THE CAPELLA REALE.

VOL. XXXIV No. 5

THE THEOSOPHIST

ON THE WATCH-TOWER

WE are not able to send out with this number the *Annual Report of the T. S.,* for with the ever-growing bulk of the Report itself, and the great increase in our own circulation, the tax upon the Society of sending it out gratuitously has become too great. The Report goes to every Lodge of the T. S., so that members can see it, and we are trying the experiment of putting a few hundred copies on sale at 1*s.* post free for the general public. These must be obtained directly from Adyar. The Presidential Address—which we print, as a Supplement, with the speech on the policy of the T. S. —gives a review of the whole field of work, and thus, to some extent, supplies a general outline of the world-movement. It will be seen that things are going very well with the Society all the world over, with the exception of serious trouble in Germany and a little trouble in India. The latter consists chiefly of attacks from outside on the President, Mr. Leadbeater, and Adyar, and these have been rendered slightly more

dangerous by the attitude of a few—very few—Theosophists. We feel sure that when these realise—as they must, sooner or later—that they are merely playing into the hands of those who hate Theosophy, and ever strive to discredit those whom the world regards as its leaders, they will change their policy, and help that which they really love.

***

There were one or two significant incidents in the Convention, showing the love and whole-hearted support of the delegates for their President and the readiness of the Theosophical Society, through its General Council, to defend her against the attacks of the outside world as well as against assailants from within. The German Executive, the Swiss-German Lodges in the German Section, and some groups of Dr. Steiner's in Italy, had sent telegrams suggesting the resignation of the President, the first especially being couched in grossly insulting language; it did not apparently strike the senders that a majority should be in favour of their proposal; if a President were to resign whenever a small minority objects to him, no Society would ever keep a chief officer. Sir S. Subramania Iyer moved in open Convention, and Khan Bahāḍur N. D. Khandalvala, Retired Special Judge, seconded, a vote of complete trust and confidence in the President; it was opposed by one gentleman, who had already shown his hostility to the President in a letter to *The Hindu,* in which he accused her of intending to appropriate T. S. funds for her own defence—a suggestion which shows the type of the mind that could invent it; a second gentleman said that the vote did not mean that they agreed with every opinion the President might express.

All hands but the one were held up for the vote, and tremendous cheering followed. The General Council considered the various documents with regard to the German Section: (1) the position of the Swiss Lodges; (2) the refusal of the German General Secretary to issue a charter for a Lodge applied for by Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden and six other members, on account of their not being in sympathy with the Section; (3) the complaint from members of the Order of the Star in the East that they were expelled from the Section on the mere ground of their membership; (4) the outrageously-worded cablegram from the German Executive; (5) the silence of the German General Secretary with respect to the President's letters, notifying him of complaints, asking for the Rules of the Section, and notifying, under Rule 31, the applications of members to Adyar for Lodge charters and of non-members for admission to the T. S. The Council finally resolved unanimously—one member, holding a proxy, abstaining from voting on the ground that he had no instructions on this point, and did not feel justified in committing his General Secretary—that the President be advised to cancel the German Sectional Charter under Rule 36, and to issue a new Sectional Charter to the German Lodges willing to work within the Constitution of the Theosophical Society.

***

It is important to remember that the territorial basis of National Societies within the T. S. affects *only* questions of administration. All Theosophists are perfectly free to belong to any international association in which teaching, exoteric or esoteric, is given by any one. There are Lodges established to study Dr. Steiner's

teachings in France, England, etc., and this is quite within the Constitution. All ties of love, of teaching, of study, are unaffected by territorial divisions, which only have to do with registration, payment of fees, and purely administrative details of external order. The system worked perfectly, until the late aggressions of the German General Secretary aroused friction.

***

Telegrams were received with good wishes in support of the President, from England, Scotland, France, Italy, Switzerland, Russia, Hungary, Denmark, Spain, Germany, Austria, Holland, S. Africa, Java, Australia, New Zealand, Burma, and many cities and individuals in India. Some offered financial help from their Sections, but this offer is gratefully, but firmly, refused. No T. S. money must go to the support of the President, either in the private suit brought against her, nor in any undertaken by her in defence of the T. S. Two Lodges belonging to the independent Theosophical League have written, since the Convention, objecting to the action of the President. I could scarcely hope for the approval of that body, as it was formed in protest against me, and has steadily maintained its attitude ever since.

