direction of the will, and its outward expression in the life, is the decisive factor of the last importance to the eternal lot of mankind. Of his great works, the greatest was that of making God's Word—the only real clue to the true life—the property of the whole people.

Gustaf Vasa gave our nation its political freedom, and laid the solid foundations of the Swedish State, on which was afterwards raised the proud edifice of our political greatness. Olaus Petri delivered the Swedish people from the yoke of the Roman Church, and laid the foundations of Sweden's position as a great religious power, which has a glory of its own not less than that of external politics.

Here, for the first time in our history, we see side by side, working together, even if sometimes in sharp conflict, two representatives of the deepest, most typical features of the Swedish people. This united labour brought forth great results; but, at the appointed time, the spirit of the Swedish race was to produce something even yet more mighty.

And this came to pass when, for the first and only time in our history, the noblest and the greatest features of Swedish nature stood revealed in the soul of *one* man. This man was Gustaf Adolf. And now the hour of Sweden's greatest achieve-

ment had struck. Our day in the history of the world had dawned.

Between December 26th, 1611, when the king of seventeen for the first time greeted the parliament of his kingdom, and with them decided that it was better to continue the perilous war with Denmark than to conclude an ignominious peace, and that November day at Lützen, are twenty-one years of reign, which meant for Gustaf Adolf an unbroken sequence of arduous labours, of burning zeal for the good of his kingdom, as a commander in the field, a lawgiver, and an organiser. When he is not, either in his own or foreign boundaries, fighting at the head of his army, he is too often, as was said, " occupied at home with an unbroken peaceful retreat."

But his whole activity is ever directed towards the goal of the ideal. He feels himself to be the defender of the Lutheran faith; to be the foremost champion of the new religion is the precious vocation inherited from his father and his grandfather. To be worthy of this vocation, inwardly as well as outwardly, is the object of all his striving; for to him, this was the same thing as being worthy of the kingly crown to which he had been called by God. It was thus that he first rose to the highest point of his greatness at that hour when his mighty power of action was able to grasp directly that great combat upon which depended the very existence or non-existence of the Lutheran faith.

No Swedish king, also, has so thoroughly understood the Swedish people as Gustaf Adolf. He knew the faults of the nation; but he knew also its brilliant gifts. He knew that under the indifference of daily life, under the grey ashes of inertness, there ever glows an unquenched fire, which only needs a powerful blast to make it once more burst forth in full flame. He knew there is nothing the Swede dreads so much as " wearing his heart upon his sleeve for daws to peck at "; and that under cover of spiritual indifference lies hidden a ceaseless longing for eternal beauty and endless truth. He knew—so it has been said—that the passion for adventure of the old Viking days has never entirely disappeared from the blood of our people; that the Swede, when he is reduced to passive idleness, becomes timid

and indifferent, and that he is first restored to himself again when he hears the roar of the storm and the whistling of the winds, which tell of swelling sails, of bent bows, and of drawn swords.

Gustaf Adolf called Sweden to a Viking cruise, the greatest in its history—a Viking cruise for the spiritual freedom of the people. With him begins that wonderful period of our history, which has been called the time of Sweden's greatness—that age when the poor northern country, which did not contain one-fifth of the inhabitants of the Sweden of the present day, was in truth a great power—a remarkable circumstance, capable only of explanation in *one* way. Sweden possessed an inward greatness, a spiritual greatness, a wealth of men of great minds. It was the most brilliant epoch of the true Swedish nature, when the people's power of action found no aim too lofty for it, when a deep religious feeling permeated our whole nation, from the King and his councillors to the soldier and the peasant.

To have possessed a greatness, founded upon other factors than mere numbers, and material resources, is not only the proudest memory of our race, but also a hostage for great possibilities in the future; for our people are at heart still the same to-day as in the days of Gustaf Adolf II. Centuries no more change the character of a race than do years change that of an individual. Viktor Rydberg, indeed, goes so far as to say that he considers it unreasonable "to apply the Darwinian idea of evolution to so short a period of time as a thousand years, and to imagine, for example, that the nature of our Swedish people could during that time be changed to anything essentially different and more lofty."

When we study the life-histories of the Swedes of that great time, we feel that they are "flesh of our flesh," even if it is our best qualities that predominate in them, and this in a manner hardly conceivable in our day.

The consuming desire for activity, the tireless power of labour, with a background of true religion, are the characteristics of the great men of that age.

Where shall we find an iron zeal like that of Axel Oxenstierna, a man who bore alone upon his own shoulders such a load of

government, able to grasp the smallest details of administration, without losing one iota of the statesman's world-embracing glance? Or where shall we find a man of more tireless, many-sided nature than Olaus Rudbeck? he who at the age of twenty-two was already one of the foremost anatomists of the day, and who, after becoming a technic of the highest rank, became the natural philosopher whose wisdom succeeding ages must admire equally with his imagination—and all this, one may say, during the time he was mastering as good as all the learning of his day, while, as an engineer, he was a Swedish Leonardo da Vinci.

It was being rich in such men that made great the Sweden of the great age.

But the second innate Swedish characteristic—the religious, the mystic—had also its representatives during this period, which, before all else, was a time of action. The greater number of these is to be found within the boundaries of the State Church.

But there were other men besides Churchmen—men such as Burens and his disciple Stjernhjelm—who hearkened to the wondrous mystic tones that a true Swedish nature has always recognised in the natural features of our country, and in the memorials of our people.

But it was not until the sunset hour of the day of Swedish greatness, that these fundamental characteristics of the Swedish people—the nature of the Viking, and the nature of the seer—were destined to attain their highest development in two different personalities.

In the one, the Swedish people joyfully recognised from the very first that trait which, before all others, they desire to find in their bannermen; in the other, the representative of the deeper, more mysterious features of the national character still remains not understood.

Once did their two paths cross each other. It was in Lund, in 1716, that Karl XII. met Svedenborg. It was a memorable day when Sweden's most renowned son, the hero-king, in whose guise the Swedish Viking nature dazzled the world, as never heretofore, encountered the man in whom all that our race has within itself of wondrous mysticism, of prescient dream-life, found its world-renowned expression!

When set the conqueror's blood-red sun, arose the star whose mild northern rays were to shed their light far and wide, destined to become for many a guiding-star amid the darkness of night.

At the time of Svedenborg's meeting with Karl XII. he was twenty-eight years old; he was still at that period of his life when, like Faust, possessed by a quenchless thirst for knowledge, he was seeking to penetrate the secrets of natural science. To such a point had his strivings brought him, that had he died before his sixtieth year, we should have erected a statue to him, as we have done to Linné and Schéele. But from that time he turned from the exploration of the outer, visible world, to the highest of all sciences, the knowledge of God—from the problems of mathematics and physics to the problem of the origin of evil, to the eternal riddles of life; and during the four-and-twenty years which still remained to him in this life, he gave to humanity, in his writings, a new philosophy and a new religion.

It was by no mere chance that the most deeply religious personality of the age of Voltaire was a Swede.

That he was not understood by the crass rationalism of his day, or by an imitative, materialistic, after-age, only bears witness to his greatness; but there have been men in all times, who have not been contented with the verdict of the multitude. By such, he is appreciated. Such a one was Höpken, who said that he had "never known a man of more unchangeably virtuous character than Svedenborg": and such a one was Kant, who complained, in one of his published letters, that Svedenborg had made all his philosophy superfluous; and in later days, such a one was Emerson, who saw in him one of the most wonderful personalities of all time.

The day will also come when occurrences, apparently supernatural, will no longer be denounced as conscious or unconscious deceptions, and when the Swedish people will no longer blush to recognise Svedenborg as one of their foremost sons. When the Swedish race has really learnt to know itself, it will recognise in him, in its deepest form, the noblest feature of its own soul—the eternal, the mystically-religious.

The influence of Svedenborg on the spiritual development

of our people is, none the less, greater than has been generally recognised. If one studies the matter deeply, it will be found that nearly all the thinkers and poets of the period of our literary greatness have, either directly or indirectly, been influenced by the teachings of Svedenborg ; and the more deeply we examine the more we shall see that this influence extends even to our own days.

First and foremost, the connection has never yet been developed between these teachings and the deepest expression that the typical Swedish ideal feature has found in our century—the Boström philosophy. But when the newly-awakened national current in our race has passed beyond the surface, we shall find that in Svedenborg's writings and Boström's philosophy we possess a fountain of wisdom and truth, springing from the inmost hidden depth of the spirit of the Swedish people, such as belongs to no other land.

With the decline of Sweden's political greatness, however, was in no wise quenched that Viking trait whose most distinguished representative was Karl XII. It found vent in the admiration accorded to him after his death, and in such poems as " Sinclair's Song " ; and it was by means of constantly harping on this national string, that the Hat Party was able to gain a hearing for its policy of adventure. In spite of renewed opposition, the longing for the brilliant and the adventurous was not stilled. With Gustaf III. begins a new era, which, by reviving the national glory, notwithstanding the accompanying shadows, allowed the Swedish people for a while to bask in a new day of sunshine. But during the latter years of his reign the clouds once more gathered ; and under Gustaf Adolf IV. it seemed for a moment as if the sun of our glory had set for ever. But the hope of a new day of victory did not desert our people. The election at Örebro of an heir to the throne, in 1810, was in reality only an expression of the longing of our race to make good their losses under a brilliant leader, and with fresh conquests to efface the remembrance of defeat. But this desire is linked with another essentially Swedish trait—the demand to be governed by a real master. To attain this end the Swedish people unhesitatingly laid legitimacy and the national feelings on the altar of sacrifice.

This choice of an heir to the throne, unique in the history of the world, is also still further indicative of two other national Swedish characteristics—the power of being hastily taken possession of by a passing mood, and the evident absence of deeply-rooted conservative ideas and feelings.

The man to whom the Swedish people gave the crown of the Vasas may have had his faults; but in many respects he was just the ruler whom Sweden needed. He possessed in the highest degree the personal authority which the Swede loves to find combined with that of the sceptre. He put down with a strong hand the half-mutinous, revolutionary spirit that had been aroused by the Age of Freedom; and he restored to the Swedish name more of its departed military glory than anyone could have dared to hope in 1809.

This new state of things is the fundamental supposition for the reason of the scientific and literary *renaissance* that distinguished the reign of Karl Johan XIV. Only in a Sweden that held her head high could Esaias Tegnér have struck his lyre. With him, for the first time, the ancient Swedish Viking trait entered the world of modern poetry, and at once took its place in the literature of the world. In the figure of Axel, and still more in that of Frithiof, was reflected that defiant, manly courage, that strong desire of adventure, which are as truly Swedish features as that mysterious longing for countries beyond time and space, which, in the form of melancholy, is not wanting in the hero of the saga.

But it was not until near the close of the nineteenth century that this second fundamental Swedish trait was to find its interpreter. This interpreter was Viktor Rydberg.

It is thus that we must consider Viktor Rydberg as the exponent of the highest form of culture of our land—as the one who, with the certainty of his prayer being heard, could pray: "Put into my lips the words which shall advance manliness, honour and goodness among my people; and let the image of eternity shine upon their path towards the goal, beyond the centuries!"—as the seer, as the prophet of his race—as, in the highest meaning of the word, an *educator*.

OSWALD KUYLENSTIERNA.

LIMITATIONS

HORACE in the first and one of the best known of his *Satires*, inquires of Mæcenas how it is that everybody considers another person's lot in life happier than his own. The old soldier, worn out with the hardships of war, sighs, "O fortunate merchants!" while the merchant, whose ship is caught in a storm, says, "It is better to be a soldier. They charge; and death or victory comes at once." The countryman would like to be a townsman, and the townsman sighs for the pleasures of the country. But if God offered them the opportunity of changing their lot, they would not care to do so. Horace then proceeds to point out the disadvantages both of greed and prodigality, and counsels moderation and contentment, but adds: "We seldom find a man who says that he has lived a happy life, and is content to depart from his life as a satisfied quest."

History repeats itself, and our own age, like that of Horace, is one of widely-spread scepticism, and widely-spread dissatisfaction; and large numbers of people, as in Horace's time, imagine, either that they would be happier under other circumstances, or that they have mistaken their "vocation," as it is called. Like so many of the evils of the present day, this cannot but be due to the loss of the balancing ideas of reincarnation and karma; without which it seems difficult to realise any rational conception of a future state, which is tacitly ignored by many who profess to believe in it, their notions being so vague as to have comparatively little practical influence on their lives.

Have we not often heard it said, even by very good people, who would have been shocked at the suggestion that they did not believe in "Heaven": "We have only one life,"—as an excuse for some trifling self-indulgence? It is not always easy, however, even for those who have unreservedly accepted these great doctrines, to acquire the calm and patience which will

reconcile them fully to the vicissitudes and restraints of life; and they will be happier when born into communities where these ideas are as fully recognised as were the ordinary notions of religion prevalent fifty years ago, when many, even among Unitarians, still believed in the historical credibility of the Bible, the possibility of Eternal Punishment, and other doctrines (of course with the exception of the Trinity) which have been practically abandoned by most thinking people at the present day.

But the causes of discontent with one's lot are very various, reaching far back into the past, as well as far forward into the future. It may be taken for granted, I suppose, that in order to attain even moderate "Perfection" and to join the "Assembly of the Prefect," as one of the newspapers mis-printed it the other day, it is necessary to pass through a considerable variety of studies and experiences, far more than is possible, under any conceivable advantages and circumstances, in any single life. Sooner or later, these must be pursued, either till the lesson needed is learned, or till the desire for that particular experience is exhausted; or more technically, till the "rafters and the roof-tree" have been broken down in each particular direction.

On the other hand, the necessities both for needed variety of development, and for breaking new ground, must often lead to our being placed in what appears to us uncongenial circumstances, when we should prefer to follow out our old pursuits, to which we are accustomed, and to which we shall doubtless return, under, let us hope, improved conditions, in some future life or lives. It is, however, imprudent to fix our desires too ardently on the realisation of any particular advantages or course of life which we think we specially desire, lest the force of our will should realise it before our guides think us ready for it, and it should consequently be attended with such disadvantages that we should find we had only been grasping at unripe fruit.

As John Stuart Mill says, "It is hard to die without ever having lived"; and it cannot be a real consolation to tell anyone who desires some particular form of experience that he will later on attain to something better, which he does not yet understand sufficiently to appreciate. One might as well tell a child who was crying for cake at Christmas, that he shall have some straw-

berries next summer, if he is a good boy. And whatever people may say or fancy, I am convinced that the "Heaven" that most of us really desire is not Nirvâṇa but Devachan. Nirvâṇa may come in its own good time, but by all means give us Devachan till we can appreciate something beyond.

Even Zanoni said "Humanity is sweet," and there is something very pathetic in Edgar Poe's longing for a more human, if a lower, Paradise than the orthodox "Heaven":

> And there, O may my wearied spirit dwell,
> Apart from Heaven's eternity, and yet how far from Hell!

Another evil result of the loss of the doctrine of reincarnation appears to be the difficulty of sympathising with those in other circumstances than ourselves, since under the "one-life theory" we cannot even conceivably imagine ourselves as changing places. How can rich and poor, husbands and wives, or even parents and children, truly comprehend and sympathise with each other, if they believe that the present relations are the only ones which will ever subsist between them in any world even remotely resembling the present?

The wonder is, perhaps, that so much genuine sympathy should exist in our ignorant western world; though it is probably largely innate or instinctive, just as there has been so much fighting in the world for so many hundreds of thousands of years (not to say millions) that most people must have been killed in battle over and over again, and soldiers instinctively realise that death is no evil, and that the great saying of Kṛishṇa to Arjuna is literally true: "He who thinks he slays, and he who thinks he is slain, are both equally deceived. There never was a time when thou and I and yonder chiefs did not exist, and there never will be a time when we shall cease to exist."

Scientific men are probably right in thinking that the love of travel and adventure, especially noticeable among the seafaring nations, is the inherited development of the Viking age. Theosophists say that our writers of adventure draw unconsciously on their own previous experiences for their tales of piracy, smuggling, etc. Bulwer Lytton somewhere says that he always had an extremely definite mind-picture of the Nile, which he never saw, and that he did not doubt that it accurately represented the

reality. Not only "Saxon and Norman and Dane are we," in a truer sense than Tennyson ever realised, but also Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and further back still.

As regards travel and adventure, I believe many young men who are debarred from it by circumstances, would gladly give half a dozen years of their lives to realise it, though many might not find the reality in accordance with their expectations. Others, however, with unlimited facilities for travelling in the most interesting countries, voluntarily prefer to remain at home, and to occupy themselves with pursuits which appeal more strongly to their inclinations. We often find that advantages for which those who do not possess them would give almost anything, are not valued by those who actually possess them. In the latter case, it is perhaps more probable that the experience has been lived through and exhausted than that it lies forward in the future.

For myself, I do not feel inclined to take up again the special line of scientific study to which I happen (partly by force of circumstances) to have devoted much of this life, though it continues greatly to interest me, and probably will do so as long as I live. Perhaps I may take up music in some other life, which I must have greatly neglected, though I am fond of poetry. Music is said to be an abstract study, carried on from one life to another, so that everyone is apparently born with all the music he ever possessed; and I was born without much more idea of music than a blind man has of light. Consequently, I regard it as a study which lies, for me, not in the past, but in the future.

As an instance of the force which former pursuits may exert on the present, I may instance the case of a friend who told me that he once had some visions of his past life; and that when he saw a vision of himself in a study or laboratory in the Middle Ages, he experienced an uncontrollable longing to return to that life and that room. Such an instance furnishes us with another argument for the necessity of passing through the river of Lethe between life and life, as otherwise both our progress and happiness would certainly be largely interfered with by the recollections of our former lives.

This does not interfere with the instinctive love or dislike that we often experience towards those whom we meet during

our present life for the first time. It is certain, however, that dislike is not always due to actual enmity, but sometimes to painful and persistent recollections of troubles with which particular persons have been associated, perhaps not by any actual fault of their own.

This is true even of the present life; and here, again, the difficulty of living down either enmities or personal dislikes would be much greater if they were perpetuated by memory from life to life. It would be difficult to imagine anything more painful and disastrous to all concerned. On the other hand, Anna Blackwell has well written: "The stranger, the foreigner, the dependent, may be, and often is, the nearest and dearest friend of a former life." (I quote here from memory, but the exact terms are of no consequence.) Those who know the real meaning of love at first sight will know that this is true; others would not understand it.