***

The Report of the 26th Annual Convention of the T. S. in America has reached us, and is a most interesting document. Mrs. Russak is working hard in her native land, and shows a devotion and a power which stimulate and inspire those with whom she comes in contact. The General Secretary was unanimously re-elected, for he has won the heart of the National Society, and he thoroughly deserves the trust reposed in him. Seven Chicago Lodges have incorporated themselves as

'The Chicago Theosophical Association' and have established themselves in a flat in a fine building; they have given their hall my own name, and it was consecrated to the service of the Masters by Mrs. Russak during the Convention. Mr. Cooper, well-known to many in Europe and India, is the Representative of the General Secretary for the Division with Headquarters at Chicago, and is in charge of the publishing business, now in the hands of the Section. The Krotona Estate, the General Secretary announced, is vested in the Outer Head of the E.S., as the Representative of the Masters, and will be passed from Head to Head. The Convention unanimously passed resolutions sending "filial greetings" to the President, and "a greeting of love and loyalty to Mr. Charles W. Leadbeater, Alcyone and Mr. Jinarajadasa". A resolution was also unanimously and enthusiastically passed which "recognises with deep gratitude the years of self-sacrifice and devoted service of its former General Secretary, Dr. Weller Van Hook, and his corps of faithful helpers, and desires his continuous co-operation". That was as it should be, for we all desire that Dr. Van Hook, though compelled by duty to resume his professional work, should give us as much time as he can. Those present at the Convention write enthusiastically of the peace, harmony and joyousness which pervaded it. May all be well with our good American brethren, to whom we send loving greeting.

***

The Anagarika Dharmapala writes me that he has "come into possession of a very old palm-leaf MSS., wherein is to be found a prophetic forecast of what is going to happen in the near future in India and Ceylon".

It says that 40 years hence a righteous King will come over to Ceylon from India to re-establish Buddhism. I am therefore preparing the way in the Island by delivering lectures to Buddhist parents to consecrate the little babes for the glorious work.

Such prophecies are very interesting, for the 'King of Righteousness' is a name given to the World-Teacher. The dawn is reddening the eastern sky, and the persecution to which we are being subjected will but increase, by contrast, the glory of the coming day.

***

The new Zamorin of Calicut is a Fellow of the T. S., and has shown a generous hospitality to our visiting lecturers. He is described as "a scholar, a man of wide sympathies, an intrepid traveller, who has brought himself in touch with the living, twentieth century civilisation of India, a man of the world, a democrat". He is a supporter of the Indian National Congress. Sincere good wishes will go to him from all our Fellows.

***

M. Richat lately pronounced a most interesting discourse at *l'Académie française,* on the changing spirit of the younger generation. It shows confidence in affronting the problems of life, and is not disposed to think that intelligence alone suffices either for the individual or the nation. "To be fit for great enterprises it is not enough to be intelligent." A new era of action is opening, in which ethical and philosophical doctrines are sought as a preparation for a fuller life, and there is a disposition to test the truth of such doctrines by the touchstone of the energy they communicate to the soul, to be manifested in fruitful activity; the whole tone of this younger generation presages a time when man will seek to act rather than to discuss. This is all true, and

there is a tendency to test truth by its effect on action; it has embodied itself in Pragmatism. But we must never forget that Right Activity must be founded on Right Knowledge, and that the Reason must approve before Action can safely be undertaken. The ignorant cannot help acting on impulse, and the impulse to do good to others and to sacrifice themselves in a good cause is for them the best and safest guide. But those who have the duty of educating public opinion, of setting the standard of conduct which the masses instinctively recognise as good, must ever accept the laborious duty of seeking Truth, and of laying a foundation of Knowledge as a basis of Ethics. In an era of feverish activity, this duty is more than ever laid upon them, lest activity should turn into a wrong channel, and its very force should make it the more dangerous. Activity without knowledge may readily run into fanaticism, and energy may become disruptive instead of constructive. It is the duty of the thoughtful to study the tendencies of their age, so that—remembering that the crowd ever rushes into extremes—they may apply a corrective to all exaggeration either of thought or feeling.

***

It is most regrettable that an official in the high position of the Hon. Mr. L. Davidson, presiding at a lecture at the Presidency College, Madras, should repeat Lord Curzon's slander on Indians as untruthful. He quoted an unwilling witness, to whom a Commissioner said: "Don't speak in the ordinary way, but speak the truth." How often do magistrates and counsel in England remind witnesses: "You are on your oath." Does this prove the general untruthfulness of Englishmen? The evidence of history shows the high standard of

truth lived up to by Indians: the truthfulness of the village folk astonished the early English settlers here, and has been put on record by English officials; the absence of written receipts, and the trustfulness in commercial transactions, banking, etc., are well known. These sweeping and unjust condemnations of a whole people for the lapses of the baser sort are very unfair, and cause widespread bitterness. Is it not time to cease from making them?

* * *

An interesting note from the Adelaide *Evening Journal* states:

> According to Professor Cambouroglon, of Athens, the tune of 'God save the King' is one of the oldest we have. Six years ago the professor discovered, among the manuscripts in the National Library of Greece, the words and music of an anthem composed in 1457 in honour of the Emperor Constantine Paleologos. The anthem opens with the line: "Long may our Sovereign reign," repeated three times. The musical notation is of an obsolete type, and had to be transposed by an expert in ancient music. It was then found that the tune of the fifteenth century anthem is almost identical with that of 'God save the King'.

The same journal has also a useful warning touching the confusion which often arises in people's minds as to 'meekness'. It is apt to be identified with weakness and general lack of energy. But Dr. Campbell-Morgan lately remarked when preaching:

> Let me emphasise the fact that the word 'meek' does not mean 'weak.' There is no suggestion here of softness. My old schoolmaster once wrote to point out to me that in Greek the word here translated 'meek' is used of a colt broken in and ready for its work. It means strength harnessed for service, force completely at rest, and therefore powerful.

It is written in the Hebrew Scriptures that "the man Moses was very meek," and the meekness of that great leader of Israel was certainly consistent with great energy and enduring strength. As Dr. Campbell-Morgan implies, meekness may be characteristic of the hero.

THE REBIRTH OF CHINA

By C. SPURGEON MEDHURST, F. T. S.

FEW perhaps, really realise that China is a continent with an area, population and resources greater than Europe, and that, unlike Europe, the Chinese continent is a unit. Here is the oldest living civilisation, a civilisation which, because developed without contact with equals or rivals, differs in many important essentials from any other; the written language of this continent—which is ideographic and which will never become alphabetic, by delicate and elusive allusions and the perfect balancings of words and phrases (superior to anything in Hebrew poetry) in its literature—has brought expression to a perfection of beauty it would be

difficult to parallel; unfortunately, under the new conditions now prevailing, there is grave reason to fear that this will pass with the passing generation. Some 400,000,000 human beings, of whom only some 14,000,000 can read and write, work out their destiny here, their innate passion-natures subjected to a self-control hardly known in the West; priests frequently here chant prayers and burn incense to Gods of whose names and histories they are ignorant; here millions of patient women subordinate their personal desires to the wishes of tyrannous mothers-in-law; here hundreds of thousands of filial sons consider it sacrilege to oppose a parent. Two thousand years ago the merchants of this continent were sending their unrivalled silks overland as far as Antioch, while its sailors, long before Hengist and Horsa landed in England, paid periodical visits to Ceylon, to India, and to Arabia. Several hundred years before Christ the civilisation of this continent was better than that of Greece; its civilisation under the Han dynasty, at the commencement of the Christian era, was superior to that of Rome. No wonder that the inhabitants of China regarded themselves as the centre of the world's culture, and as an example to the barbarians who occupied the other quarters of the globe; nor is it surprising that half a century elapsed, after Europe had forced her way into the country, before the foreign ministers could meet the Chinese Emperor on equal terms; but since the days of Kanghsi and Kienlung, contemporaries of Oliver Cromwell and Warren Hastings, the history of China has been a long record of continual struggle with decay, until, finally, the great Power which once ruled all eastern Asia became of less importance than the islands of Japan, "one-tenth its area and population".

In happier days she had given these island people their religion and their civilisation; in 1912 the twenty-fourth Chinese dynasty was supplanted by a Republic, created by a few determined men, who by one bold stroke accomplished for their country what in ordinary circumstances would have required the slow evolution of a century.

The resemblance of the late Imperial Government to a decaying tree has been increasingly apparent since the demise of the Empress Dowager, and her Imperial nephew Kuang Hsü, in 1908. There had been dry rot in the royal trunk for a long time, its branches snapped in the wind, its leaves were covered with a devastating blight; and its final *Nunc Dimittis* (the abdication edict was not written in Peking but in Shanghai) was a fitting prelude to the darkness of oblivion and silence which have swallowed up the Imperial family. But the frost of incapacity, which killed the old tree, was confined to the upper regions of the air; below, young life was stirring, green shoots were everywhere breaking through the ground, buds were swelling, fresh growths were appearing; the hoes and axes of the Revolution loosened the soil, felled the aged trunk whose usefulness had ended, broke obstructing clods, removed impedimenta, and prepared the way for the fresh crop of ideas which immediately began to grow. For over thirty years patient sowers had scattered the seeds; they did not all anticipate the harvest, nor did they all comprehend the part they were playing in one of the greatest dramas of one of the world's greatest nations; but, consciously or unconsciously, their combined strength overthrew the upas tree, and made possible the rejuvenation of the Chinese race. The transition from the old to the new,

notwithstanding that it was completed in four months, was a costly process; probably the change from a Monarchy to a Republic sacrificed more life and property than was lost in the French Revolution during the closing years of the eighteenth century; as statistics are not available this must be accepted as merely a personal opinion. But there is this difference between the two events: the French Revolution descended from a moral reform to brute force; the Chinese Revolution ascended from physical compulsion to moral suasion. Since that memorable May when the States-General "marched in impressive array to hear a sermon at the Church of Notre Dame, at Versailles," nothing has occurred of such moment as the social, political and religious awakening of China at the beginning of the twentieth century. It is the concentration of a nation's personality on one supreme effort to right its wrongs. Its promoters possessed the patriotism which prompted Captain Nathaniel Hale of Connecticut to say, when facing death: "I regret that I have but one life to lose for my country." One of the regiments, recruited after the Revolution broke out, was styled the 'Dare to Dies'; the name indicates the sacrificial strength which made possible the purpose achieved; the Dragon, or the omnipresent impulse of growth, overthrew the Dragon Throne. The new administration is the people's, not a soldier's, Government.