At present, the proportion of women is largely in excess of men in many parts of the world, and the obvious inference is that at this period a woman's life is either a better or a more necessary training for the majority of people than a man's. It may also be reasonably supposed that its restraints are frequently useful to help to counteract the racial Viking tendencies to which I have already alluded. Hence it is not surprising that the restraints of their sex should press so heavily on some women that they often express the wish to have been men. This is often genuine, as in the case of a girl I once knew whose greatest desire was to be a general in the army.

The converse is rare, but I have heard of a case of two married sisters, one of whom desired boys, and the other girls. The lady who desired boys had only girls, except two boys who died in infancy, but the lady who desired girls had only boys. However, the eldest son would have much preferred being a woman, and could hardly look at a pretty girl without envying her. In this unusual case, the mother's desire for a girl seems to have brought about a peculiar form of psychical hermaphroditism.

It may be suggested that such a person had been, and probably would be again, happier as a woman than a man; but that special necessities or circumstances led to his being

born a man in a particular life. In fact, his mother, though not unkind, was injudicious and unsympathetic, and if she had had a girl, might very probably have trained her up to be a most unhappy woman. It may be added that in this case the father was considerably older than the mother.

As people are sometimes born apparently out of their proper sex, so are they frequently born out of their religion. I have known a clergyman who would much have preferred being born either into the old Greek religion, or into pre-Reformation Catholicism. Another man once said to me that he wished he was a Catholic, and the older he grew, the more he should wish it. Yet he had not the slightest idea of joining the Catholic Church.

As people progress, they are very liable to fall into errors opposite to those which they seek to avoid. Some children do not take up the pursuits of their parents, not from disinclination, but because they see the disadvantages attending them; for every avocation must needs have its advantages and disadvantages. Other children, in trying to avoid the errors of which they are conscious in their parents, fall into opposite extremes. Thus, if the parents pay too much attention to appearances, the children may neglect and undervalue them. I am even of opinion that the greater asceticism of the teaching of Buddha as compared with that of Christ, is partly due to the probability that the original high station of the Prince gave him a greater (and perhaps overstrained) contempt for the vanities of the world than was felt by the son of the carpenter.

Those who are trying to cure themselves of meanness and selfishness are not unlikely to fall an easy prey to others who have not outgrown the stage of selfishness and dishonesty. In time, this will cure itself, for those who progress faster may probably drop the others out of their lives, with no disadvantage to either party.

Without reincarnation, the doctrine of karma, so earnestly insisted on by Christ, remains useless, like one blade of a pair of scissors; and leaves the whole social system of the world, as we know it, a mere chaos of inextricable confusion, as if it were the work of a mocking fiend rather than of a God. W. F. K.

RICHARD ROLLE AND WALTER HILTON

Two Early English Mystics

Buried in the British Museum, hedged about by the difficulties of old English language and orthography, is, I believe, a number of valuable writings of those whom I would call the British Fathers of the Church. There appear to be numerous manuscripts containing mystical writings, sermons, epistles and religious poems of sufficient interest to justify an attempt to make them better known among Theosophical students.

In the Thornton Manuscript, and in others, for instance, are copied the writings of Richard Rolle of Hampole, and his better-known disciple Walter Hilton. Both were monks of Yorkshire, and Rolle particularly seems to have been in the vanguard of the religious thought of his time, and to have added to his following many years after his death.

Very little is known about their lives; but that they carried out their teachings into practice is very evident, for there are records of Rolle at war with the selfish spiritual culture of the monasteries and with the undiluted worldly ambition of the people among whom he mixed freely. He spent his best years—from nineteen to thirty—fighting himself in a hermit's cell, subduing the evidently powerful passions of his lower nature by the force of his greater desire for holiness, for "nothing is strong enough to impose oughts on a passion except a stronger passion still." Then he left his solitude to wander about Yorkshire and the neighbouring counties, preaching, not in a spirit of reform or censorship, but that, by his life and his words, he might show the possibility of using duties, social relationships and passions, so that out of vices, virtues might grow, and chains might be hammered into weapons.

To read the books of these simple but profound writers is not to tread the highways of the intellect, but to breathe the rarer

atmosphere of affirmation. They look down from the heights upon the toilers below and are able to give them directions because they see beneath them the mapped-out plan of the world. They cannot make the workers see from the same position, and whether they can make them even listen, depends upon the number of times they descend to be the gazing-stock of their fellows, and lso upon the amount of faith their hearers possess. Faith to these mystics means the power to see an ideal state of existence, not with the mind's eye, but with the eye of the Will, a deliberate choice of a mode of life, and grit and courage enough to pursue it through all temporary changes of mood.

Union with Christ, identity with Christ, is the end-all of the mystic's striving. We, as Theosophists, would say, union with the Higher Self, but the meaning of the mystical Christ has been discussed often enough. The mystic wills to be filled with a burning love, which shall destroy all other interests and pleasures and cause the mind to be set solely on becoming a "worker together with Christ," so that, believing that all things are rightly and sweetly ordered, he, as Epictetus says, "seeks not to have things happen as he choose, but rather to choose them to happen as they do."

This is the explanation of the "living-death" of the mystics. This love, this union, they know, cannot be won by good works or by intellectual comprehension, but simply by willing for it. True meditation is for them the concentrating of the will upon Christ; the act of desiring, the consummation of which is as the "coupling of the lover and the beloved." To them, contemplation is life; yet here they are exiled in a world of action, which can only appear to them to separate them from their Christ. All their writings are full of the sadness of the poem of Richard Rolle, part of which, for the sake of its beauty, I have translated.

Almighty god in trinity,
  Father, son and holy ghost,
That is one god and persons three,
  One soothfast lord of mightiness most.
Give us grace sin to flee
  And well to live and keep us chaste,
That so our soulës ready be
  For god when we the death shall taste.

He may well be called witty
That can well live in this exile
Whoso lives here right wisely
He works well after god's will.
He that makes him for god ready
And lives well shall not die ill,
And all others may have dread
But he that well can live through skill.

All our life that we here lead
Is nothing but a death living,
And death is nothing else to dread
But a passing of life failing,
For from beginning of our childhood,
Even day to day, . . .
This life is failing for our need,
For whiles we here live we are dying.

The mystics are very bold. Believing as they do that this life is a death in life, that no action of theirs can lead them one step nearer to that union they desire so ardently, they yet accept the conditions of their exile and in their own minds decide how they shall best pass away the time. Certain that earth life is part of the plan and the objects of sense created by Christ, they act as lovers, whose devotion and desire is stirred to greater intensity by the sight or touch of something belonging to the Beloved.

Very quaintly Walter Hilton describes good deeds as the sticks which are kindled by the live coal of devotion.

"It may fall sometime that the more troubled that thou hast been outwardly with active works, the more burning desire thou shalt have to God and the more clear sight of ghostly things by the grace of our lord in devotion, when thou comest thereto. For it farest thereby as if thou hadst a live coal, and thou would make a fire therewith to make it burn. Thou wouldst first lay thereto sticks and overhaul the coal, and though it seem for a time that thou shouldst slake the coal with sticks, nevertheless, when thou hast waited a while, and after blowing it a while, anon springeth up a great flame of fire, for the sticks are turned to fire. Right so it is spiritually. Thy will and desire that thou hast to God, it is, as it were, a little coal of fire in thy soul, for it giveth to thee

somewhat of ghostly heat and ghostly light; but it is full little, for often it waxeth cold and turneth to fleshly rest and sometime into idleness. Therefore it is good that thou put thereto sticks that are good works of active life."

Having first made clear that this life is only an almost aimless wandering in the wilderness, aimless because of the many by-ways down which we all wander, the mystics describe three main roads. They are the active, the contemplative, and the mixed lives. Hilton uses the allegory of Jacob and his two wives to illustrate these. The man living the contemplative life is married to Rachel. He spends his time brooding upon God; such a life is the hermit's life, it is beautiful but barren. The man of action, engrossed in business, helping to push the world round, has Leah for his wife; she is unlovely but fruitful. Hilton himself would choose the mixed life, in which action and contemplation are combined.

Charity has two objects, God and man, and this mode of life provides for activity towards both.

"For a man to devote himself entirely to devotion and meditation is to kiss the mouth of Christ and to perfume his head, while his feet, the members of his church, are all befouled."

The mystics are distinct from the philosophers because they give rules for living. They know the common tendencies of man, his down-fallings and his uprisings, and they have keen wits to discover the right medicines and the right tonics. These they detail in their writings, trusting to common-sense to recognise their value. The philosopher, on the other hand, states the principles round which life must turn, and trusts to individual reason to discover their bearing upon actual life.

Plato takes up such a position when he refuses to legislate on business or strictly personal affairs, arguing that if the citizens have been trained to understand the few first principles of living "they will have little difficulty in discovering all the legislation required."

It is unnecessary for me to enter into any minute description of the rules laid down by the two mystics whom I have had in my mind while writing. My object will be better fulfilled by translating another passage from Hilton's "Epistle of a Mixed

Life," and letting it plead the cause of these old Christian mystics.

"One night after thy sleep, if thou wilt rise for to serve thy lord, thou shalt find thyself fleshly, heavy, and sometimes lusty. Then shalt thou dispose thyself to pray and think some good thought . . . and set all thy business first for to draw up thy thoughts from worldly vanities and from vain imaginings falling into thy mind. . . . There be many manners of thinking, which are best to thee I cannot say. . . . If devotion come not with mind of the Passion strive not nor press after it. Take easily what will come and go further to some other thought. Also others that are more spiritual, as for to think of virtue and for to see by light of understanding what the virtue of meekness is and how a man should be meek. Also, what is patience and cleanness, righteousness, chastity, sobriety, and others, and how a man shall get all these virtues, etc. If with thy thoughts thy soul has been fed and comforted, and it passes away by itself, be not busy for to keep it still by mastery, for it shall then turn to pain and bitterness."

"Such things that are above thy wit and thy reason, seek not, and great things that are above thy might ransack not."

M. L. B.

THE Heaven-honoured One says, "All ye Heaven-endowed men, who wish to be instructed about the Perfect Tâo, the Perfect Tâo is very recondite, and by nothing else but Itself can it be described. Since ye wish to hear about it, ye cannot do so by the hearing of the ear:—that which eludes both the ears and eyes is the True Tâo; what can be heard and seen perishes, and only this survives. There is (much) that ye have not yet learned, and especially ye have not acquired this! Till ye have learned what the ears do not hear, how can the Tâo be spoken about at all?

THE CLASSIC OF THE PIVOT OF JADE, i. 1.

KARMA

FAR in the forest stands the ancient shrine
Where none may enter, save the king alone,—
And he but once, when he is crowned the king,
To bow him down before the central shaft,
Wrought like a palm-tree, which upholds the roof.
Lost in deep darkness, from the column's head
In palm-leaf-shape the widespread vaulting springs,
Until it droops into the walls around.
One window, only, pierces, from the East,
The silent circle of the masonry;
Formed like an eye, at break of day it sends
A kindling glance upon the hidden name,
The name engraven deep into the heart
Of that high shaft which bears the sacred shrine.
Within the pall of dust upon the floor
Footsteps remain,—the steps of bygone kings,
The last imprinted three-score years ago;
And now, behold! another king draws nigh.
Harshly the key jars in the rusted lock,
The door swings open, and the hermit-priest
Who guards the shrine, yet never, till this day,
Has looked within, upon the threshold stands.
"Enter, O King! High Heaven guard thy steps!
Lay down thy crown and sceptre at the foot
Of yon gray palm-tree, rising through the gloom,
And bow thine head before the mystic name
Engraven breast-high on its marble stem."
The king approached, a youthful prince, well pleased
With all the pomp and splendour of the day,
Yet half impatient of the ancient rite
Which, for a moment, bade the revels hush.
"An empty form,—vain relic of the times
When priestcraft ground e'en kings beneath its heels.

Yet, since the people hold the shrine in awe,
And cling to custom, we must needs obey.
Whose is the name engraven on the shaft?"
"Hearken, O King!" the hermit made reply,
"The stone has crumbled, and the name has passed.
Call on the name thy spirit holds most high,
And, bowing down, fulfil the ancient rite."
But, when the king, with scornful smile, drew near,
And laid his crown and sceptre in the dust,
Behold! the pillar bent, as though, indeed,
It were a palm-tree in a mighty wind,
It bent, and brake, and thund'ring from on high
Its leaves of stone crashed down upon the king.

Then shrieked the crowd, and running forward, drew
Forth from the ruins of the shrine their lord,
Who writhed in death, and, groaning, cried aloud:
"What fault is mine to merit such a doom?
Is this your justice, ye eternal gods?"

The hermit stood, in deep amazement lost;
Before his eyes the Veil of Time was rent;
The Present darkened, and the Past shone out
As when, eclipsed, the sun is wrapped in gloom,
And night's pale stars, forgotten since the dawn,
Gleam, for a while, upon a noonday sky.
Then from his lips flowed forth a murmured chant,
Breathed in a voice like that of one who wails
At eventide, far off, among the tombs.
"Yet for a moment, ere thou partest, hark!
Yet for a moment be life's dying spark
Fanned into flame and quickened by my breath,
Ere thou descendest through the doors of Death.
Upon this ground . . . O King, 'tis even so! . . .
We met this day, a thousand years ago.
I, then, was young,—ay! young as thou to-day;
Thou, King, wast old, as I am now, and gray.
Through years of bloodshed heavy lay thy hand
Upon these realms, till thou hadst seized the land,
Till here, with sword ensanguined, thou didst claim
A kingly crown.—'Whose, tell me, is the name
On yonder shaft?' Thus didst thou ask, and I

Made answer thus: 'The name of the Most High,
The name of Bramah, Lord of Heaven and Earth.'
And then, O King! and then, with impious mirth,
'Let Bramah keep his Heaven!' didst thou cry,
'But on this Earth I only am Most High.
Let Heaven be his,—I care not! But this shrine
Henceforth shall bear no other name but mine.'
Then did thy slaves the Holy Name erase,
And deeply carve thine own name in its place,
Deeply, ay! deeply! On the selfsame day
Thou slewest me, for that I sought to stay
The sacrilege. But Bramah saw and laughed.
Deeply, so deeply, graven was the shaft
That from thy name decay did slowly spread.
Year after year, not once the daylight fled,
But from thy name a loosened atom rolled.
Year after year, not once the molten gold
Of sunrise filled the mystic Eye of Morn,
But in its ray another mote was borne.
Thus, one by one, the centuries crept past;
The scar grew deeper, till thy name at last
Sank out of sight, yet ever gnawed its way
Into the stone, nor rested night or day,
Till now the slow-revolving Wheel of Time
Has brought thee back to expiate thy crime.
Thy name has worn the marble into dust.
Die, then, and, dying, know the gods are just."

LLOYD WOLLEN.

LÂO the Master said, Scholars of the highest class do not strive (for anything); those of the lowest class are fond of striving. Those who possess in the highest degree the attributes (of the Tâo) do not show them; those who possess them in a low degree hold them fast (and display them). Those who so hold them fast and display them are not styled (Possessors of) the Tâo and Its attributes.

THE CLASSIC OF PURITY, ii. 1.

A MASTER MYSTIC

An Introduction to the Writings and Philosophy of Jacob Boehme

III.*

Of the Worlds of the Three Principles

Having spoken in the previous article of the principles and powers involved in the process of manifestation, we turn now to the definite outcome of the operation of these. The first result was the arising of the world of the second principle. By "world," of course we do not mean "globe," but the whole universe of that principle, with all its content.

In this world of the second principle, the first principle was there, but hidden. Without the first principle no manifestation can be; just as abstract quality cannot be apart from something whereby it manifests. This "something" is hard to define, and, in fact, never ought to be defined. It is the mysterious "basis," which we can only call "strength," "vitality," "substance"; that in, and through, which the quality manifests itself. It is as the root to quality; and quality is as the fruit to it. It is as the mind, which thinks; but must be there before thought can be. It is the analogue of the unmanifested God, Who, as unmanifested, has no quality. We learn His quality only through His works, which are His self-manifestation; but yet these works could not be if the unmanifested God were not. Thus we see how truly Boehme speaks when he says that it is the *power*, as apart from the *love*, of God.

Therefore, as the first principle was hidden, the manifested quality of that world was the true light of divine love; which, so far from trying to bring evil to light, hides and covers it. We see this power of love to veil and hide evil, in the acts of Christ.

* See the last two last numbers for I. and II.

When the woman who was a sinner came to Him, the Pharisees would fain drag forth this character of hers, and proclaim aloud what she was. The Lord veiled it. He did not deny the fact, but He closed it up with forgiveness, and so put the first principle, whose appearance as quality had been the cause of her sinning, back into the hiddenness. Then that which had been the manifestation of the quality of false love became the power of much true love; for as soon as the first principle is hidden, the second manifests. What a difference it would make to the world if we could catch and apply the principle involved in this perception!

How may mortal man hope to speak of the world of the second principle? It seems hopeless; yet Boehme strongly affirms the possibility. He says in effect, "It is not a strange, nor far-off, world to you. It is the world of God; but if God is your Father you can look into His world; for every creature sees into that which is its origin. You cannot do this in your external nature, which is from the third principle, and not out of the eternal Band, and will have an end; but you can in your divine nature. Nothing hinders you from doing this but that fact that you put all your imagination into external things: put your imagination strongly into God, and all Mysteries stand revealed to you."*

The best thing to do will be to give that apprehension which has come to us from the many scattered references made to this world throughout our author's voluminous works; for, as we said in the introduction, we prefer to say, not "this is his teaching," but "this is what we understand to be his teaching."

The world of the second principle, then, is the world in which the first principle is hidden; where the true light has arisen in the fourth form, and the first three forms remain as unmanifested bases, and the whole quality comes from the divine light.

* "Dost thou say, I cannot; I am corrupt and depraved? Hear me! Thou art not yet born of God, otherwise if thou hadst again that same light, then thou could'st." (*Mysterium Magnum*, Part I., Chap. iii. Par. 4.)