The long series of events which thus ended in the transformation of China is numerous and varied. First war, and then, as a result of wars, treaties opening ports and permitting Christian missionaries to rent or purchase property and carry on propaganda, without hindrance, in any part of the Empire. But despite

defeats in warfare, China still continued unwilling to co-operate with the West; unconsciously she had set herself against the tide of evolution, and the pressure from without and within increased as the years advanced; each decade strangers acquired more power in her ancestral domains; each year China became less the mistress of her own house; at length, in 1900, her insight blinded by self-interest, her perceptions blurred by ruffled pride, she declared war against the world; made one supreme effort, in the Boxer fiasco, to rid herself of the outsiders who sat by her hearthstone and warmed themselves at her fire—and failed. Four years later the success of the Japanese in their conflict with Russia aroused all Asia, and the Manchus began to reform; but as usual their action was too late. The modern educational methods which they introduced prepared the way for the modern Press, and the Press became a powerful ally of their enemies. Ten or twelve years ago, outside of the 'treaty ports,' there was only one Chinese paper, the *Peking Gazette,* and it contained only the Imperial Edicts. To-day there are at least 500 well organised papers dependent on Chinese support and under Chinese control, while new books and magazines are ever appearing. Indeed, the Revolution was as much a result as a cause, and is strong evidence that the Chinese have changed, not superficially but substantially. So great was the contrast between this uprising and previous rebellions that it has earned the *soubriquet* 'The Bloodless Revolution'; here for the first time Chinese Red Cross Societies cared for the sick and wounded. Other minor but significant proofs of a complete change of heart are the removal of the queue, the official adoption of a new national costume,

and the growing fondness for western dress; when I first came to the country I had to wear Chinese clothes, shave the front of my head, and cultivate a 'pig-tail'.

Force alone could not, however, have reformed China. A war fought with the North had no interest for the South, it was not heard of in the West; the opening of ports to commerce, diplomatic or military pressure in Peking, only pricked the Chinese epidermis. If the preparation for the Revolution had been of this order alone, the rebellion of 1912 would have been "washed out in blood and scorched in flame," as was the Tai Ping mutiny of the sixties. The initiator of the Chinese Revolution was the Christian Missionary; the leaders who made it a success were Li Yuan-hung, the soldier, Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the organiser, and Yuan Shih-kai, the diplomat. Dr. Sun, outlawed and banished from his native land, steadily pursued his purpose for two decades, undaunted by danger, undiscouraged by failures. On January 1, 1912, he became President of the Provincial Republican Government in Nankin; but a few weeks later, in order to unite North and South, he resigned in favour of Yuan Shih-kai, whom he recognised as the more suitable head for the Republic—as fine an instance of self-abnegation as history can produce. Yuan also, but in a different way, is a disinterested patriot. Had he wished, he might have been the founder of a new Imperial House several years ago, and there would have been no Republic. The Revolution though destructive, and undertaken with little thought of the constructive period to follow, is, from the higher standpoint, undoubtedly an evolution. A new nation, animated by a new patriotism, has been born. No longer a vessel held together by strong bands

imposed from without, China has become a living organism throbbing with her own unifying life force. The much talked of 'Break-up of China' might have been possible under the defunct Chings; if attempted under the Republic, the Nation, from Canton in the South to Kan-su in the North, would rise to maintain its integrity. Naturally there have been family disagreements, the personnel of the administration has changed oftener than is good for the republican health, the pocket has controlled principle, mistakes have been made; but there is small room for doubt concerning the assured progressive prosperity of the Five Nations whose colours make up the Republican Flag. The ancient China that we knew has passed; the lusty youth, who has taken her place, is her reincarnation. The nation has been born anew, and some of her sons, who are desperately in earnest, who listen to the still small voice rather than to the wind and to the tempest, find in Tennyson's lines the best expression of their ideals:

> Howe'er it be, it seems to me,
> 'Tis only noble to be good.