"Yet if the soul elevates its imagination forward into the light, in meekness and comeliness or humility, and does not (as Lucifer did) use the strong power of its fire in its qualification, then it will be fed by the Word of the Lord, and gets its virtue, power, life and strength in the Word of the Lord, which is the Heart of God. . . . And in this Imagination it is an Angel and a child of God, and it beholds the eternal generating of the indissoluble Band, and thereof it has ability to speak." (*Three Principles*, Chap iv. Par. 24.)

Its matter is what the philosophical Alchemists call the "One pure Element," the "*Prima Materia.*" It is as inconceivable to our natural minds as is the fourth dimension. In it, everything being in right and equable balance, there is nothing noxious, or hurtful, or intractable. It is perfectly responsive to manipulation, and is at once most perfectly yielding, and most perfectly adamantine. It is manipulated by thought, or will; to which it responds more readily than our matter does to tools and mechanical manipulation. Of all the things in our world, says Boehme, that which is the nearest approach to it is such a precious stone as the diamond or ruby, at least in its adamantine quality; but we have nothing here which is even distantly analogous to it in its power of combining the extremest stability with the extremest manipulability. With it, as a material, works of whose beauty and splendour we can form no adequate conception can be executed, which no disintegrating forces tend to attack, tarnish or destroy; and yet a thought can change them, or again produce them. This marvellous power, which would be disastrous here, where there are men who might use it in a selfish, harmful and unbrotherly way, is perfectly safe there, where nothing but love and harmony can come. The spirit which would destroy the work and delight of another is safely shut up in the first principle, never to be brought to the surface; nor could even the thought of so acting arise in any celestial mind.

And as our bodies here are of the matter of this world, so this "One pure Element" is the matter of the bodies of the angels. In this matter, and therefore in the bodies made of it, and in the food of those bodies, which is also of it, is no corruption; nothing that needs to be separated and cast out in the draught. "An angel," says Boehme, "has no entrails, neither flesh nor bones; but is constituted and composed by the divine power in the shape, form and manner of a man, except the members of generation, and the fundament, or going out of the draught; neither has an angel need of them."*

For, as he says in a following paragraph to the one quoted above: "The fruits of that world, of which the angels eat,

* *Aurora*, Chap. vi. Par. 22.

though they are in the shape of our fruits here, yet they are mere divine power. In the heavenly pomp, in the heavenly Salitter and Mercurius, grow divine trees, plants, flowers, and all sorts of whatever is in this world; but as a type and resemblance." Thus the angels eat of the divine power; they take into their bodies nothing corruptible. In that world can be nothing offensive, or repulsive; no evil odour, no loathsome sight.

And this One pure Element is, says Boehme, the matter of the glorified body of the Lord; of which He spoke when He said, "My flesh is true meat, and my blood is true drink."* It is that meat which, except we eat, we have not life in ourselves. The *Erd-Geist*, the spirit of this world, makes the *garment* of God, by which we see Him faintly, as in a mirror, darkly; for our matter is at once the veil of, and the door to, the understanding of the heavenly matter. But the One pure Element is the divine substance itself, that which the garment clothes. The garment is of our four elements; the substance is of the One, in which the four are; not as a simple mixture, but mixed with such a difference as puzzles modern science in the allotropic forms of carbon as retort coke, and diamond; which are at once the same and yet not the same; there is a strange, mysterious, molecular difference which no one yet has succeeded in explaining.

There may be some who might imagine such speculations as these to be mere idle speculation; of no practical utility. Let such remember that the very reverse is the case. We are, it is true, in this outer world, and our bodies are of its matter; and we must eat of this matter for the nourishment of our bodies. But our bodies here are our *garment*, rather than *us*, our very being. Man lives not by bread alone; and unless we, here and now, eat of what is true meat and drink, we have only this animal, intellective life which has an end. We need indeed the new birth before we can see the things of the true world; but the new birth stands open to all who desire it. The divine nature, whose proper food this One pure Element is, is in us now, though hidden; but it can be brought out of the hiddenness; and the power whereby it can be so brought out is "desire." If there be in our heart the eager desire to enter into the new birth, to

* *John*, vi. 55. ἀληθής βρῶσις. . . . ἀληθής πόσις.

pass from death unto life, it will take place; nay, it has already begun to take place. If there be the desire to eat of the One pure Element, it will be supplied to us; for all desire is prayer. We are fed with what we desire; and the Father will not give a stone to those who desire the living bread. The appeal is: "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, which is but husks that swine do eat? Why labour for the meat that perishes, and neglect that which endures to eternal life?" We may not, indeed, while here, neglect the earthly house of this tabernacle; we must give our animal the food requisite for its sustenance; but we should ever keep it and its food clearly distinct in mind from us and our food; or we shall be as foolish as one would be who should paint and repair his house regularly, but neglect to feed, clothe, and educate himself.

It is not necessary that we should attain at once to the direct cognition of the One pure Element, for nourishment is accomplished in the majority of cases without the full knowledge of what the food is in its chemical constitution, or how it is assimilated. All that is required is to feel that we are spirits in bodies, and that *both* must be fed with the food proper to each. As the world gets wiser, men will increasingly recognise the inviolable relation between the food desired and eaten, and the eater. We are of that world of which we eat. Some of us feel: "Oh, if the spiritual perception would open in me, I would eat of the spiritual food." Nay, it is rather that the perception does not open because we are not eating of spiritual food. But how can we eat of that of which we have no perception?* The answer is, *by desiring*. Strive to increase and intensify the desire; or, as Boehme would say, put your imagination strongly into it; eat by faith. What we have to do is—"open thy mouth wide"; then God will fill it with the One pure Element; and then, and in consequence of this true eating, our faculties will gradually respond to the influence of the new food; the inner vision will open; the things that are eternal will appear, which are unseen by outer sight; and the new man will arise from the new birth.

But let it be carefully noted that the true result will not

* On this subject, see the spiritual paradoxes in the Works of St. John of the Cross, vol. I., pp. 58-59 (second edition).

follow if the desire be but of curiosity. There is in some men a keen desire after the occult, that thereby they may become "some great one." This is the false Magia, of which Boehme has much to say, and of which we will not here speak at length. Let it be most heedfully avoided. True knowledge makes a man humble and meek, willing to take the lowest room, and eager only to serve. Vain glory opens no doors except those that lead to mental and spiritual disaster.

Thus, so far from being merely speculative and impractical, the knowledge of the world of the second principle is of all things most necessary and important. Begin the attainment of this knowledge with "faith"; continue it by earnest effort to love and serve; use the power of imagination to make it most real and desirable; strive to lift up every thought and aspiration into it; and to put all that is of the first principle (that is, all pride, envy, self-regard) into the hiddenness; then shall the perception of the second principle, which is "Christ in you, the hope of glory," arise; at first dimly and in weakness, as in the manger in Bethlehem, but ever growing stronger, "till we all come, in the oneness of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man; unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."*

When we turn to the world of the first principle, we come to the darkest and most difficult subject of all. What Boehme says about it seems clear enough on the surface; but is of such a nature that we cannot see with him, if the surface meaning is his real meaning. We will give what we at present understand him to teach, and after that indicate the points on which we must venture to differ.

To him, then, the world of the first principle is as real and actual as is that of the second. In it, the first three forms have passed to the fourth, the fire; but have not been qualified by the fifth, the divine light. Instead of this, they have taken their own

* This spiritual principle that "as is the food, so is the eater" is at the bottom of the Jewish refusal to eat with the Gentiles, and of the caste customs of India. It is also the spiritual basis of the Christian Sacrament of Holy Communion; too seldom rightly apprehended. It ever tends to get materialised and perverted; for men love to have the right form, though they do not like to practise the right spirit. They ever fail to see that the form without the spirit is more disastrous than no form at all; for often where the form is not, the spirit may be; but where the form alone is emphasised, the spirit never can be.

quality as their light, and the result has been a nature severe, acrid, selffull, horrible; full of hatred, variance, wrath, strife, etc., which arise when the first three forms stand revealed as qualities, instead of remaining in hiddenness.

According to Boehme, God created in the world of the second principle three great Throne angels, Michael, Uriel, and the third who afterwards became Lucifer. Each of these created out of himself the angels of his hierarchy, who were as his children, and of his own nature. All these angelic beings should have turned their will and desire to the divine light that it might be their quality; and all did this but Lucifer and his angels. Lucifer was attracted by the "might" of the fire, and spurned the meekness and the love. He elevated himself in pride, seeking to fly aloft in his own self-desire, and rule in the fire's might; and, as his angels were all out of him, they all followed him in this. Thus the fire was never qualified by the true light, which would have made it soft and meek and pleasant. It remained a horrible, raging fire of fury and wrath, and took this nature for its light, that is, for its quality. Thus the light of its fifth form became darkness, and the sound of the sixth form became the expression of hate and rage, out of which has come every harmful and poisonous property in nature; and the "figure" of the seventh form became a horrible devil, misshapen and hideous. Thus the world of the first principle arose in its own manifestation; in which the true light and sound and figure remained hidden, and will so remain, says Boehme, through the unending ages of eternity.

There is, we see clearly, much to be said in favour of the general principle involved in the existence of the world of the first principle. For, undeniably, evil *is* for us; it has been brought out of the hiddenness; and it may well be that it has been brought out in the way that he describes. We do know hatred and wrath; we do take them for our quality; and we can see that all that is required to heal the woes of this world is to put them again into the hiddenness. We can see further why it was necessary that they should be brought out, for any good quality can only be felt as intense delight by means of the experience of the contrary quality. To have been good from the

first, and have had no experience of evil, would have been to be so without delighting in being so. But what we do not see is the necessity for the *permanence* of evil; we see the necessity for an *episodal* consciousness thereof, but for no more. As an episode, we see no difficulty in its continuance for any required length of *time;* but to place the continuance of active, operative evil in the category of eternity, this is, to us, a difficulty.

Boehme's whole method is, no doubt, perfectly logical. He lays down the fundamental thesis that the first and second principles are both out of the eternal, or indissoluble, Band, and take their origin out of the first, original will, and out of the second, or re-conceived, will. They stand, therefore, in the very power of the divine nature, which is eternal, out of which they arise, and from which they can never be dissociated, for if they were, manifestation would at that instant cease. We have admitted the concept that the first principle must eternally BE; the question remains, need it be eternally *manifested?* Boehme says that when once the fact of its manifestation was accomplished, by Lucifer and his angels putting their will into the might of the fire, and rejecting the meekness of the divine light, there is now no power that can again shut it up. Is not this an argument from ignorance? That manifestation, as such, does not require the first principle *to be manifested* is proved by the fact that the world of the second principle *was* before the fall of Lucifer; for he was, at first, a Being of that world; and might have so remained eternally if he had not flown aloft in pride and self-will. Therefore it cannot be urged that if the first principle were to be again shut up, manifestation as such would cease; for all that is required to manifestation is the existence of the first principle *as a hidden basis.* That some of the creatures of God should remain eternally in revolt against God seems, to us, to contradict the splendid optimism of St. Paul, who says that, in the end, "God shall be ALL in ALL."* Boehme says that, in God, the two principles can never be even thought of as separated; they stand eternally in their right relation: the first, hidden; the second, manifested. Can the glory of God be accomplished until all is

* I. *Cor.*, xv. 28. Note also "He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet." Can we believe that the ultimate triumph of the Son is but the triumph of might?

as it was in the beginning? If not, what becomes of "the restitution of all things"?

We yield to no one in our admiration of, and reverence for, the marvellous illumination of Boehme. Of all human teachers he far surpasses any that we have read. But it is not necessary to regard him as infallible on all points. In *The Mission of Evil** we have drawn attention to the fact that all ideas entering the mind must enter through the mind-forms; and that these forms are to some extent fixed in every case. These forms shape the idea that is seeking to enter, though to the person receiving it there is no consciousness of this. Boehme had no doubt his own mind-forms (as we all have); and there is also no doubt that these would shape and colour the truth revealed. In his day perceptions that are now, three hundred years later, only just beginning to arise, had not yet dawned upon the minds of even the most advanced Christian thinkers. Moreover, Boehme had been most wickedly and unjustly persecuted; a thing which above all others, tends to harden the mind-forms. This persecution he bore with a meekness that is wonderful; but one can see from his writings that he was not unmoved by it; what man could have been?

Therefore, for ourselves, while we have too much respect for his illumination to venture to be sure that he is wrong when our opinion differs from his, yet we must stick to what we do see. For just as David felt unfit in Saul's armour, so no one is justified in saying he does not see what he does, because some great authority says it is not as he sees it. Reverence for the authority will lead a man most carefully to weigh and ponder the view put forth by the authority, and strive hard to see it; but if, in spite of such effort, he yet cannot see it, it is always best to stick to what he does see; and so anyone would say who knows the power of truth to outwork ultimately its own conviction in the opened and desirous mind.

The two worlds of the second and first principles are, says Boehme, in each other; and yet each is as a nothingness to the other; the first has no cognition of the second, nor the second of the first. They are separated by a whole birth; whereas the

* *The Mission of Evil*, by Rev. G. W. Allen (Skeffington), p. 52.

third principle (of which we shall have to speak hereafter) is separated from these two by a half birth. And he says that when, in the end, the first principle and the second are finally shut up each in itself, there will be no consciousness in the beings of the one, of the beings of the other.

He speaks sometimes as if he believed that the beings in the first principle (the devils and wicked men) are as much at home, and in delight, in that, their own, principle, as are the angels and good men in the world of the second principle.

All thoughtful persons will recognise that an observer, describing any state in which others are, will describe it in the terms of his own feeling regarding that state. If, to him, it is a state of torment, he will describe it as such; while it by no means follows that it is so to the beings described. Still, even when this allowance is made, it does not, to our mind, take away the dreadfulness of the condition of lost souls as Boehme represents it. It is impossible to us to conceive that a lie can endure for ever; and yet what Boehme asserts comes to this. The eternal, unalterable truth of God is that the first three forms should remain in the hiddenness. We can, as we have said above, understand that an episodal manifesting of them should conduce to the attainment of a higher delight in goodness and love. Our Lord gave us the key to this truth when he said, "To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." Evil provides me with an enemy to fight, whereby I discover the strength that is in me, and rejoice in the possession of it;* and evil, experienced in its consequences, makes good, when attained, a thing I can now rejoice in in the highest degree. But the good in evil comes through victory over it, and not through its eternal continuance; and the divine victory cannot mean "forcible repression." Therefore, for the present, we must say that we cannot accept Boehme's view of the eternity of evil. We do not decide positively against him; but we hold our minds open to whatsoever new light may come; and feel sure that he would say to us, as St. Paul said to some who honestly disagreed with him, "If in anything ye are otherwise minded, even this shall God reveal to you."†

* It acts just as beneficially if it shows me the weakness that is in me; and so leads me to humility, and to seek for strength from above.

† *Phil.*, iii. 15.

Boehme says that, abstractly, it is not good to know anything about the world of the first principle; but since man has fallen, and the powers of this dark world are his ghostly enemies in the outer life of the third principle, the knowledge has become necessary to us. We must know who and what our enemy is if we are to resist him successfully.

The world of the third principle differs in kind from the other two. It is an out-birth from the first and second principles in which both are latent; so that as the world of the second principle stands in good alone, and the world of the first principle stands in evil alone, this of the third principle stands in good and evil.

When Lucifer fell, God created Adam to occupy his vacant throne. But, foreseeing that Adam would be assaulted by the whole power of the dark world, and would not stand, God created this out-birth of the two eternal principles so that Adam might fall into it. When Lucifer fell, there was nothing for him to fall into but the first principle; and Boehme teaches, as we have shown above, that whoso falls into this, abides in it eternally. It is this conclusion that leads Boehme to assert the hopelessness of Lucifer's fall. He fell into total evil. Adam fell into a mixture of evil and good. There was a germ of good left in him which might, by the power of God in redemption, be made to sprout anew. Of the process of this power of redemption we shall have to speak hereafter; we will only say now that in his treatment of this matter he is at his very best; and is most helpful and luminous.

In a little pamphlet, entitled *Truths of Life*,* we have spoken of the world of the third principle; how in it the second and the first stand mingled, so that in its constituents both poisonous properties and healing virtues exist. In it are some things that approximate to good, and some that approximate to evil. Its light is not the true light of God, but neither is it the darkness of Lucifer's world. It is lit by the sun, which enables us to see all that is needed for our earthly life; and our mind has the light of intellect which, while not fully revealing, enables us to discover somewhat of the ways, and mind, and wonders of God, if our eye

* May be had of the Theosophical Publishing Society. Price 6*d*.

be not evil. Our self-hood is not the pure, divine Self which perceives its perfect and harmonious relation to the all; but neither is it the totally dark self-hood of the first principle, which is incapable of a single generous, loving thought or feeling. It is a mixed self-hood, capable of love and capable of hate; and we may press with our desire into which we will. Its matter is of the four elements, and not of the one which is all good, or of the one which is all evil. The One pure Element is in it, but veiled under the appearance of the fourfoldness. And there is in it, hidden, but discoverable, a process of mystic Alchemy whereby can be produced a Tincture which avails to convert all base matter into its heavenly perfectness.

There is in Boehme's writings much about the matter of this world which we do not profess to understand. There is in everything, he says, a Sulphur, a Mercury, and a Salt; by which we have sometimes ventured to think he means a spirit, and soul, and a body; but are by no means sure that this is correct. The Sun, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn seem to stand in some mystical relation to the seven forms of nature; and influence the quality and character of the matter of earth, and the nature and lives of men. To us, these ideas are by no means the folly that they will seem to the "high doctors" and learned scientists of earth; they are no doubt mystical ways of expressing recondite truths of Being. Nevertheless we shall pass them by, because we are utterly unable to give any clear and intelligible account of them. They were as acceptable to the day in which Boehme lived as they are unacceptable to our day. Neither do we think that they are of such practical importance that the omission of them will render our interpretation of his philosophy incomplete.

GEORGE W. ALLEN.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

IN DEFENCE OF THE SPORTSMAN

THE butcher! The sportsman!! The vivisectionist!!!

In ascending degree of iniquity these luckless wights are represented in Theosophical literature as crowning the pyramid of human crime. In life they are the target for endless anathema, in death their inevitable sufferings are recounted with what I may almost describe as satisfaction.