They know that a Republic brings no more satisfaction than an Autocracy unless the invisible be ever sensed through the visible, and the whole strength of manhood enlisted in defence of moral attainments; but these are a minority. Man learns slowly; the oft-told tale of universal history is repeating itself under the ægis of the world's newest and largest Republic. Freedom, the glory of the new régime, is employed as a weapon of attack. An observant and respected Chinese surgeon in Shanghai, writing twelve months after the Revolution, describes the first year of its life as "an unbroken record of pillage, bloodshed, office-grabbing,

land-grabbing and unrighteousness of all kinds". Such a description is hardly fair; it lacks perspective, it notes only one side of the coin of liberty. Sorrow is the mother of reform, and with nations, as with individuals, the new life begins where the old one ceases; and so nepotism, favouritism, bribes, and sinecures still exist, but with this difference: in China's former incarnation these blots on purity were as a part of the natural order, in her present life they are resented as excrescences. The editor of *The Republican Advocate,* an English paper solely managed and owned by Chinese, thus voices the new spirit of the New Age:

> China desires to be a free, independent nation, not in the old sense of isolation and exclusion, but in the more rational sense of unobstructed individual development, on the basis of co-operation and reciprocity.

The significance of it all can be only partially understood. The detached wire, before it takes its place among its sister-strings on the violin, gives no hint of its hidden music; the rebirth of China only discloses its supreme importance when studied in connection with the unfolding evolution of the human race. This Chinese Revolution was not the restless change of a fickle, irresponsible people, nor was it the work of scheming, successful agitators, with no thought above their own selfish interests; rather it was the deliberate self-transformation of a race of such tenacity of purpose that they are like "a sea that salts everything that flows into it". Long residence amongst the Chinese gives the Occidental an oriental squint, and modifies his western impetuosity with a philosophic calm; often conquered, the Chinese have always, in the end, conquered their conquerors: their Manchu Rulers forgot their own tongue and their native books; a Jewish

colony, which settled in the province of Ho-nan, lost both its language and its religion. When a people of this calibre commences to live anew, the world may well mark the day as the beginning of a New Age, and the question whether the new nation will take a wrong path and consider only the good of China at the expense of others, or whether it will constitute itself a leader of progress, becomes vital to the prosperity of the human race.

The dust is still thick, and there is much to make the thoughtful ponder. The reaction from the centralisations of the Manchu Government has provoked a tendency to ignore the testimony of history that if a nation, or an individual, is to prosper, its culture must remain attached to its own root; that to be of value the genius of any people must be its own and not another's. China, suddenly awakening from her soporific trance and faced with the imposing civilisations which have sprung into existence during her slumbers, is tempted to break adrift from the past; she covets the inventions, the discoveries, the economic achievements which she sees, but does not consider the moral, the social, the spiritual evolution which made them possible; and so she is eager to adopt western materialism without western idealism. The result is seen in the formation of Societies to propagate the cruder forms of Socialism; to destroy the family; and, under the guise of freedom, to make attractive the practice of promiscuity, with the destruction of that ancient landmark of Chinese civilisation —the relationship of father and son. This reversal of the ideals which have made China great is reflected in other half-baked measures, such as the effort to uproot 'superstition' by destroying idols, scattering

monks and nuns, and putting temples to secular uses; by the emancipation of woman, without making provision for the protection of girls against the degradation frequently thrust upon them by the opposite sex; by promising liberty to all, but giving none to helpless children who are bought and sold as domestic slaves; by forcibly suppressing opium, even decapitating inveterate smokers, but taking no steps to prevent whisky doing more harm than opium. Serious students are urging their fellow-countrymen to abandon the traditional peace ideals of former days, to introduce conscription, and to make China a great military power, notwithstanding that, since the termination of the fighting, the soldiers have lawlessly burned more houses than all the property destroyed during the whole course of the Revolution, and that during the transition period they may, at any time, shatter the unity of China by starting a second uprising. China's soldiery is her chief menace. The world has a right to expect better things of the land which has always been pre-eminently the professor of peace. Confucius, when asked for one word which would serve as a rule of practice for the whole of life, said: "Is not reciprocity such a word? What you do not want done to yourself, do not to others." This should be China's gospel—the union of the world as one nation, with loyalty to one central Government. The suggestion is in harmony with the genius of the Chinese character. Her great Sage declared that all men are brothers; universal peace was his aim; and if China, as soon as she has set her house in order, makes this her foreign policy, she will repeat on a grander scale the exploits of the most glorious periods of her past; but if she abandons her

ancient bulwarks she will abandon her proper place in the world, and will sink into insignificance. It is useless to blink the fact that it was a calamity that the Revolution broke out when it did. Had it been accomplished as Dr. Sun planned, without fighting, China's outlook would have been different. Considering the size of the country and the magnitude of the nation, the Revolution was a surprising exhibition of self-control; yet there has been, nevertheless, too much of the superior man who wishes to kill all wicked and undesirable persons, he, of course, being the sole judge of the wicked and the undesirable. The waters are troubled, the cross-currents are many; but beneath the changeful surface waves there flows the steady evolutionary tide, with centuries of hereditary instincts and unworldly ideals behind it; and there is good foundation for the hope that in the end the best culture of the years that have gone will reassert itself, and save the nation in spite of itself.