Now with the first and last of these classes I am not deeply concerned. I have met many butchers who appeared to be, in other respects, harmless and respectable members of society, perhaps self-denying fathers of families, perhaps public-spirited Town Councillors. But I do not think that as a class they are large readers of Theosophical works, so that probably their withers are unwrung. It is chiefly as a meat-eater, and so morally responsible for their crimes, that I should be glad to see some portion of the load of present opprobrium and future disaster lifted from their shoulders.

As regards vivisectionists I have even less to say; so far as I know I have never met one. Their methods, if they are as stated, appear to me detestable; of their motives I have no means of judging.

It is the sportsman that, with some trepidation, I now venture to defend. I have long waited in the hope that some abler and more influential advocate would undertake the brief, but month after month the thunders of the prosecuting counsel alone are heard, and there is danger lest judgment should go by default.

First of all let me try to define my client. He is not the "sporting man," the frequently undesirable attendant of the racecourse, the pigeon-shooting ground, and the betting office. His aim is not the destruction of the greatest amount of life with the least exertion to himself. He matches his nerve, his skill, and his wits against the instinct, the cunning, or the brute force

of the animal he hunts, the essence of the contract being that the conditions should be equal, or, preferably, the advantage on the side of the hunted.

Now let us take the sixteenth discourse of the *Gîtâ* and see if some of the Divine properties therein mentioned do not, in their germ at all events, constitute the education gained in the pursuit of sport as I have defined it.

Fearlessness? It is evident. The man who learns to face a charging tiger, or ride a young horse across a country, has certainly grounded himself in this virtue. Cleanness of life? Austerity? A *sine quâ non* if the nerves are to be relied on and the muscles kept fit for their work. Self-restraint? The man who cannot command himself will never be the master of his horse. Compassion to living beings? Here I see my critics raise their hands to Heaven at my audacity. And yet I say that killing is not the essence of sport. No doubt it is a frequent accompaniment of it, still it is kept at a minimum, and no true sportsman kills for the sake of killing. To kill and leave to waste is repugnant to him. Nor does he enjoy the sight of suffering; he hates wounding his game, and will walk miles sooner than leave a wounded animal or bird to linger in pain. Paradox as it may seem, it is a matter of daily experience that there is no such lover of animals and the life of nature as the sportsman.

"Do men gather grapes of thorns?" If we can recognise among the qualities inculcated by sport the germs of virtues which crown the Adept, surely we must agree that, in its right place in evolution, sport is not an evil thing. And if this be granted, but it be urged that that time has now passed away, I would reply that it takes all sorts to make a world; there are Kshattriyas as well as Brâhmans, and as long as a man finds something of good to be learned from sport it is right for him to use the opportunity afforded.

Of course I do not dispute that a time must come when he has learnt all that sport can teach him, and he needs a gentler, more delicate school; but it seems to me that his own nature tells him when that time has arrived, and he requires no denunciations from without to guide him.

Lastly, as to the authority on which we are asked indiscriminately to condemn a pursuit, the love of which is more or less ingrained in the fibre of nine out of ten Englishmen of the present day, and to which, as I submit, the English character owes much of its virility. So far as I know—I stand open to correction—the unpopularity of sport in Theosophical circles is based on sympathy for animals carried to the point of partisanship on their side as against man, and is supported by the accounts of the fate which is said to overtake the sportsman on the other side. Now I do not seem to see all this antagonism between animals and man. No doubt wild animals are averse to man's society, but they are not particularly friendly with each other, and I would urge that among all who have succeeded in bridging the gulf that lies between animals and man and stand on terms of real intimacy with the lower creation the sportsman is pre-eminent.

As to the sportsman's ultimate fate—to be pursued, I understand, by the shapes of those he has slain—it all seems a little vague, and I have hardly gathered whether those of our members who have the power have actually seen such an incident; and, even if so, may I be forgiven if I suggest that possibly preconceived ideas may have somewhat coloured their vision? Anyhow the idea does not seem to me very impressive, and I see another side to the question. What about the animals that have injured me, from the horse that has kicked me to the wasp that has stung me? Am I to waste my time making astral faces at *them?* I hope I shall not be called on to do anything so foolish.

No, I would ask for a revision of the judgment that, without calling on the defence, our writers appear to have passed on sport. I would maintain that it has its place in the great economy of Nature, that though no doubt some have passed, and many are passing, beyond its sphere of utility, still for hundreds and thousands of young men of to-day, it is a mighty educator, leading them from paths of vice and self-indulgence in the direction, at all events, of those higher virtues which are the ultimate goal of the race.

S. V. THORNTON.

THE PERFECT SERMON, OR THE ASCLEPIUS

A Sermon of Thrice-Greatest Hermes to Asclepius

(continued from p. 339)

XXI.

Asclepius. Thou speak'st of God, then, O Thrice-greatest one?

Trismegistus. Not only God, Asclepius, but all things living and inanimate. For 'tis impossible that any of the things that are should be unfruitful.

For if fecundity should be removed from all the things that are, it could not be that they should be for ever what they are. I mean that nature,* sense,† and cosmos, have in themselves the power of being born,‡ and of preserving all things that are born.

For either sex is full of procreation; and of each one there is a union, or,—what's more true,—a unity incomprehensible; which you may rightly call Erōs or Aphroditē, or both [names].

This, then, is truer than all truth, and plainer than what the mind ['s eye] perceives;—that from that universal God of universal nature all other things for evermore have found,and had bestowed on them, the mystery of bringing forth; in which there is innate the sweetest charity, [and] joy, [and] merriment, longing, and love divine.

We might have had to tell the mighty power and the compulsion of this mystery, if it had not been able to be known by every one from personal experience, by observation of himself.

For if thou should'st regard that supreme [point] of time when . . . §the one nature doth pour forth the young into

* Here, presumably, meaning *hyle*.

† That is the higher sense, or sense as one.

‡ *Naturam*, again.

§ *Quo ex crebro attritu prurimus ut* . . .

the other one, and when the other greedily absorbs [it] from the first, and hides it [ever] deeper [in itself] ;—then, at that time, out of their common congress, females attain the nature of the males, males weary grow with female listlessness.

And so the consummation of this mystery, so sweet and requisite, is wrought in secret; lest, owing to the vulgar jests of ignorance, the deity of either sex should be compelled to blush at natural congress ;—and much more still, if it should be subjected to the sight of impious folk.

XXII.

The pious are not numerous, however ; nay, they are very few, so that they may be counted even in the world.

Whence it doth come about, that in the many bad inheres, through defect of the gnosis and discernment of the things that are.

For that it is from the intelligence of God-like reason, by which all things are ordered, there come to birth contempt and remedy of vice throughout the world.

But when unknowingness and ignorance persist, all vicious things wax strong, and plague the soul with wounds incurable ; so that, infected with them, and invitiated, it swells up, as though it were with poisons,—except for those who know the discipline of souls and highest cure of intellect.

So, then, although it may do good to few alone, 'tis proper to develope and explain this thesis :—wherefore divinity hath deigned to share His science and intelligence with men alone. Give ear, accordingly !

When God, [our] sire and lord, after the gods made man, out of an equal mixture of a less pure cosmic part and a divine ;—it [naturally] came to pass the imperfections* of the cosmic part remained commingled with [our] frames, and other ones† [as well], by reason of the food and sustenance we have out of necessity in common with all lives ;‡ by reason of which things it needs must be that the desires, and passions, and other vices, of the mind should occupy the souls of human kind.

* *Vitia ;* lit., vices. † *Sci.*, imperfections. ‡ Lit., animals.

As for the gods, in as much as they had been made of nature's fairest* part, and have no need of the supports of reason and of discipline,†—although, indeed, their deathlessness, the very strength of being ever of one single age, stands in this case for prudence and for science,—still, for the sake of reason's unity, instead of science and of intellect (so that the gods should not be strange to these),—He, by His everlasting law, decreed for them an order,‡ circumscribed by the necessity of law.

While as for man, He doth distinguish him from all the other animals by reason and by discipline alone; by means of which men can remove and separate their bodies' vices,—He helping them to hope and effort after deathlessness.

In fine, He hath made man both good and able to share in immortal life,—out of two natures, [one] mortal, [one] divine.

And just because he is thus fashioned by the will of God, it is appointed that man should be superior both to the gods, who have been made of an immortal nature only, and also to all mortal things.

It is because of this that man, being joined unto the gods by kinsmanship, doth reverence them with piety and holy mind; while, on their side, the gods with pious sympathy regard and guard all things of men.

XXIII.

But this can only be averred of a few men endowed with pious minds. Still, of the rest, the vicious folk, we ought to say no word, for fear a very sacred sermon should be spoiled by thinking of them.

[IX. M.] And§ since our sermon treats of the relationship and intercourse of men and gods,—learn, O Asclepius, the power and strength of man!

[Our] lord and father, or what is highest God,—as He's

* *Mundissima;* that is, most cosmic, or "adorned."

† Or, science.

‡ *Ordinem;* that is, cosmos. Compare this also with the idea of the Gnostic Horos which "surrounds" the Plerōma.

§ This sentence and the first half of the next, down to "suffer man's approach," is quoted word for word in Latin by Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, xxiii.

creator of the gods in heaven, so man's the maker of the gods who, in the temples, suffer man's approach, and who not only have light poured on them, but who [send forth [their] light [on all] ; not only does a man go forward towards the god[s], but also he confirms the gods [on earth].*

Art thou surprised, Asclepius; nay is it not that even *thou* dost not believe?

ASCLEPIUS. I am amazed, Thrice-greatest one; but willingly I give assent to [all] thy words. I judge that man most blest who hath attained so great felicity.

TRISMEGISTUS. And rightly so; [for] he deserves our wonder, in that he is the greatest of them all.

As for the genus of the gods in heaven,—'tis plain from the commixture† of them all, that it has been made pregnant from the fairest part of nature,‡ and that the only signs [by which they are discerned] are, as it were, before all else their heads.

Whereas the species of the gods which humankind constructs is fashioned out of either nature,—out of that nature which is more ancient and far more divine, and out of that which is in men; that is, out of the stuff of which they have been made and are configured, not only in their heads alone, but also in each limb and their whole frame.

And§ so mankind, in imaging divinity, stays mindful of the nature and the source of its own self.

So that, just as [our] sire and lord did make the gods æonian, that they might be like Him; so hath mankind configured its own gods according to the likeness of the look of its own self.

XXIV.

ASCLEPIUS. Thou dost not mean their statues, dost thou, O Thrice-greatest one?

TRISMEGISTUS. [I mean their] statues, O Asclepius.—Dost thou not see how much *thou* even, doubtest?—Statues, ensouled

* The Latin translation of this paragraph seems confused.

† This is, apparently, the "star stuff" of which they are made.

‡ *De mundissima parte naturæ esse prægnatum*—whatever that means.

§ This sentence, together with the first five sentences of the next chapter, down to the words "and constant worship," are quoted in Latin with two or three slight verbal variants by Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, xxiii.

with sense, and filled with spirit, which work such mighty and such [strange] results,—statues which can foresee what is to come, and which perchance can prophesy, foretelling things by dreams and many other ways,—[statues] that take their strength away from men, or cure their sorrow, if they do so deserve.

Dost thou not know, Asclepius, that Egypt is the image of the heaven; or, what is truer still, the transference, or the descent, of all that are in governance or exercise in heaven? And if more truly [still] it must be said,—this land of ours is shrine of all the world.

Further, in that 'tis fitting that the prudent should know all before, it is not right ye should be ignorant of this.

The time will come when Egypt will appear to have in vain served the divinity with pious mind and constant worship;* and all its holy cult will fall to nothingness and be in vain.

For that divinity is now about to hasten back from earth to heaven, and Egypt shall be left; and earth, which was the seat of pious cults, shall be bereft and widowed of the presence of the gods.

And foreigners shall fill this region and this land; and there shall be not only the neglect of pious cults, but—what is still more painful,—as though enacted by the laws, a penalty shall be decreed against the practice of [our] pious cults and worship of the gods—[entire] proscription of them.

Then shall this holiest land, seat of [our] shrines and temples, be choked with tombs and corpses.†

O Egypt, Egypt, of thy pious cults tales only will remain, as far beyond belief for thy own sons [as for the rest of men]; words only will be left cut on thy stones, thy pious deeds recounting.

And Egypt will be made the home of Scyth‡ or Indian, or some one like to them,—that is a foreign neighbour.§

Ay, for the godly company‖ shall mount again to heaven,

* Augustine's quotation ends here.

† *Sepulchrorum erit mortuorumque plenissima.* This sentence is quoted verbatim by Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, xxvi.

‡ Compare *Colossians*, iii. 11. "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, *Barbarian, Scythian*, bond nor free: but Christ is all and in all."

§ *Vicina barbaria;* lit., a neighbouring foreign country. Compare this with the previous note. It is strange the two, Scyth and barbarian, coming twice together.

‖ *Divinitas.*

and their forsaken worshippers shall all die out; and Egypt, thus bereft of god and man, shall be abandoned.

And now I speak to thee, O river, holiest [stream]! I tell thee what will be. With bloody torrents shalt thou overflow thy banks. Not only shall thy streams divine be stained with blood; but they shall all flow over [with the same].

The tale of tombs shall far exceed the [number of the] quick; and the surviving remnant shall be Egyptians in their tongue alone, but in their actions foreigners.

XXV.

Why dost thou weep, Asclepius? Nay, more than this, by far more wretched,—Egypt herself shall be impelled and stained with greater ills.

For she, the holy [land], and once deservedly the most beloved by God, by reason of her pious service of the gods on earth,—she, the sole colony* of holiness, and teacher of religion [on the earth], shall be the type of all that is most barbarous.

And then, out of our loathing for mankind, the world† will seem no more deserving of our wonder and our praise.

All this good thing,‡—than which there has been fairer naught that can be seen, nor is there anything, nor will there [ever] be,—will be in jeopardy.

And it will prove a burden unto men; and on account of this they will despise and cease to love this cosmos as a whole,—the changeless work of God; the glorious construction of the Good, comprised of multifold variety of forms; the engine of God's will, supporting His own work ungrudgingly; the multitudinous whole massed in a unity of all—that should be reverenced, praised and loved,—by them at least who have the eyes to see.

For darkness will be set before the light, and death will be

* *Deductio;* the technical term for leading out a colony from the *metropolis* or mother city. Compare Philo, *De Vita Contemplativa*, P. 892, M. 474 (Conybeare, p. 58): "In Egypt there are crowds of them [the Therapeuts] in every province, or nome as they call it, and especially at Alexandria. For they who are in every way the most highly advanced, lead out a colony (*ἀποικίαν στέλλονται*), as it were to the Therapeutic father-land"; and also the numerous parallel passages cited by Conybeare from Philo's other writings.

† *Sci.*, the cosmos.

‡ *Sci.*, the cosmos

thought preferable to life. No one will raise his eyes to heaven; the pious man will be considered mad, the impious a sage; the frenzied held as strong, the worst as best.

For soul, and all concerning it,—whereby it doth presume that either it hath been born deathless, or that it will attain to deathlessness, according to the argument I have set forth for you,—[all this] will be considered not only food for sport, but even vanity.

Nay, [if ye will] believe me, the penalty of death shall be decreed to him who shall devote himself to the religion of the mind.

New statutes shall come into force, a novel law; naught [that is] sacred, nothing pious, naught that is worthy of the heaven, or gods in heaven, shall [e'er] be heard, or [even] mentally believed.

The sorrowful departure of the gods from men takes place; bad angels* only stay, who mingled with humanity will lay their hands on them, and drive the wretched folk to every ill of recklessness,—to wars, and robberies, deceits, and all those things that are opposed to the soul's nature.

Then shall the earth no longer hold together; the sea no longer shall be sailed upon; nor shall the heaven continue with the courses of the stars, nor the star-course in heaven.

The voice of every god† shall cease in the [great] silence that no one can break; the fruits of earth shall rot; nay, earth no longer shall bring forth; and air itself shall faint in that sad listlessness.

XXVI.

This, when it comes, shall be the world's old age, impiety,—irregularity, and lack of rationality in all good things.

And when these things all come to pass, Asclepius,—then He, [our] lord and sire, God first in power, and ruler of the one God [visible],‡ in check of crime, and calling error back from the corruption of all things unto good manners and to deeds spontaneous with His will (that is to say God's goodness),—

* This will perhaps generally be taken to denote the presence of a Persian-Jewish influence.

† *Omnis vox divina*; or perhaps "the whole word of God."

‡ That is, the cosmos.

ending all ill, by either washing it away with water-flood, or burning it away with fire, or by the means of pestilent diseases, spread throughout all hostile lands,—God will recall the cosmos to its ancient form;* so that the world itself shall seem meet to be worshipped and admired; and God, the maker and restorer of so vast a work, be sung by the humanity who shall be then, with ceaseless heraldings of praise and [hymns of] blessing.

For this [re-] birth of cosmos is the making new of all good things, and the most holy and most pious bringing-back again of nature's self, by means of a set course of time,—of nature, which was without beginning, and which is without an end. For that God's will hath no beginning; and, in that 'tis the same and as it is, it is without an end.

ASCLEPIUS. Because God's nature's the determination† of the will. Determination is the highest good; is it not so, Thrice-greatest one?

TRISMEGISTUS. Asclepius, will is determination's child; nay, willing in itself comes from the will.

Not that He willeth aught desiring it; for that He is the fullness of all things, and wills what things He has.

He thus wills all good things, and has all that He wills. Nay, rather, He doth think and will *all* good.

This, then, is God; the world of good's His image.

XXVII.

ASCLEPIUS. [Is cosmos] good, Thrice-greatest one?

TRISMEGISTUS. ['T is] good, as I will teach thee, O Asclepius.

For just as God is the apportioner and steward of good things to all the species, or [more correctly] genera, which are

* This passage is cited in the original Greek by Lactantius (*Div. Institt.*, vii. 8) as from the "Perfect Sermon" of Hermes. As we might expect from what had been already said on this subject, it differs somewhat from our Latin translation ans runs as follows:

"Now when these things shall be as I have said, Asclepius, then will [our] lord and sire, the God and maker of the first and the one God, look down on what is done, and making firm His will, that is the Good, against disorder,—recalling error, and cleaning out the bad, either by washing it away with water-flood, or burning it away with swiftest fire, or forcibly expelling it with war and famine,—will bring again His cosmos to its former state, and so achieve its restoration."

† *Consilium* = βουλή.

in cosmos,—that is to say, of sense,* and soul, and life,—so cosmos is the giver and bestower of all things which seem unto [us] mortals good;—that is to say, the alternation of its parts, of seasonable fruits, birth, growth, maturity, and things like these.

And for this cause God doth transcend the height of highest heaven, extending everywhere, and doth behold all things on every side.

Beyond the heaven starless space doth stretch, stranger to every thing possessed of body.

The dispensator who's between the heaven and earth, is ruler of the space which we call Zeus [above].

The earth and sea is ruled by Zeus below;† he is the nourisher of mortal lives, and of fruit-bearing [trees].

It is by reason of the powers of all of these‡ that fruits, and trees, and earth, grow green.

The powers and energies of other [gods] will be distributed through all the things that are.

But they who rule the earth shall be distributed [through all the lands], and [finally] be gathered in a state,§—at top of Egypt's upper part,‖—which shall be founded towards the setting sun, and to which all the mortal race shall speed.¶

ASCLEPIUS. But now, just at this moment, where are they, Thrice-greatest one?

TRISMEGISTUS. They're gathered in a very large community,** upon the Libyan hill.†† And now enough concerning this hath been declared. G. R. S. MEAD.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

* Meaning higher sense, presumably; reading *sensus* for *sensibus*.

† *Jupiter Plutonius*. Ménard suggests "*Zeus souterrain* (*Sarapis?*)"; the original was probably Zeus Aidoneus.

‡ It is not clear who "these" are; perhaps all that have so far been mentioned, but this does not seem satisfactory. Doubtless the Latin translation is as usual at fault.

§ Or, city.

‖ *In summo Ægypti initio*.

¶ Compare Philo, *De Execrat.*, §. 9; M. 435, 436, P. 937 (Ri. v. 255); writing of the redeemed of the spiritual Israel, and the consummation of the age, he says: "Those who were but scattered in Hellas and non-Grecian lands over islands and over continents, shall rise up with one impulse, and from diverse regions flock together unto the one spot revealed to them."

** *Civitate*.

†† In *monte Libyco;* lit., on a (or the) Libycan, or Libyan or African hill or mount. Compare with this Chap. xxxvii. below.

CONCERNING ATLANTIS

AT the request of the Editor, I have read the article on Atlantis in last month's number of the THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

It is interesting to note from how many different sources information may be obtained about this lost continent. The source of the present communication was evidently of a spiritualistic nature, for the two ladies who received it, did so apparently by means of automatic writing.

As neither of them seems to have had much, if any, knowledge of what has been already written on the subject, the value of the communication is no doubt increased, and whoever may be their informant "on the other side," it is apparent that he has the means of obtaining information, for though the article in question abounds in somewhat vague statements, anyone conversant with the subject may without much difficulty gather illuminative hints on the conditions of life existing in those far-off days.

At the same time there are discrepancies between the statements made here, and the results of the investigations made some years ago by the group of trained seers who supplied the writer with the information which was embodied in the *Story of Atlantis*. The points of agreement and the points of difference will be brought out as we proceed.

The description of the land surface would seem to correspond roughly with Map No. I. in the *Story of Atlantis*, which represents the outlines of the continent before the first great catastrophe. It is indeed stated in the paper that the description applies to a period about 2,000 years before the first destruction. The "Lords of the dark face" had for thousands of years been the acknowledged rulers in the City of the Golden Gates. The exercise of sorcery was becoming more and more common, and the priests who practised the black art had learned to draw on

the vital energy of the earth. These events were inevitably leading up to the first great catastrophe.

Many of the statements made throughout the paper about these Adepts of the black art, who had succeeded in establishing themselves as rulers of the people, not only in the City of the Golden Gates but in many other centres of the great continent, are in accordance with the information received by the writer. It is true that they had no love or pity for their fellow men. It is also true that they were served by automata, but these were of course *non*-human, being in fact elementals formed, materialised, and animated by their own powerful and evil will. They also had the power of projecting their thoughts by means of telepathy, as well as by means of a system which corresponds very closely with our modern wireless telegraphy. This last power is probably referred to, in the article before us, in the somewhat vague phrase of "writing their messages on the clouds."

But the fundamental difference between the information received by the writer and that now put forward, is the identification of these Black Adepts with the general population of Atlantis, while there is only the barest reference made in the paper before us to the Adepts of the Good Law—the initiated priesthood of the White Lodge. The view presented of Atlantis is manifestly limited, both in time and space. The only district dealt with is that of the central city, and that at a time when it was entirely dominated by the evil magicians.

References are, it is true, occasionally made to slaves and lower people, but the impression left is that the Atlanteans *generally* were possessed of abnormal powers—were, in fact, the Black Adepts who helped to bring on the ruin of the Continent. This idea is expressed in a most pointed way in the following words: "The Lemurians were savages with every bodily faculty ready for development. These simple creatures were during many thousand centuries slowly evolving into the glorious divine gods and titans of Atlantis." It is perfectly true that the Lemurians started from a savage state, and their evolution proceeded slowly during many thousand centuries, but in the time of Atlantis (according to the information previously received) they formed the great body of the people, *i.e.*, the lower classes

and the slaves, for the upper classes were chiefly composed of the more advanced among the first group of Lunar Pitṛis who had only begun to return to incarnation on Atlantis. That they should be spoken of as "gods" in Atlantis would imply such an abnormal rate of progress as is hardly consistent with any facts of evolution known to us. It is true they were titans, but only in physical size and strength.

It may be noted here that the reference just made to the population of the world is in direct contradiction of the statement made in the article before us that there are no pure Atlanteans left. For instance, the Japanese are said to be of pure Atlantean race, for the Mongols were its seventh sub-race.

It may be interesting now to enquire into the origin and history both of the Black Adepts and of the Adepts of the White Lodge in Atlantis. Readers of the *Secret Doctrine* will remember the references in the Shlokas of Dzyan to semi-divine beings, some of whom took up their allotted task in the building of man in Lemuria, and some of whom refused at that time to do so. Now it appears that these beings were the highly evolved humanity of some system of evolution which had run its course at a period in the infinitely far-off past. They had reached a high stage of development in their own scheme of evolution, and since its dissolution had passed the intervening ages in the bliss of some Nirvâṇic condition. But their karma now necessitated a return to some field of action and of physical causes, as they had yet many lessons to learn—notably the lesson of compassion —and their temporary task now lay in becoming guides and teachers of the Lemurian race.

Though it was only for a temporary period that these beings had to incarnate in our humanity, that period extended over the Lemurian and Atlantean epochs. Those who took up their task in Lemuria became doubtless Adepts of the Good Law in Atlantis. Of those who refused it is written that they were "destined to be reborn in the Fourth [Root Race] to suffer and to cause suffering." Many of them, no doubt, through the experience and the suffering reached the haven of the White Lodge, but the great majority of them became the Black Magicians of Atlantis.

A limited number of members of our own human family

reached on Atlantis a point of development at which they had to choose between the right and the left hand paths. Those who chose the left hand path became pupils of the Black Adepts, but can never have reached their heights—or rather depths—of evil. But the distinction to be drawn is this, that while those who belonged to our humanity may now be in physical existence on the earth, this cannot be the case with the others. Of the great and powerful "Lords of the dark face," whose dominance in Atlantis formed so terrible, yet so interesting an episode, no return need be expected. They have gone to their own place.

Statements are put forward in the paper under consideration to the effect "that there is no need for men to die," that if a man "knew how to regulate the inflow of new particles [into his body], he would never choose worse but rather better particles, and the atoms would remain permanently polarised by his will." It is unfortunate that a little more discrimination was not used to guard against the implication that such powers were the possession of the race at large. The statement is certainly not applicable to the ordinary population of the world to-day, and it would imply retrogression, not advance, in the general evolution of mankind to imagine that it could be applicable to ordinary men in those far-off ages. The quasi-scientific reasons put forward in support also seem to give a very misleading idea. They are apparently a distorted version of the facts about the "permanent atom." The "permanent atom" has been written about very fully elsewhere,* so a repetition is not necessary here. There is of course a certain amount of truth in the idea that there "is no necessity for men to die." Adepts who reach a very high level either on the right or the left hand path, *do* attain powers of prolonging the life of the physical body, but not for ever, as seems to be implied in the paper before us. The limit appears to be two or three hundred years. When that term is reached, it is probable they can make for themselves a new body by drawing to themselves the necessary particles of matter and thus materialising the "*mâyâvi-rûpa*." Now, as we are informed, there was in Atlantis a certain number—an extremely limited number in proportion to the whole population—who had this power, as there is a

* A. Besant's *A Study in Consciousness*, pp. 85-113.

limited number living in the world to-day who have it also. The proportion of those who attained it by the left hand path was, however, in those days larger than it is now.

The rather loose statements made about sexual love and the birth of children seem to require some amount of sifting. It is perfectly true that the sexual passion had no place in the existence either of the White or the Black Adepts in Atlantis. It never is indulged in by those who reach these heights and depths of good and of evil. Marriage does not exist for them. Marriage is a means by which the population of the earth may be kept revolving—the means by which its ordinary inhabitants, who are going through their normal course of evolution, may return to physical existence after enjoying that long or short period of subjective bliss which each respectively has merited in the last earthly life.

Love for others—so exalted a love that ordinary mankind cannot conceive it—love which is the passionate outpouring of the soul, and which needs no expression on the lower physical plane—this love is the very life-breath of the Masters of Compassion, the Adepts of the Good Law. They live for their brother men. They are the Redeemers of the race.

Love for himself alone is the one dominant characteristic of the Black Adept. Naturally enough the expression of love for others, whether on the physical or any other plane, does not form part of his design, while—the possession of superhuman powers being his chief object—he is fully aware that the indulgence of passion on the material plane would tend to frustrate this attainment.

With the exception of these two orders, the social life in Atlantis—with marriage as a fundamental institution—would seem to have been very much the same as it is amongst ourselves; for these Atlanteans *were* ourselves, at a lower stage of evolution, but with far greater psychic powers. Those whom we may call the upper classes—who may be taken as representing the first group of Lunar Pitṛis—were not only highly educated and intellectual, but they were in full possession of psychic vision. In speaking of them as being highly educated and intellectual, it must not be imagined that they reached any standard which

would be considered high in our own days. The capacity for abstract thought was then in its infancy. The human race on Atlantis was utterly incapable of producing a Plato, a Kant, or a Hegel; and although physical science was an important object of investigation, it was concrete, not abstract, and Atlantis was equally incapable of producing such a scientific thinker as Lord Kelvin or Sir Oliver Lodge. It must always be remembered that their great discoveries and inventions were almost entirely due to *direct perception*, through their psychic vision, of so many of Nature's hidden forces.

The lower classes, too, had a certain amount of astral vision, for the "third eye" was then a normal characteristic of the race. It was rather in their more limited mental capacity that they differed from the upper classes. It is indeed obvious that those who were the Pitṛis of the second group and had not made the same progress on the Lunar chain as the members of the first group, could not stand at the same stage of mental development.

The descendants of the Lemurio-Rmoahals, who in the later days of Atlantis formed a large proportion of the slave class, naturally represented the still lower stage of development of the third group of the Lunar Pitṛis, and the still later in-comers from the animal kingdom.

At no stage in the world's history has educational training been so perfect for supplying the needs of the community as that which existed during the great Toltec era in Atlantis. While the higher education culminated in such scientific achievements as the navigation of the air, the technical schools inaugurated experiments, some of the results of which we are reaping to-day. By centuries of continuous selection and elimination, the Atlanteans are said to have produced the seedless banana, while the domesticated animals of to-day are the results of the experiments carried on by the men of those times. From this it will be observed that the statement that the Atlanteans "had no animals about them" does not tally with the information previously received.

The food of the Atlanteans is another subject which requires some comment. Here again no mention is made of the food consumed by the great bulk of the inhabitants, only of that which

supported the bodies of the priests and rulers, and even in this case the statements do not quite correspond with what has been already written on the subject. While the initiated priesthood and the Adepts of the Good Law used simple articles of diet such as milk and cereals, the black magicians adopted as a rule compressed essences made in the laboratory. But the food of the great bulk of the population was very different from either. That which was regarded as a luxury by the upper ranks, who constituted it will be remembered all the most cultured and intellectual classes, was the blood of animals, dishes made of the blood, and of the flesh in which the blood remained, while the flesh from which the blood had been drained was left for the lower classes and for the slaves. Fish which had reached a high state of decomposition was also considered a choice article of diet!

It is interesting to note that the ladies who obtained the present communication are in hopes of getting further information from their unseen friend. If it might be permitted to the writer to offer a suggestion, it would be that their friend's attention might be directed towards various phases of life at definite epochs. The detailed descriptions which might result from this method would form an interesting supplement to the knowledge we already possess. Were this often enough repeated and with full assurance that the information obtained was correct,* the sketch we have of this long-lost continent and its inhabitants might become a finished picture.

W. SCOTT-ELLIOT.

* The first necessity is confidence in the accuracy of the information offered. Apart from the illusive character of the astral plane itself, there seems to be some essential difficulty in getting information correctly transmitted through spiritualistic communications.

It will probably be considered, in the cases where discrepancies occur between the information offered in the article under review, and that given to the present writer by the group of trained seers above referred to, that the latter seems to be rather more in accordance with the dictates of common sense, but altogether apart from this consideration, such an error in a statement of simple fact as the substitution of the name of Herodotus for that of Plato, twice made in the paper, gives some cause for doubt whether the present communication is any exception to the general rule.

FROM MANY LANDS

Contributors of matter under this heading are requested kindly to bear in mind that not only accounts of the general activities of the various sections or groups of the Theosophical Society are desired, but above all things notes on the various aspects of the Theosophical Movement in general. It should also be borne in mind by our readers that such occasional accounts reflect but a small portion of what is actually going on in the Society, much less in the Theosophical Movement throughout the world.—EDS.

FROM ITALY

IN the month of October last new quarters were provided for the Roman Branches and the offices of the Italian Section in a spacious set of chambers at No. 380, Corso Umberto I., in the most central and aristocratic part of Rome. Mrs. Cooper Oakley, the Executive Committee, and the Presidents of the various Branches, arranged for the furnishing of the new Headquarters, which comprise a magnificent hall for lectures and for the Library, and rooms for the Branch meetings, for study, offices, etc.; all with good light and air, convenient and in every respect suitable for our Theosophical work in Italy. Mrs. Besant was good enough to interrupt her return to India to give us a week, from the 16th to the 22nd October, and did us the honour of inaugurating our labours in our new establishment; delivering the Inaugural Address before a large number of the members, including representatives of nearly all the Italian Branches, come to Rome expressly for the occasion. On the following days Mrs. Besant gave four public lectures on the following subjects: "The Importance of Psychic Studies," "Theosophy and the New Psychology," "Occultism and the Occult Arts," and "Theosophy and Sociology." These lectures, both by their arguments and by the magnificent manner in which they were developed by our great orator, kindled the most lively interest in the numerous auditors.

Thanks to the energy of Mrs. Cooper Oakley, the Executive Committee and the Presidents of the Lodges, we have to record the

formation of seven new Branches during 1904. These are: a second Branch at Milan, under the name of "Loggia Lombardia"; a second at Genoa under the name of "Loggia Giuseppe Mazzini"; one at Palermo; one at Leghorn; one at Terni, under the name of "Loggia Umbria"; one at Venice, named "Loggia Fulgentia Adriatica"; and a second at Turin, under the name of "Leonardo da Vinci." The Italian Section now numbers nineteen Branches.

In Rome, on the initiative of the Presidents of the four Groups, in unison with the Central Committee, conversazioni are held every Monday for outsiders, in which (in addition to answering questions) short expositions are given of the results of our own studies and of what has been recently published in the way of science, history, literature, art, etc. In December two lectures were given by Dr. Cervesato on "Buddhism and Christianity" and "Marcus Aurelius"; and one by Dr. Agabiti on "The Social Importance of Karma." To satisfy the desire of students arrangements have been made for the formation of Centres for the study of psychic problems, which will be directed by scientific authorities.

From the literary point of view also the work of the Section has been sufficiently satisfactory. Amongst the original works published by members of the Section we have to record the following: M. S. T., *Towards the Unity of the Human Race;* M. S. T., *Towards Occultism;* Prof. Alberto Gianola, *The Pythagoric Society of Crotona;* Prof. Balbino Giuliano, *The Religious Idea of Marsilio Ficino in Relation to the Esoteric Doctrine;* Olga Calvari, *Annie Besant, her Life and Work;* and A. V., *What we know of Theosophy and the Theosophical Society.*

Of translations there have been published this year: M. C., *Mysticism of the Feasts and Ceremonies of the Year;* Flammarion, *The Unknown,* with a splendid preface by Dr. Visani Scozzi. Nearly ready are translations of Chatterji's *Esoteric Philosophy of India* and Leadbeater's *Astral Plane;* whilst an Italian translation of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* is passing through the press.

I have the pleasure to notice, in addition, that one of our members, Sig. E. Arbib, has published a novel of a Theosophical character in the well-known review *La Letteratura* of Milan, which gained the prize in a public competition.

I cannot refrain from a word of gratitude to our foreign friends who have given us precious assistance, especially Mrs. Scott, Mrs. Williams, and Mrs. Murphy. Of the labours of Mrs. Cooper Oakley for so many years in Italy we Italians are learning more and more

every day the value, and we shall ever retain for one who has given so much of herself to the Theosophical movement amongst us the most lively admiration and the profoundest gratitude. D. C.