The missionaries are still the centre from which the ideas now in demand can be most easily tapped. Their opportunities are unique; but, as on other occasions, the opportune moment will probably slip away with most of its gifts unused. This observation is less applicable to the educationalists than to the preachers and evangelists. The missionary community in China as a body fails to realise that the True Light "lighteth *every man* that cometh into the world," and acts as though the West possessed a monopoly in wisdom and truth. Hence, occidental theologies and creeds musty with the flavour of past ages, which have hardly anything in common with the present, strangle much well-intentioned effort. The Jesuits, who were in China

two hundred years ago, wished to orientalise Christianity, but the Franciscans and Dominicans objected. The result was that all were expelled. Undoubtedly, had Jesus and his apostle Paul been born as Hinḍūs, or as Taoists, instead of as Jews, they would have spoken in a different tongue, but would their message have been otherwise? We should have had a different New Testament, but it would not have contained a different gospel; we should still have heard that, because of the necessary union between the human and the divine, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself"; righteousness would not have been less practical, nor would the answer to men's need have been less emphatic; the Word would not have been less "the power of God unto Salvation" because the Gospel narrative repeated the 'old story' from an Indian or a Chinese stage; the philosophy and the illustrations of Paul's epistles would have been changed, but whether as a Jew, as a Hinḍū, or as a Taoist, Paul would still have proclaimed at-one-ment with God, detachment from earth, and fellowship with Christ. If it be possible, without profanity, to think of the Founder and the chief exponent of Christianity as delivering their message in bodies and through religions which are not Hebraic, surely those who have made it their vocation to teach religion to peoples of different faiths should be able to hang suitable lamp-shades over the light they bring. Thought, like the soul, may express itself through many vehicles; the way of salvation, like electricity, may be effective through varied conductors.

Missionaries have accomplished more by their lives than by their sermons. By their schools and philanthropies, in the face of strenuous opposition, they have

won for Christianity a place in China. The Chinese admire their intrepidity; they are impressed by their peaceful return to stations whence they had been brutally driven by fire and sword. The Chinese seldom forget, and one of the most unlooked-for proofs of the efficacy of the various evolutionary factors already indicated, was the manner in which foreign property was protected; again and again towns were looted, but the persons and possessions of the missionaries were left untouched; only in the province of Shen-si, when the mob got temporarily out of hand during the massacre of 15,000 Manchus, were missionary lives taken. And not only did lawless bands loot and destroy on the right and on the left of the foreigners' residences and pass by without entering them, but the people were glad to have the missionaries in their midst. They were begged not to leave, as their presence and counsel were indispensable. Dr. U. E. Macklin, of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society, acted as intermediary, when the Imperialists surrendered Nankin to the Revolutionists. Naturally the missionaries are regarding the future in an optimistic mood. It is right that they should, for optimism and determination are credentials of success. Moreover, not all are oblivious to the new demands created by the new situation; some realise that the New Testament nowhere refers to Christianity as a religion, and that neither Christ nor his apostles uttered a religious denunciation. The Y. M. C. A. sends lecturers through the country to discourse on the gyroscope and on flying machines; the Christian Literature Society translates standard western works on every branch of knowledge, and has *The Secret Doctrine* on its library shelves; another missionary organisation

boasts an excellent educational museum, where the exhibits contrast the progress of other lands with the condition of China; but missionary statesmen are few, and, excluding schools and colleges, missionary efforts at *national regeneration* are as the days of sunshine to the weeks of fog during a normal London winter. Although there are now a million Chinese Protestant adherents of the Christian faith, under leaders who are Christians from conviction; although the Roman Catholics have probably a like number of followers; and although a number of Christians occupy responsible posts under the new Republican Government, any impartial observer, who knows China and the thoughts of the people, will confess that the missionary endeavour is a history of missed chances. It would be ungrateful and invidious in one who owes all his acquaintance with things Chinese to the missionary enterprise, to do more than call attention to general principles; but, without criticising, it is well that amidst a chorus of self-congratulation one voice at least should say that, unless a radical change takes place in non-educational missionary policy, the missionary movement in China has reached its zenith. To seek the conversion of a people who know nothing beyond their physical horizon, and to endeavour to change the religious faith of a nation to whom the world is an open book, are totally different propositions; and the chief difficulties of a narrow missionary policy will now arise from the enlightened character of the new administration. These will be far greater than the resistance offered by the passive ignorance so familiar to all acquainted with the rank and file of the Mandarinate of the late dynasty. Under the circumstances, the most sanguine can scarcely expect

that China, as a nation, will look to Christianity for spiritual direction. It is too closely allied with the foreigner, who controls and directs its expansion at every turn; and though the Chinese are, at the moment, very friendly with the alien, it is only with the idea that through the foreigner they will acquire the necessary culture to rid themselves of him, and secure China for the children of the soil; Christianity in China is further hampered by the difficulty of giving the non-Christian an authoritative explanation as to what are its distinctive doctrines—ethics, dogmatics, sacraments? Already there are indications that the Church is becoming less amenable to mission authority, that it would like to take matters into its own hands and to adapt the Christian expression of truth so that it shall suit the genius of its people. In hindering this, missionaries defeat their own aims; some among them are conscious of the danger.