From Farthest South

A characteristic letter from Farthest South comes to one of our staff and we quote a few sentences: What shall I tell you of "news and views" at the Antipodes? Well—well; things are much the same as when I wrote you last. Branch goes ahead, lectures and classes go ahead; here a soul and there a soul catches a flash of something beautiful, and joins the Branch or does not join, but goes about the highways and byways of the world another creature. My special fellow-workers are fairly well and strong and certainly getting nearer the ideal as Theosophical Society lecturers, as I hope I myself am. The other Sunday . . . gave us a really brilliant lecture on the Planetary Chain. But the audience had sunk to thirty or so; the rest were off to hear a travelling Spiritualist lecturer and see their departed dear ones,—all for half-a-crown! Many of the local Spiritualists come to us; but most of them, and many of our own adherents, are not "stickers"; they are like children, interested in a novelty, but not persevering. And yet—they *return*, and sit out fifty minutes or an hour discourses (and not bread-and-milk discourses either) with an earnestness of mien, a real interestedness, that leaves one little to desire. Is that return the real key to them, or the tangential flight—"extends the silver thread and rushes onwards"? I pin my faith upon the larger fact, here and elsewhere; and guide them by their best.

I have a class in the *Secret Doctrine*—some two and a half years old now—every Friday night. We give two hours to our study, and have got to p. 196, vol. i. Remember I have had to make my students, as well as guide their studies; not one (I think) was a trained scholar. Now unity begins to manifest itself, and this so strongly that the entrance of several new pupils has not in the least affected the class feeling. With three who cannot attend quite regularly the roll number now stands at twenty; and I do think that it is creditable in the extreme; for I have no "milk for babes" on Fridays; it is all hard going, and wants a pretty agile wit. I do think that now the members are habituated to study all are the better, to a greater or less extent, for contact with the marvellous book of that great spirit H. P. B.—God bless her!

From the North of England

The activities whose beginnings were noted in earlier months have run through these later ones in long threads of lectures and meetings of many kinds. Mr. Orage has been weaving to the end many strands of work running through the Northern towns, in four of which he has given series of lectures and in others single ones. It is interesting to note the tendency towards a series of lectures on one subject, or on linked subjects. Does this mark a public that has been attracted and aroused by the single lectures and is now taking Theosophy as a subject worthy of being systematically studied? The lecture is undoubtedly the great activity just now—except perhaps the forming of committees—; it was not so a little time ago, and these fashions and phases are interesting and significant.

One of the most energetic labours is that of the Northern Propaganda Committee, whose scheme has prospered exceedingly. Four towns, Ripon, Darlington, Wakefield and Limthorpe, have had a series of lectures, and as a result, study-groups in three of them are now working, and Sunderland, West Hartlepool, Stockton and Macclesfield are being, or will be, added to the list. Mr. Van Manen is busily working through a long programme of lectures in North, South, East and West, and also presided at the Autumn Federation of Northern Branches, which was a larger meeting than is usual at that time of the year. It was, I think, the first time a non-British member has been asked to preside, and the experiment was a successful one.

Concerning Reincarnation and Christianity

A sign of the times is the broad and mystical tendency which is asserting itself among Christian thinkers, especially the clergy of the different Churches. There is a desire to find a common platform of belief upon which the members of various religious bodies can meet; this desire has found expression in many associations which aim to bring about a greater unity of thought, and to draw Christians to a common centre, the inner unity of souls with each other and with God. The favourable consideration of the doctrine of reincarnation by many of the clergy is another most important indication of the change which is passing over Christian thought; there is, moreover, a more favourable attitude towards Theosophy, and towards Theosophists; there is even a willingness to co-operate with them for the common good. On the other hand those Theosophists who are not

Christians are showing a wider, more tolerant, and more sympathetic spirit towards members of Christian Churches.

Archdeacon Colley, who took the chair at a lecture on "Reincarnation, a Christian Doctrine," given by Mrs. Besant, in Leamington, shortly before she left for India, has sent out 2,000 copies of this lecture in pamphlet form to the chief clergy of this country, to the leading ministers of many denominations and to one hundred religious papers, accompanied by a letter from herself. He is also holding fortnightly meetings in a hall at Leamington, to discuss Theosophy with any who are interested. At Bristol, Miss Ward has recently addressed a large audience of men in a Baptist Chapel on the subject of Theosophy, and the address was not only cordially received, but the speaker was asked to give a lecture on Reincarnation in March.

This same subject has been admirably dealt with by Professor McTaggart in an article in the *International Journal of Ethics* for October, and we look forward with interest to the book which we understand the Professor has in preparation. But the journeyings of reincarnation do not end even here; through pulpit and ethical journal into the Christmas magazines lies its track this month. In the *London Magazine* we read what four great minds think on the questions: "Have we lived on earth before? Shall we live on earth again?" Dr. Russell Wallace give a negative answer to those vital questions with most happy and complete assurance. The light of science—of physical science—has been shed on the whole history of man, past and to come! Mr. Rider Haggard reviews the answers given by three great schools of thought, Materialism, Christianity and Buddhism. He finds no need for man to accept the negative answer of Materialism and good reason for rejecting it, while he finds still better reason why Christianity, in unison with Buddhism, should give an emphatic affirmative. Mr. W. T. Stead gives a qualified affirmative, and Dr. Clifford believes vaguely that man will live again.

In his article entitled "Historical Mysteries—XI.: St. Germain the Deathless," in the November number of *The Cornhill Magazine*, Mr. Andrew Lang faces, not the question of "Will man live again on earth?" but the more startling one "Can man continue to live on earth for many centuries without change of body?" In his story of St. Germain under his many names, Mr. Lang justifies his title, for there is no question as to the mystery of this wonderful life, and he gives most suggestive evidence as to its deathlessness. There is, of

course, in this article little expression of opinion, but that such a question should be brought up by serious suggestion is a witness of unseen movements towards definite questions of the future.

From Scandinavia

The work is here in full swing in the different branches all over the country. Two of the members have been busy lecturing in towns where, as yet, no Theosophical centres exist, and these lectures have been very well attended, and many books and pamphlets sold. In Gothenburg two lodges of "Good Templars" have most heartily received lectures on Theosophy, and in Vesterås, in North Sweden, lectures on "Modern Theosophy" and "Reincarnation," in the Good Templars' Hall, have been attended by some two hundred people.

In a Swedish periodical, *The Friend of Health*, a prominent physician contributes an article on "Sickness as a Punishment for Crime." The crime, he says, may be committed in the present or the past, may be near to or far from the place where its effects appear. It may be caused by ignorance, heedlessness or sin, but its due consequences will surely follow. This is the law of illness. He pleads for simplicity, balance and dignity in the life, and demands for health peace and tranquillity of mind, since passion and unrest break up the body.

X. Y. Z.

A "Tortoise" Cosmogenesis

According to a Muhammadan tradition the first thing which God created was water, and the divine throne rests thereon; from the water arose a mist, out of which He made the heavens. He next dried up the water and turned it into solid earth, which He divided into seven parts. The earth was placed on a fish, both the fish and the water were set upon the rocks, the rocks were set upon an angel's back, the angel was set upon a rock, and the rock upon the wind. The movements of the fish make the earth shake, and God set mountains upon it that it might keep firm. The vapour which God made into heaven, He divided into seven parts. The seventh heaven is of fire, wherein live the angels who sing praises to God, their heads are beneath the throne, but do not touch it, and the soles of their feet rest on the earth. The distance between the throne and the earth would require five hundred years to traverse. Under the throne is a sea, whence floweth subsistence for all living creatures.—*Mas'ûdî* (tom. i., p. 47 ff.), in a note to Budge's *Alexander*.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Consciousness and its Mechanism

A Study in Consciousness: A Contribution to the Science of Psychology. By Annie Besant. (London: The Theosophical Publishing Society; 1904. Price 6s. net.)

This latest contribution by Mrs. Besant to the literature of our movement is, undeniably, in certain aspects, one of the most important books she has written, both because of the volume of new information which it embodies—information obtained, it is needless to say, by the use of those supernormal faculties upon which so much of our Theosophical study depends—and also because of the many new problems which it suggests, and the equally numerous old ones which it sets in a new light.

A large portion of the text having already appeared in the form of articles in these pages, it may, I think, be assumed that most of our readers will already know something of the main scope of the material dealt with; though in its new book form it has been so much systematised and revised that, as a contribution to our understanding of ourselves and the universe, it has gained enormously in value.

Under these circumstances, therefore, it seems inadvisable to review it in the ordinary way—the more so as nothing of the sort can be needed either to call the attention of students to any serious work of Mrs. Besant's or to recommend it to their study and appreciation. But it may perhaps be useful to some, and helpful to a few, to go through it chapter by chapter and indicate those points which appear to the writer to be specially significant or novel, while at the same time this procedure will give an opportunity to call attention to some things which appear less satisfactory or open to objection, as well as to note some of the problems to which this new work gives rise.

Taking first the Introduction, we have in the opening pages a somewhat new classification—or perhaps it would be truer to say, a clearer and more definite formulation of what many of us vaguely apprehended—of the seven planes which constitute a solar system,

into three distinct fields: that of the purely Logic manifestation, that of supernormal human evolution, and that of elemental, mineral, vegetable, animal and normal human evolution. And coupled with what is said also—little as it is—about the relation of the Logos to the planes of His special manifestation, the student will find that considerable help has been given him in clarifying his ideas.

On the other hand, the attempt made to answer the question: Why three Logoi?—appears less satisfactory. What is quoted as the great generalisation: All is separable into Self, Not-Self and a relation between them—is pure verbalism. These three terms are *abstractions* of human thought, and though exceedingly useful for purposes of nomenclature, are quite unfitted to supply an answer to such a question of *reality in its wholeness* as that propounded. It is such abstract verbalisms which have done not a little to bring metaphysic into disrepute. Again later on in the book there comes a point at which, as a student of Psychology—to which this work is a contribution—I cannot help entering a vigorous protest against the needless and, I venture to think, incorrect change in the nomenclature adopted for the three fundamental expressions of consciousness, as analysed by Psychology.

In the first place this nomenclature is unsound because—to mention only one among many other reasons—"Activity" is the result of Will and because also it is traceable in each of the three fundamental modes. Thus Activity belongs to a subsequent stage of forthgoing to that of Will; or else must be regarded as belonging to all alike. In the second place—this to my mind forming by far the most important objection—no writer, in treating of a well-defined subject, should venture to abandon the received terminology without full and careful explanation of his reasons. In inventing this new nomenclature of Will, Wisdom and Activity, Mrs. Besant has paid no attention to the outcome of all the best work that has been done in Psychology—as well as in Philosophy—for the last fifty years, work which has resulted in a practically unanimous conviction that the three primary, fundamental, co-ordinate, co-existing modes of human consciousness are: Willing, Feeling and Knowing; or Conation, Volition and Feeling.

But let us turn now from the uncongenial task of criticism to the far more pleasant one of appreciation; merely adding that throughout this book the metaphysical substructure is inadequate and not seldom ignores the real nature of the problems touched upon.

For the student of symbolism, the clue given as to the meaning of the Divine Tetraktys (or Tetrahedron?) on pages 8 and 9 is most suggestive, as in fact are also the various symbolic hints which follow. And it is worth remarking that symbolism has *real* value, if only because it may afford no small help in escaping from, as well as in detecting, those subtle and delusive verbal abstractions with which the very nature of spoken language so constantly misleads us. A good illustration of this may be found in the significant footnote to page 10, concerning the "drawing apart" of spirit and matter. This "drawing apart" is truly said to be in consciousness alone, for Spirit and Matter are merely names for mental *abstractions* (not *ideas* in the Platonic sense) and the use of the word "idea" in this connection without the adjective "abstract" may possibly cause the real point to be overlooked. And useful, nay indispensable, as is that form of the language of symbolism which we call words and names, its very facility conceals a pitfall, and hence the ancient language of more concrete and actual symbolisation has a very special value and utility *for us*. Therefore all that aids one to grasp and understand this almost forgotten tongue should be most welcome, and these pages are good work in that direction, if we can pass beyond the verbalisms into which the seer who gives them had perforce to render what was seen in order to communicate it. And it may prove profitable to remember this, for much in the subsequent chapters of this book seems to me to be of essentially the same character.

As regards the origination of the Monads, we are left, as might be expected, in face of impenetrable Mystery: "THAT willed: I shall multiply and be born." This Upaniṣhad passage seems like an anticipation of Schopenhauer, only that the older view does *not* seem to be that this Ultimate Will whence proceed all beings and things was *blind*, that is, unconscious and unintelligent, as the more modern thinker held. In any case the mystery remains impenetrable, though the careful student will surely find in these pages the material for forming a much clearer and more definite conception of what is meant by the "Monads" than he has hitherto possessed; and that alone is no small gain.

The first chapter of the book gives a very useful sketch of the preparation of the field in which the evolution of the Monads is to take place—in other words an outline of the laying of the foundations, the preparation and formation of the matter which is to form our solar system. But there is one point as to which there seems to be a dis-

crepancy in the account itself here given with what has been stated elsewhere, to which it may be well to call attention.

The chapter begins by quoting H. P. B.'s statement that "the atomic subplanes of our planes make up the first or lowest (the prâkṛitic) kosmic plane," and we are rather led to expect that our solar Logos in modifying the kosmic matter to build the foundations of His universe would form—or rather modify—the kosmic matter forming the seven subplanes of the kosmic prâkṛitic plane into the corresponding *atomic* subplanes of our solar system. But in the more detailed description given on pages 22 *et seqq.* it seems to be clearly stated that our solar Logos forms *only* the "atoms" of the Adi plane *directly* from the kosmic matter, and then builds the atoms of the Anupâdaka plane out of the atoms of the Adi plane ensheathed in the lowest molecular combinations of the matter of that plane, and so on downwards; the atoms of the Nirvâṇic plane being formed by a sheath of the densest molecular matter of the Anupâdaka ensouled by the atom of the same, and so on. Thus the question arises—and has as a matter of fact been already asked—in this form: Are the atoms (*e.g.*) of our physical plane formed—or rather modified—by the Logos *directly* from *corresponding* kosmic matter; *i.e.*, from the *lowest* order, or subplane of the kosmic prâkṛitic plane, or are they formed by the Logos solely *within* His system as described above? In the first case there would exist a continuity (with modifications) of *physical* atoms of the same essential nature between us and the fixed stars; in the second no such atoms, *i.e.*, no physical plane atoms *at all*, would exist beyond the limits of our solar system. It may be remembered that Mr. Leadbeater has over and over again stated that our physical atomic subplane extended *continuously* (with of course local modifications) to and beyond the fixed stars, and has supported that view by reference to the fact that we *see* the fixed stars and can analyse their light with a spectroscope, and since the vibrations of light travel in *physical atomic matter*, it would therefore follow that that order of matter must extend to the fixed stars.

The point is one of more than purely theoretical importance, and it seems exceedingly desirable that the apparent discrepancy should be cleared up, and the correct view ascertained by a careful comparison and closer study on the part of those who can deal with such problems.

Chapter II. has "Consciousness" as its subject, and begins by stating that "consciousness and life are identical." I confess to a

great desire to see this statement explained and justified. We know —in experience—something of that class of happenings or phenomena to which we give the name of life; in brief they may be summed up as nutrition, excretion, reproduction, to name only the primary or specific characteristics. By consciousness—as the term is usually employed—we mean to include all those phases in experience called: Thinking, Willing, Perceiving, and Sensation in all their various forms. As used in modern works, the term consciousness is a general term to include all these; but it does *not* include the specific phenomena of life. How then are the two identical? Or better, what is meant by saying that consciousness and life *are identical?* But both the metaphysic and the phrasing of this first section, especially the former, leave so much to be desired, that it is more useful to turn away from the critical aspect, and call attention to the exceedingly valuable and admirably suggestive definitions given on pages 38 and 39. These should help us considerably to a clearer understanding of the old Scriptures, and here the real insight and deep intuition of the true seer are apparent.

I should like, however, to ask, in reference to the point discussed on pages 43 and 44, whether—as the language used seems to imply—we are to understand that every passing thought and feeling, every movement of our bodies, every printer's error in an uncorrected proof, for example, is to be regarded as *eternally existing* and *present* in the "Absolute," and, therefore, present there *before* it is manifested here? If so, we seem reduced to a system of sheer mechanism, far more deadly and soulless than the Mechanical Theory of the Universe so beloved of some present-day scientists. But if it is not so—we for one cannot accept the idea—then what is the real clue to the needed explanation, for it is impossible to ignore that universal experience of all Mystics, in which Mrs. Besant has evidently participated, which translates itself always in such language as she here uses? This is one of the deepest and most difficult of all problems, alike of Metaphysic and of Mysticism, and it has proved the pitfall which has engulfed all the "Absolutist" systems of Idealism from Shaṅkarâchârya to Bradley, *viâ* Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. Here *is* a problem truly worthy of all the best energies of a modern seer; for this is certain, that we can never rest satisfied with the implications of the statements here made; *some* solution of the difficulty must sooner or later be found, and no system which does not furnish it can be true, real, and adequate in its ultimate foundations.

In Section 2 of this chapter, dealing with the Monads, we have the work of a true seer, carrying with it that characteristic insight and illuminativeness which is its own best authority,—though all too brief, inevitably, and leaving out much which one earnestly hopes the future will bring to light, in order to make coherent, consecutive, and adequate, the insight, at any rate intellectual, of those not so gifted; still admirable and lucid, giving the outlines of a chapter in our evolution of supreme interest, and worthy the most careful meditative study. Space, however, does not serve for going into any of this in detail, so we will pass on to Chapter III., which describes the "Peopling of the Field."

This chapter is lucid and instructive, but is already so condensed, as to its significant paragraphs, that I must limit myself to a few brief remarks. First a word of gratitude for the clear definition and explanation of the often used, but very difficult, term "Reflection" as employed in occult writings. It is here explained to mean generally the manifestation on a *lower* plane of a force manifested and operative on a higher. This, at any rate, is definite enough, though naturally, later on, one will begin to want to know more as to the *way* in which this process takes place, though perhaps, nay probably, that will be asking too much. Also it will be interesting to go through as many passages from occult writers as we can, and see whether in all cases this explanation works out satisfactorily, or whether this term, reflection, still covers as yet unsuspected implications.

My second point is a question. In describing the putting forth of his life ray by the Monad, the language used, as well as the diagram given on page 64, seems to imply that this ray has (as it were) *three* strands. In other words it reads as if the Will aspect of the Monad energised into the âtmic atom—that is clear anyhow; his Wisdom aspect *directly* into the buddhic atom, *without contacting or sheathing itself* in âtmic matter, whether atomic or molecular; and his Activity aspect similarly and directly into the mânasic atom. Now the point of the question is this: Does this energising take place as implied from the Wisdom and Activity aspects respectively *directly* into the corresponding buddhic and mânasic atoms, *without* sheathing itself in the matter of the intermediate planes; or, on the contrary, does it so sheath itself?

In Section 3, which gives a classification of seven types of matter in terms of the three ultimate factors or Guṇas—Satva, Rajas and Tamas, or as they are here rendered Rhythm, Mobility and Inertia—

there seems to me to be a certain difficulty in making the equilibrium state of the three Guṇas (the state in which all three are *equally* active) one of the seven, because in Indian thought this condition, that of the *equilibrium* of the three Guṇas, has always, in all the scriptures, been associated with *non-manifestation* and *liberation*. How then can this state be counted as one of the seven *manifesting* and manifested streams? And, analogically, I should raise the same question as to the parallel classification of the seven streams or rays of Logic life. Very possibly the classification in both cases may be correct, but some further elucidation of this point seems needed.

In Section 4 a very interesting hint is given with regard to the work of the Devas or Elementals in the later stages of evolution, and this opens up the problem of the most radical and fundamental difference between the world-view of the Theosophist and that of all phases of modern science—the question of the conscious and intelligent working of beings other than those we see in the operation of the so-called "laws of Nature." Some day this problem must be faced; at present all that can be done is to allude to it by way of showing that the students in our ranks are by no means oblivious of its importance, nor ignorant of the sneer of "palæolithic anthropomorphism" which will be hurled against them.

In Chapter IV. we are given more details as to the permanent atoms and the process by which they become linked to the Monad, the foundations of whose vehicles they constitute, and we are introduced to a new factor, a new and immensely important feature, which I believe will come to occupy an enormously significant, a vitally constitutive position in our conceptions of man and the universe. This is what Mrs. Besant has termed the "Web of Life," the golden-coloured ray or thread of life sheathed in buddhic matter which is put forth from the Jivâtmâ—the tri-atomic Âtmâ-Buddhi-Manas. From the language used it would seem that this thread of life never envelopes itself in any sheath of matter denser than the buddhic, but remaining thus sheathed only, nevertheless not merely picks up the permanent atoms of the lower planes, but also forms the network into which the molecular structure of the vehicles is built, even that of our physical body. If this be so, it suggests the answer to a somewhat analogous question raised above in relation to the life-ray of the Monad itself; but, leaving that aside, the wonderful description of the bodies when thus clairvoyantly seen, given on pages 91 *et seqq.*, is not merely wholly new and most beautiful, but full of meaning.

For instance, take the physical body, with this network formed by the golden thread of buddhic matter issuing from the physical permanent atom; does it not give a new and deeper meaning to the old myth of the world tree—the mystic Ashvattha Tree with its roots above and branches below? Anything more beautiful as a picture, or a vision, it is difficult to imagine, and in it we shall find the clue to the solution of many a puzzling problem. But I must not linger on this one point, for this chapter is full of important, new information and insights; for instance, the all too brief section upon the way in which the Monad "chooses" his permanent atoms; that following it upon the use of these atoms and their bearing upon heredity; no less than the concluding one describing the nature of the Monad's action upon his permanent atoms.

The account given in Chap. V. of the Group-Souls is by far the most consecutive and coherent that has yet appeared, and much new information has been brought to light, notably the details as to the triple envelopes which form the sheath of the Group-Souls, and as to the relations of these envelopes to the contained triads of permanent atoms which they sustain, foster, and nourish. It is needless to repeat with Mrs. Besant that our information is still exceedingly fragmentary; but the student may well be congratulated on obtaining so much additional insight as is here given. On the whole, these two chapters, the fourth and fifth, are among the most satisfactory in the book.

Chapter VI. is concerned with the "Unity of Consciousness," and seems mainly to have been written in order to introduce the striking experimental researches of Professor Jagadîsh Chandra Bose, M.A., D.Sc., of Calcutta, upon the response of so-called inorganic matter to electrical stimulus. Whether, as Mrs. Besant contends, these researches *prove* the presence and the unity of *life* in both organic and inorganic worlds is a question open to debate. The present opinion of even the most sympathetic scientists is that they do not. And for myself, personally, profoundly interesting as these researches are, I should have thought a somewhat more restrained attitude preferable in regard to the validity and cogency of the demonstration required upon a point so fundamental and a theory so far-reaching. On the other hand, the introduction of this topic gives occasion for the extremely valuable and useful explanations as to the meaning of the term "physical consciousness," on pages 145 *et seqq.*, and, incidentally, also leads Mrs. Besant to throw out some very suggestive remarks and hints bearing upon the functions of the

spirillæ in the permanent atom in their relation to the work of the Monad, and also to our own normal waking consciousness. The same remark applies, with even greater force, to the subject of Prâṇa, upon which a few extremely suggestive and valuable hints are given in the following chapter, dealing with the "Mechanism of Consciousness."

This chapter, too, is excellent, and some of the facts now clearly stated are of the highest significance; notably, for instance, the facts that the sympathetic nervous system owes its origin to impulses originating in the astral sheath, while the cerebro-spinal system owes its origin to impulses originating in the mental sheath—a distinction of vital importance. But there is one topic touched upon with regard to which much more work seems to be called for. This is the question of the senses and (so-called) organs of action. The doctrine of only *five* special senses, *viz.*, Sight, Hearing, Touch, Taste, and Smell, seems at first sight quite incompatible with, and contradicted by, the results of modern experimental investigations into the subject. Modern work, alike in Psychology, and in Physiology recognises at least three, if not more, distinct senses in addition to these five: *viz.*, a distinct temperature, or hot and cold sense, a distinct and specialised sense of movement, *i.e.*, of the rotation of the joints upon their sockets —a sense of extreme delicacy, by the way—and a distinct "equilibrium" sense, whose organs are the semi-circular canals of the ear. In addition to these, some investigators assert, on experimental grounds, a further distinct and separate sense of weight. In some way these results must be reckoned with, and if there are only *five* astral centres for the "knowing powers," then either these extra senses must be reducible to terms of the others—which I do not think likely—or else traditional ideas have been over strong for our seers, and they have missed perceiving what is really there to be seen—a quite possible occurrence. And somewhat similar remarks will apply to the subject of the motor-organs as well.

Chapter VIII. gives us an excellent, but all too brief and bare, outline of the first steps of the Monad in its human evolution, in the course of which some suggestive remarks are let fall in Section 3, which have important bearings upon our present social conditions, and contain some valuable germs of thought throwing light upon the methods likely to lead to their amelioration—when rightly understood.

We come now to Chapter IX., on "Consciousness and Self-Consciousness"—one of the most stimulating, but at the same time

in various respects one of the least satisfying in the book. Doubtless, if the students in the Society do their duty, the topics here dealt with will later on be thoroughly discussed and threshed out; but in this place I must limit myself to a very brief indication of a few salient points, round which it seems to me that some at least of the discussion will centre.

First, then, the description (pages 195 *et seqq.*) of the way in which external impacts affect the Self by causing expansion or contraction in its envelope following an expansion or contraction in the sheaths, does not seem to me clear or really explanatory. It needs much fuller working out, and I incline to think that the part played by the golden "Thread of Life" has been overlooked, and moreover that in some way it is the forth-put *life* of the Self, the Monad, which is *directly* affected by the impacts on the sheaths and thus thrills up to its source, the Self. And further I doubt whether this conception of contraction and expansion is really the true and appropriate one to apply in this connection.

Second, while heartily welcoming the suggestion of the "interchange of life" described on page 196, as a luminous suggestion, one wants to know more definitely what this expression means. For it seems as though the only "life" which by interchange could thus affect the Monad *directly*, would be that of its own life-ray or "thread"; and if so, then may we conceive that there is a real union, an actual taking up into each of the forth-issuing life of another? Or is there, throughout, an interchange of life between the life-ray of the Monad and the surrounding life and lives with which it is associated? The suggestiveness of the idea here adumbrated is considerable; but much work needs to be done upon it ere we can grasp and really apprehend it.

Third, a difficulty presents itself in connection with the description on page 198 of the "Birth of Consciousness" in the separated divine germ. We were told that the Monad on the Anupâdaka plane was little less than omniscient, sharing the full Logic consciousness. It seems hard to understand how the addition of even the tri-atomic sheath which makes it the Jivâtmâ, can so *wholly* obscure and extinguish that fullness of *internal* consciousness, as to make such a phrase as "birth of consciousness" accurately applicable to it. Probably the explanation may lie in the nature of the raying-forth of its life by the Monad or else the expression may be intended to refer only to the ray *in* its tri-atomic garment; but, since we are frequently

reminded that human consciousness is *one*, and ultimately the consciousness of the *Monad itself*, I may perhaps be pardoned for suggesting the need for making plain and clear the real bearing and significance of what is here said. This seems the more needful because of the concluding words, which so strongly emphasise the idea of a *birth*, a *beginning*, *viz.*: "It (consciousness) is born of change, of motion; where and when this first change occurs, there consciousness for that separated germ [either Jivâtmâ or (ultimately) Monad] is born," and the way in which this is elaborated in the succeeding paragraph.

Lastly, we find the term "Feeling" appropriated to denote the primary, undifferentiated character of consciousness as a whole. No doubt the term is suggestive and in some respects applicable; but I incline to think that the original word consciousness would be better, and should be retained for this purpose, or else an entirely new word coined to denote it.

The outline of the rise of self-consciousness with which this chapter concludes, is barely but skilfully traced, and need not here detain us, save to note that the distinction between consciousness and self-consciousness is one of primary and fundamental importance for our whole subject.

Chapter X. deals with "Human States of Consciousness," and is in the main a very brief *résumé* of part of the substance of Mrs. Besant's Queen's Hall Lectures on *The New Psychology*, already reviewed in these pages. It needs, therefore, no special notice here.

Chapter XI., which deals with the Monad at work, contains a good deal that is interesting, but already this review has exceeded its due limits and for the same reason it is impracticable to discuss either the Theory of Memory which Mrs. Besant outlines in Chapter XII., the last of this part of her book, or her views upon Will, Desire and Emotion, a reprint of which from these pages occupies its last 150 pages. The former needs a good deal of space for adequate consideration, and the latter contains too much matter to be dealt with here.

Hence I shall only add in conclusion that in writing the above I have placed myself at the standpoint of the language used throughout the book, that which is the habitual standpoint of us all in our ordinary thinking—and which philosophically would be termed Realism. Of course Mrs. Besant—as I should myself—would repudidiate this standpoint in its philosophical implications; but none the less this

book, like all her others, is written in the language and from the point of view of that standpoint. This premised, another and more difficult problem remains: How are we to understand and interpret the *data* which she, as a seer, here gives us? Are her "seeings" literal actual *fact*, or how far are they translations, renderings into the *visual* and hence *spacial* imagery which characterises all seers of something much more essential and fundamental? Here we have the greatest and the most difficult problem of all those we have to face, and I must rest content with pointing it out, merely concluding this over-long review with a word of grateful thanks for all the new observations, the fresh *data*, and the many luminous and stimulating suggestions which this work contains.

B. K.

Is Theosophy a System?

An Enquiry into the Principles of Modern Theosophy. By Pestonji Ardeshir Wadia, M.A., Professor of History and Political Economy, Gujarat College. (Bombay: B. T. Anklesaria; 1904.)

We are very pleased to welcome this criticism of Professor Wadia's, and would like it read by all thoughtful members of the Theosophical Society. We do not, however, regard it as a criticism of Theosophy, but rather as a very useful stimulation towards an improvement in the methods of stating Theosophical problems. We do not regard it as a criticism of Theosophy, because for us this word connotes "Wisdom," an ideal, and not a dogmatic system. Professor Wadia, on the contrary, will have it that Theosophy is a system, a "form of philosophic pantheism," and as such he proceeds to make hay of it from the idealistic standpoint. But Theosophy is no more pantheism than it is monotheism, or idealism, or any other "ism." Theosophy, if we dare venture at all to speak in its name, is something quite apart from any dogmatic statements of any member of the modern Theosophical Society, and, unless we are grievously mistaken, teaches the lover of wisdom that all systems are but passing ways of regarding the great mystery, useful for the moment, for various types of mind, but all insufficient, all unsatisfactory, and this, too, in the very nature of things.

The way of regarding the great problem which is beloved by the idealist and the metaphysician is very different from the way of the

seer, whose tendency is almost invariably to exalt his objective subjective symbolic representations into an explanation of the reason of things.

When, then, Professor Wadia quotes from an article in *East and West* the purely symbolical statement: "In that Absolute Darkness (identical with Absolute Light) appears a centre of luminosity,"—which the writer glosses with the words, "to drop metaphor, where there was only the Absolute, out of the One Eternal principle appears a self-conscious centre, named the Logos, or the Word,"—and proceeds to point out from the idealistic standpoint the contradictions and inadequacies of this form of stating mysteries beyond our ken, we are in complete agreement with him. Such a mode of statement is entirely inadequate, and misleading, when applied to ideas. It is a statement based on seership, and seership of this nature is occupied with the material beginnings of a world system, the marvel which is revealed to our telescopes, oft occurring in the fields of space.

All his criticisms of such statements, then, do not touch Theosophy proper, but only the inadequate statements made by some modern writers and a host of ancient writers on such subjects. His criticism, however, is entirely beside the point, if he would try to abolish the concept of the Logos as the Divine Reason of things, or the modest position of modern Theosophical students, who occupy themselves with speculations regarding one solar-system only, meaning by Logos the Divine Reason of that system. The countless other systems are beyond their powers of speculation, and even of our own system it is only the shadow of the shadow of the Logos of our "cosmos" which falls within the range of their contemplation.

Equally beside the point, then, is all the criticism which Professor Wadia directs towards what he says Theosophists believe to be the nature of the "Absolute." Being "ineffable," there is nothing to be said about it, not even "*Neti neti*,"—much less "absolute." The Mystery of all mysteries is not revealable, and yet there is naught which it is not. But what is the use of words, when the invocation "Thou who art to be worshipped with silence alone!" can rightly be applied not only to the Logos, but to mysteries far beneath His transcendent glory, which though transcendent is also nearer than hands or feet?

Professor Wadia, then, is but criticising inadequate statements, and obscurities of thought, of some members of the Theosophical Society, and of many outside its ranks, both now and in the past.

But he cannot criticise the thing itself, in that he cannot criticise the best in himself, and—that is the Wisdom for him.

We are, therefore, all undismayed when he makes use of such phrases as "the first principles of Theosophy are this and that," "Theosophy teaches," "the God of the Theosophist," and a dozen such expressions. For years we have been contending that this way of treating the subject is entirely inadequate; indeed we have used much stronger expressions. But, says Professor Wadia, there is *a* system of Theosophy. We answer: There are innumerable systems. He will reply: But there is a *modern* system. We rejoin: Some members of the Society are trying hard to make one; but even that is only what they see or think they see of the old symbol of the world-order, which has been the means of the instruction of the seers for many an age. The interpretation of this "seeing" belongs to another faculty. The interpretation so far hazarded has a certain charm about it, in so far as it attempts to clothe the "seeings" in modern scientific terms; but in so doing it contains the seeds of its own impermanency, for it is one of the most remarkable phenomena of the history of religions and theosophies, that the more "scientific" all such systems were in their own day, the less suitable are they for succeeding ages; for our knowledge of physical science continually increases, and puts the physical notions of past generations out of date. So also will it be with any system set forth in modern scientific terms. It is a temporary clothing, not an eternal vesture—the only eternal "garment" of God is Nature herself.

To our mind, all systems, even the most intellectually perfect, are the playthings of children; we are all, even the wisest of us, here on earth, in a *Kindergarten*, and the strangest thing of all is that the most beloved playthings are what the real grown-ups of the cosmos most probably regard as by no means the most beautiful. Do we not see our children in the nursery hugging with tenderest care the ugliest dolls, passing once more, perchance, through the fetish worshipping stage,—is not the "golliwog" the most beloved of the small child? So with systems—idealism included—*pace* Professor Wadia. And yet without them how are we to win towards clearer thought; how are we to rise towards the "intuition of that which is"—is "here" as much as "there," of course—for we are not naïve mystics nor naïve realists, though our critic evidently writes us down as such. But, I take it, that we are not frightened by the elemental grimaces of words.

We should be pleased to go through the criticism before us page by page, but that would mean a volume of equal size or even of larger compass. There is much with which we agree, but very much that does not in any way represent the belief of the individual writers Prof. Wadia criticises; as for ourselves we are hugely amused at the notion that what our critic sets down to our address is the real basis of our conviction in the grandeur of Theosophy as a life and in the existence of the inexhaustible treasuries of light which are promised to all who persevere in the Way—a Way that differs for every man who is born into the world.

Professor Wadia can hardly be expected to know that the modern Theosophical Movement is still in embryo; it is passing through the thought stages of its predecessors, just as the child in the womb passes through the stages of mineral, plant and animal. An embryo is anything but beautiful, but it contains within itself the promise and potency of the future.

And now let me answer the chief of our critic's questions. He says:

"(1) But will the Theosophists, in their love of brotherhood, give up their Absolute so far as to acknowledge that it may be supplemented by the Absolute of Idealism? (2) Will they give up their doctrine of Nirvâṇa so far as to admit that there may be other ways in which the individual can unite with Deity? (3) Will they give up their Reincarnation Theory, and say that it is only one amongst other hypotheses which are equally satisfactory? (4) Will they say: 'All philosophic systems are partial truths; Theosophy is one of them and therefore a partial reflection of truth. Let each one, therefore, follow what system of philosophy he chooses'—?" (p. 113).

I have numbered these questions for greater clearness, and thus reply, at least for myself, and I have been identified with the movement for some twenty years:

(1) Good Heavens, yes!—or any other "Absolute" or conception of the "Absolute." But as to that Mystery which all this verbiage grotesquely adumbrates: No! And why, because we can't "give up" what we don't "possess"; and we can't possess an "Absolute"—or even a conception of it—that is worth any serious consideration.