This is a matter for regret, because Christian missions might have supplied China with that which is lacking in her present spiritual equipment, building a new structure on the solid foundations already laid. If, discarding the accidentals of their faith, or the Hebrew colouring which, as the development of Judaism, it naturally possesses, the missionary body had confined its presentation of the Gospel to its essentials, or the simple life-story of its chief Figure, presenting it as a map of the Path along which every human being must travel to perfection, preaching Christianity as an experience instead of as an argument, the religions of China would have become the 'schoolmaster' that the Law was to the Hebrews. Quick to see that "What light is to nature love is to the

heart of man," the Chinese are ready to welcome any uplifting message, not inconsistent with the faith of their fathers; but they are very unlikely, as a nation, to do more than tolerate a religion which cuts out the root of their historic traditions by forbidding them to reverence their dead ('Ancestral worship,' so called, has always been condemned as anti-Christian), and which is unable to agree with itself as to the form of the Church, and the manner of its worship. They cannot be made to believe that truth can divide. "The nearer we approach to truth the closer we come to one another—even as the nearer we get to Peking the more our separate roads converge." So said a venerable non-Christian Chinese gentleman at a conference of Christians and heathen, which it was my privilege to convene some eight years ago.

Religious tolerance has always been a strong Chinese characteristic. The alleged religious persecutions in China have seldom been due to religious bigotry. If Christianity has suffered severely in the person of its professors the cause must be sought, not in dislike of its teachings but in racialism. Confucianists have fought Buḍḍhists; but it was celibacy and immoralities, not religious debates, which raised the controversial dust. Taoists have struggled with their co-religionists for supremacy, but the motives were political not religious. Since the inauguration of the popular Government, the innate religious toleration of the Chinese has shown itself, among those whose temperament tends toward the philosophical and devotional, in a reaching out to all faiths and a desire to appreciate the best points in each; while among those who think more of the visible side of life it displays a tendency to iconoclasm—idols are

destroyed, temples are secularised. 'Parliaments of Religion' are becoming familiar in many parts of China. A friend, who knows no language but his own, and who has never crossed the borders of his native land, is giving his money and his life to the organisation of a Society with the purpose *of making religion a centre of unity between men of different creeds.* Even the Muhammadans are joining the movement. The only sect which stands aloof is that of the Chinese Christians. This confirms what has been said as to the westerness of Christianity in China—the Chinese recognise it, and it will prove the missionaries' checkmate.

Confucianism, which up to the present has been the bed-rock of the Chinese civilisation, has received a knock-down blow from the new order of things. How far it will recover, whether it will prove flexible and win, or adamant and lose, it is too early to say. It has powerful advocates, and a Society has been formed to preserve it; but the first of the three Constant Relationships, or the bands of human society, is that of Emperor and Minister—the other two are father and son, husband and wife. I have already referred to the socialistic attempt to dissolve the two latter, the natural consequence of the dissolution of the first. Of course this extreme swing of the pendulum may right itself in time, but it is doubtful if Confucianism will again hold the supreme place it has so long enjoyed. Young China considers its ethics and philosophy superannuated. If it ceases to be taught in the schools it will speedily lose its grip on public life, and its place in the curriculum depends more on the pupils than on the teachers, for in China it is *the scholar* who controls the school. Confucianism answers the question: "How can

I be a good citizen and do my duty to my neighbour," and it answers it well; but Confucianism has no answer to the question: "What is my connection with the unseen, and have I any duties there?" Buḍḍhism, which for a time provided the spiritual motives lacking in Confucianism, has apparently had its day; excepting for a few of the elect, it is now little more than a superstitious crutch for the lame—prostrations, offerings, manṭrams, without knowledge and often without thought. Unless the monks can be educated along modern lines and imbued with the spirit of Service, Buḍḍhism in China has no future. Lao Tzu had a higher vision than his contemporary, Confucius; but for the man who can as yet only interpret life in the terms of the physical, his message is too ethereal, and so Taoism "now means magic, fortune-telling, necromancy, multiform idolatry, and demon worship". In religious as in social affairs, the nation is at the parting of the ways. "Together with Buḍḍhism and Taoism," writes Dr. C. H. Fenn in a recent issue of *The Chinese Recorder,* "even the ancient and comparatively pure worship of Heaven seems destined to find its place in the limbo of 'innoccuous desuetude'—its altar nought but a memorial in the midst of an experimental forest. What is to take the place of the many Buḍḍhas, the myriad Spirits, the ancient Sages? No people have remained long content with empty shrines, with godless morals, or with an altar to the Unknown God." And it is the interfering West which has wrought this destruction. Its civilisation, its science, its religion, have smashed all that China knew; therefore with the West rests the responsibility for directing her in the right path. Fresh from the melting-pot, saddled with the most complex of the