(2) We should be delighted to give up the doctrine of Nirvâṇa if it connoted anything approaching to what Professor Wadia says we think it is, when he writes (p. 191): "We have used 'Nirvâṇa' to

denote not the Buddhist idea of positive bliss and happiness brought about through suppression of the causes of suffering, but the purely pantheistic and negative idea of the annihilation of the individual soul, and its absorption into the ultimate source of existence, which is found repeatedly turning up in theosophic literature."

If our critic was throughout as misleading as he is in this sentence we should not have troubled to notice his book. Curious that he should set the Buddhist idea of Nirvâṇa as a positive thing over against the annihilation of the individual soul, as though he had never heard of the *Anattâ* theory of Buddhism, and of the contentions of the Theosophical writers for so many years against those Buddhists who hold that theory in all its crudity. But we are glad to find that he agrees with us that the teaching of the Buddha was a positive realisation of the Fullness and not an absorption.

Other ways in which the individual can unite with Deity? Yes! One for every man; and no two alike. But then I have never had the audacity to define the possibilities of Deity, and though I was foolish enough once to put together some "Notes on 'Nirvâṇa,'" and left out the quotes which would have made my intention quite clear, namely, that I was putting together some notes on what some others had *said* about the great intuition which has been so labelled.

(3) I am sure I do not know whether those who hold to the theory of reincarnation as the most satisfactory explanation *to them*, will say there are other theories equally satisfactory *to them*; but they certainly should be prepared to admit that they may be equally satisfactory *to others*. And for myself I am prepared enthusiastically to accept any other theory that explains the facts more thoroughly, and above all I would like to see the theory of reincarnation treated more from the idealistic standpoint than has been hitherto the fashion.

(4) I was under the impression that this was a fundamental concept of Theosophy, and that any system put forward by any Theosophist was at best but his or her halting attempt to put forward his conception as far as he had got. The system was merely a form, to be broken up when greater life and light poured into him.

Professor Wadia thinks that Theosophy will fail; it cannot fail. The Theosophical Society may fail; though there does not seem to be much sign of the weakening of its vitality at present. But even if the Society goes to pieces, it will not affect Theosophy; other and worthier instruments will be found, and whatever of good there is in Professor Wadia's criticism or in his constructive views, is part and parcel of

that Theosophy. So that we may regard him as a friend and not as a foe, as we regard all who labour for the good of humanity. We who are members of the Society have no monopoly in Theosophy ; we are men and women glad that in our time there is an opportunity for coming into contact with the Ancient Wisdom, which is also the Modern Wisdom, for it knows no distinctions of time and place, and as we grow older we are becoming more and more convinced in our own minds that, as Professor Wadia himself says: "It is not impossible that with the hour the man might come, capable of helping on a movement of regeneration," and that too not only in India, but throughout the world, but He when he comes will not, we believe, found a new religion, but consummate the new idea of religion, of which in the Theosophical Movement and beyond it many are now so imperfectly struggling to form some crude notion.

G. R. S. M.

The Chronicles of Ancient China

The Shu-King, or the Chinese Historical Classic ; Being an Authentic Record of the Religion, Philosophy, Customs and Government of the Chinese from the Earliest Times. Translated from the Ancient Text, with a Commentary, by Walter Gorn Old, M.R.A.S. (London: The Theosophical Publishing Society ; 1904. Price 3*s.* 6*d.* net.)

We are exceedingly glad to welcome this volume, for whilst Indian and Greek traditions have been manfully tackled, the marvellous and ancient sources of Chinese wisdom have scarcely been explored at all by Theosophical workers.

Any thorough understanding of ancient Chinese (and in China even modern things are ancient) must start with an intimate knowledge of China's original history as outlined in the *Shu-King* (*i.e.*, The Historical Classic), for throughout the whole of the subsequent literature there is such a constant reference to its events and heroes that, if these are unknown, the later writings also remain sealed books. As a work of reference, therefore, this book is indispensable to any student of matters Chinese. The sub-title, however, given to it in this translation is rather misleading; and the reader will find that, though he may with difficulty dig out of its pages *some* religion and philosophy, their mention is for the most part incidental, philosophy in particular looming larger in the commentary than in the text.

One reason why we are specially glad that the Theosophical Publishing Society has had the enterprise to publish the work, is because it is not one of Theosophical exposition or propaganda in any sense of the word, but is rather a *source*, one of the world's classics which must prove of great utility to Theosophical students. We feel grateful that the Theosophical Publishing Society is willing to test the response of the public in this direction, and we hope that many within our Theosophical circles will meet this test by showing such an interest as will ensure the publication of kindred works. The price of the book is, with this in view, certainly well fixed, making this edition of the *Shu-King* the cheapest in the English market. Let us further add that the volume is neatly bound, well printed, and numbers over 300 pages, about half of which go to make the text, the other half comprising Mr. Old's commentary.

Having thus far spoken of the book itself, a few words should now be said about Mr. Old's share in producing the volume, and about this edition in particular. First of all, we think we may feel warranted—after a close inspection of his translation—in inferring that Mr. Old does not professionally belong to "that pugnacious body commonly called Sinologists," as Professor Parker calls them. That a Chinese translator falls short of the highest scholarship, however, may be a help or a hindrance. It may be a help, if he has industry enough to collate the results of others, and to bring together various scraps of information bearing on the questions dealt with. On the other hand, it may be an hindrance, for nowhere more than in Chinese studies is a little knowledge a very dangerous thing, and if one relies too easily or too much on himself, there are sure to be some wonderful results.

So we find that Mr. Old has not compared Legge's translation (see p. viii. of his introduction) nor evidently his edition of the text (Hong Kong, 1865), thus taking upon himself a greater burden of responsibility than he should have done. But not only is Legge, the standard translator, where historical books of China are concerned (G. Schlegel called him *the* best translator of his time), not taken advantage of; Pauthier's *Chou-King* also (Paris, 1840) and Couvrier's text with Latin and French translations (Ho Kien Fou, 1896) have escaped Mr. Old's notice, and only translations of 130 and 60 years ago have been compared, those of Medhurst and Gaubil. Still it stands to the credit of Mr. Old that, notwithstanding these self-imposed limitations, his translation reads in English as substantially

the same book as the other modern translations, a fact by no means so common in Sinological renderings as to make this statement so ludicrous as it might appear. On the other hand, curious renderings do occur, *e.g.*:

Old (p. 2): "Regulate thus carefully the hundred labours, and abundant merit will be universally diffused."

Legge (p. 34): "(Thereafter) the various officers being regulated in accordance with this, all the work (of the year) will be fully performed."

Further:

Old (p. 2): "He has but the semblance of respect and is a mere sycophant and a bombast."

Legge (p. 34): "He is respectful (only) in appearance. See! The floods assail the heavens!"

Such examples might be multiplied abundantly; but, notwithstanding this, the whole translation gives a fairly correct outline of the work, faithful enough for all general purposes, though not reliable or authoritative enough for real first-hand research. But everyone who would use the work for such purposes would know for himself what to take and what to leave.

Lastly we come to the notes which form such a large part of the whole. Not only has the translator gleaned for these notes a rich harvest of information, but he also gives applications and references embodying his own views. The astronomical and astrological elements are largely present, and to lovers of mysticism it will be interesting to find the chronological tables of the years from Adam to those of the Flood brought into connection with Chinese chronology (p. 28), or the "Hebrew Talisman of Saturn" compared and found identical with the mystic markings of the legendary "Great Tortoise" of China (pp. 172-173). Still such comparisons raise more questions than they settle.

A goodly sprinkling of quaint quotations is found scattered through the pages of the commentary. Thus we find mention made, amongst others, of persons so unexpected as Claudius Ptolemy (his *Tetrabiblos*) and Emanuel Swedenborg (p. 167). Sometimes the notes are somewhat audacious, and it is hardly the mark of a critical scholar to assign so decided a meaning to the expression the "four mountains" (p. 7, n. 12) as Mr. Old gives, if we compare Legge's cautious note on this point (p. 35). So also, it is hardly an accurate way of putting it, to say that "the word *juy* is equivalent to Latin *jugum*, Sansk. *vuj*,

to join" (p. 8). Again in note 11 (p. 169) we find the old mistake that *Tien-tse* means the Son of Heaven. It should be "He whom Heaven treats like a son."

But enough of such minor criticisms. The notes gives evidence of great industry, although unhappily not always carefully polished and checked. The element of haste is perceptible throughout the whole book, giving it thereby less finish than it should have. In various places, we find references to the Taoistic doctrine and even to the *Tao-Te-King*. The comparison between Hebrew and Indian traditions and those of China may be of mystical interest and is not dangerous, because it may be so readily separated from the rest of the commentary; comparisons between the traditions in the *Shu-King* and those of Taoism, however, are dangerous where they are superficial, because subtle differences of not yet finally settled values are compared with each other without our being told so. We should have preferred it if all Taoism had been left out of this volume. As an aside, and only because several terms have been explained in this book, it once more strikes us how little as yet has been made of the help afforded by etymology in this direction. For instance, *if* we could prove that Chinese *Tao* is Tibetan *Thabs*, or Chinese *Te* (virtue) is Tibetan *Mthu*, a very valuable addition to the knowledge of the original shades of meaning of the Chinese words would have been won. But all this will come later on, we hope.

And now we have to leave our *Shu-King*. Summarising what we have said, this is our impression. The translation contains all that the general reader practically needs of a book that is indispensable to the student of Chinese antiquity under whatever form. Although Mr. Old's book does not open up any new questions, or mark a new epoch in the understanding of the book, yet it brings together a large amount of information bearing on its contents, and presents the whole in a handy and neat volume, cheap in price. The notes, though sometimes somewhat mystical and vague, and often too confidently put, still as a whole give a body of matter worth knowing, and not easily found together elsewhere. Lastly, the Theosophical Publishing Society by producing it initiates a new side to its issues, to which we fervently hope it will soon add other volumes of a similar nature.

J. v. M.

Magazines and Pamphlets

Theosophist, November. "Old Diary Leaves" is this month mainly filled with notes of Japanese jugglery;—pleasant reading, but not available for our purposes. Next comes Mr. Leadbeater's lecture on the "Ancient Mysteries"; then a lecture by Mr. Fullerton on "Infidelity." We venture to differ from his statement that: "In the word itself there is no intimation that the thing disbelieved is obligatory, or that the disbeliever is morally culpable." In the *etymology* of the word there may be none; but we should often go very far wrong in judging the *meaning* of a word by this. "Infidelity" is *never* used without a suggestion of moral guilt; and it is this, and this only, which keeps it in use at all. Christian and Mohammedan alike use it to express their belief that everyone who does not receive their dogma is *guilty*, not merely mistaken—a conviction which is itself The Great Heresy "that cannot be forgiven in this world, nor in that which is to come." Miss Richardson gives us "Some Thoughts on Genius"; and Miss Kofel on "The Swastika" and other symbols. Mr. Rider Haggard's dog, and a touching letter from the Colonel entitled "The Support of our Aged Workers" (as to which we must hope that some one may discover the solution which the Colonel frankly admits that he has failed to find), complete the number.

Theosophy in India and *Central Hindu College Magazine* not received in time.

Theosophic Gleaner, November, is an interesting number, with an account of a very suspiciously Christian lecture delivered at the Oxford Mission Hall by "Swami Dharmananda Mahavarati," of whom we should like further information.

The Dawn, November; *Indian Review;* and *East and West*, also acknowledged with thanks.

The Vâhan, December, continues the correspondence about music. The "Enquirer" gives further answers as to multiplex personality and the value of magic, the latter with an excellent extract from William Law, the English expositor of Behmen; A. H. W. categorically denies that punishment "due on this plane" can be worked out on the astral plane. As a general rule this is doubtless correct, but there are some old sayings which seem to recognise exceptions. Other questions are "What is the nature of Moods?" and "What difference exists between the object of the S.P.R. and the third object of our Society?" as to which last the respondents agree that (accord-

ing to Hood's jest) "we row in the same boat, but with vastly different sculls!"

The Lotus Journal, December, gives notes of a lecture by Mrs. Hooper, and the conclusion of Mrs. Besant's "The New Psychology." Mr. W. C. Worsdell has a paper on seagulls, with a pretty illustration; and the rest of the number is fully up to its mark.

Revue Théosophique, November. In this number we have Mr. Leadbeater's lecture on "Purgatory"; the conclusion of Mr. Keightley's "The Black Forces in Evolution," being an interesting set of questions and answers on this important subject; a short paper by Th. Darel entitled "Science and Faith" and the continuation of Mr. Mead's "Apollonius of Tyana."

Theosophia, November. The "Outlook" gives occasion for a vigorous defence of Theosophy against the attacks of a certain Father Hendricks, a Catholic priest. H. J. v. Ginkel continues his study of the Great Pyramid, this time getting himself rather tangled up with Piazzi Smyth, H. P. B., and the Skinner "quadrature of the circle,"—all of which had better be allowed to be forgotten. Mrs. Besant's "Dharma," and "The Pedigree of Man," and Mr. Mead's "Concerning H. P. B." follow, and the number is ended by a further portion of Dr. v. Deventer's studies of Greek Philosophy.

Der Vâhan, November, contains the Report of the Convention of the German Section, held at Berlin, on the 29th and 30th October. The financial condition of the Section seems to be highly satisfactory, and the membership has risen during the year from 130 to 251—very nearly doubled, though still a very tiny proportion of the German-speaking millions. But we know in England how far beyond the actual number of the members the influence of Theosophy is felt, even when not acknowledged; and so we hope it will be in Germany. The contents of the number are Dr. Steiner's lecture on "Clairvoyance"; the continuation of R. Schwela's "Meditations on the Eight-fold Path"; that of Dr. Drew's "The Religious Relationship"; "Ernst Haeckel and his Monism" (unsigned); notices of the *Theosophist* and *Theosophical Review*; Madame Von Ulrich on the "Sayings of Buddha"; and original Questions and Answers, mostly as to how our doctrines can be harmonised with certain "texts of Scripture"; Mrs. Besant's "Man as Master of his Destiny" concludes a full number.

Luzifer, October. Here the first article is a very important study of "Initiation" by Dr. Steiner himself. His explanation of the so-called trials of fire, water, air, etc., should be carefully studied. We

have but space for one short passage to illustrate the way the subject is treated. "The intention of the true Fire-test," he says, "is not simply to gratify the curiosity of the candidate. True, he does learn marvellous secrets, of which other men have no conception. But this knowledge is not the object,—only the way to attain it. The object is that by acquaintance with higher worlds the candidate shall gain more perfect and real confidence in himself, higher courage, and a greatness and steadiness of soul quite different from anything to be found in the lower world." This is followed by the Introduction to Schuré's *Les Grands Initiés*, and Mrs. Besant's "Pain and Evil."

Teosofisk Tidskrift, October-November. The main contents of this number are the conclusion of G. Lindborg's lecture on "Religious and Social Questions in the Light of Theosophy"; Mrs. Besant's "Seeking after God"; Mr. Leadbeater's "Vegetarianism and Occultism," and a review of Mrs. Besant's *The New Psychology*.

Sophia, November. The contents of this number are, a translation of F. von Mueller's "The Conception of Spirit according to Goethe"; "The Odic Force and the Life of Crystals," by Dr. Lux, in which we are glad to see that tardy justice is beginning to be done to Reichenbach's long-discredited studies; the continuation of *The Disciples of Sais*, the well-known and admired work of Novalis; and an important paper by A. Ballesteros on the Hyksos, combating the common view of their Turanian origin, and inclining to identify them with the still mysterious Hittites of the Pentateuch.

South African Theosophist, October, opens with the continuation of W. Wybergh's valuable paper on "The Ascetic Spirit." A very interesting account of "Hallowtide in Ireland" is injured by its point of view. A writer who can bring himself to believe that "many weird and fearful rites were then performed, . . . for all incantations were made in the name of the Evil One," had better leave the subject alone. There was *no* "Evil One" in the Irish faith of those days, any more than there is in ours now. Mrs. Besant's "Necessity for Reincarnation" and Mr. Nelson's lecture, entitled "Gleanings" (mainly poetic), follow. The "Activities" speak very cheerfully of the position.

Theosophy in Australasia, October. A very readable number. The Branch Reports mainly occupied by Miss Edger's very successful lecturing tour.

New Zealand Theosophical Magazine, November, contains a farther portion of Mrs. Besant's "Resurrection of the Body"; J. H. S.

begins a good study of "War," mainly concerned with Tolstoy's views; also "The Fears of the Bishop of London" and "Regarding Music."

Also *Theosofisch Maandblad* for October.

Of other magazines we have *Modern Astrology; Luce e Ombra*, a Spiritualistic magazine, with an account of Colonel de Rochas' curious experiments in pushing the memory of his subjects both backwards and forwards, upon which we hope some of our own authorities will give us a criticism.

From G. A. Natesan & Co. we have a tiny pamphlet *Vedânta, the Religion of Science*, by N. K. Ramasami Aiya. The creed printed in his Preface is curious and interesting, not for its value *as* a creed, of course; one who begins "(1) I believe in nothing which is not proved," marks out thereby his position. From this most unpromising starting point he must and will in time work out for himself his salvation, but no criticism of ours can help. For his object—to put the ancient Indian philosophy as a living and attractive system before modern Western thinkers—we have every sympathy and heartiest good wishes.

The Philosophers and the French Revolution, by P. A. Wadia, Professor of History and Political Economy, Gujarat College, Ahmedabad (Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 2*s.* 6*d.*) We presume that the author of this little work will take it as the highest possible compliment when we say there seems nothing in it from beginning to end which a European might not have written. For us, the fact that under Government education an oriental in India should have so completely succeeded in cutting himself off from the thoughts and sympathies of his own people, to fashion himself on an English model, is not a pleasant one, and opens a far from encouraging prospect for the future of India—India cannot be regenerated by *imitations* of the English.

W.

We have received the prospectus of a new magazine to be called *The Occult Review*, the first number of which is to appear on January 1st. It is edited by Mr. Ralph Shirley, and our old colleague Mr. W. Gorn Old is sub-editing. We are informed that the first number will contain contributions from Sir Oliver Lodge, Messrs. A. E. Waite, David Christie Murray, etc. It is to contain 48 pp., and the price will be 6*d.* monthly. The publishers are Messrs. Rider & Son, 164, Aldersgate Street, E.C.

Printed by the Women's Printing Society, Limited, 66 & 68, Whitcomb Street, W.C.