various forms of human government, with the majority of their people still ignorant of national problems, the Chinese are prepared to welcome any unmistakable spiritual direction ; and as they learn to handle material problems in its light, many immature theories will be packed away in perfume and fine linen. They themselves recognise the danger of mistaking fiction for fact. " It is a new Soul that China wants," said one of her talented sons recently, when reviewing the aftermath of the Revolution. At heart the nation is not irreligious, but it is undecided. Buḍḍhists, fearful of their future, are, in some places, offering convents and monasteries to Christian missions, the inmates promising conversion *en masse* ; but the great body of the people nowhere see just that which appears to satisfy their needs. The Rev. Timothy Richard, D. D. Litt. D., Secretary of the Christian Literature Society, suggests that the solution of the problem is to be found in three principles: Reverence of God alone; Study of Truth under all forms, no matter how unfamiliar ; The Union of all devout men of all lands and creeds. In these, he says, " we have a trinity of forces which is irresistible, and will lead the human race to higher heights than it has reached before".

This is the situation in China to-day, full of promise, encompassed with danger, threatened by perilous temptations ; but has a more hopeful youth ever knocked at the portals of the Theosophical Society and asked instruction, or is any teacher better qualified to show him the old truths in a new light ? Is not a share in his education worth while ? For good business reasons, the financial outlay would bring a comparatively small monetary return, but it might in the end prove one of

the best and wisest moves the Society has made. Let this youth but realise himself, let him but comprehend the unity of God and man, the solemn grandeur of the wide sweep of human evolution, the significance of the present in relation to the certainties of the near future, and, whatever the Government, he will shine as a brilliant star in the galaxy of the nations; without this no reforms can save China from becoming a tawdry show. I enumerate seven particulars in which Theosophists might render aid in assisting China through the stage of adolescence to mature manhood.

1. Instruction along Theosophical lines on character-building; the purpose being to unify and lift higher the thoughts of China's reformers, and to convince doubters that national greatness depends on national goodness.

2. A continued series of articles in the native Press, commenting on current events in the light of Theosophy, showing that to proclaim a Republic against the Manchus is not a forward step, unless also a Republic be proclaimed against vice in the heart, and slavery of every kind.

3. Specially written papers explaining the message of Theosophy, more particularly in regard to social and industrial problems, that at the beginning of her industrial era China may avoid errors which have worked disastrously in the West, and which would not have so operated had a correct start been made at the first. Owing to the leaven of returned Chinese students, western conditions are beginning to recur in China. The methods of Trades Unions, with intimidation of waverers, are spreading. This is a new feature in Chinese life.

4. Translations into Chinese from the writings of Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater, explaining the place and power of Religion, and the relation of the various religions to each other. All this ought, for the most part, to be prosecuted through the medium of the Chinese tongue, but this need not prevent those ignorant of the language from helping.

5. Judicious distribution of Theosophical literature in English, or German, among the foreign-educated Chinese.

6. Educational work along the lines of the C. H. C. in Benares. For every student who comprehends present-day problems in China, Japan and the western nations have ten. Many Chinese 'universities' are only 'high schools'. The Revolution has, as yet, been of little assistance to China's schools, the directors are often men of the old type, with literary or social influence, but without practical executive ability. The best education is still given in the mission schools, and only in these schools is religious or moral instruction regularly imparted.

7. Special schools for Taoist priests and Buḍḍhist monks. There are about 10,000 of the former, and 70,000 of the latter. It would be impracticable to admit these to any existing school. Because uneducated in modern matters, these natural instructors of the people are without influence. A knowledge of English would enable them to become important factors in the evolution of China. In Japan, I understand, the Buḍḍhists take the lead in every moral and religious movement.

By the methods I have indicated millions may be reached, and the human race assisted to progress. While the Manchus ruled, the truism was often heard: "What

affects China affects the world." If this were true then how much more true is it now, when her 400,000,000 are interested in the same things. Surely the marvellous kaleidoscopic changes we have been discussing are a part of the Great Plan! Dr. King Ya-mei is probably right when he says: "It devolves on China, which is neither mystic nor warrior, with its great body of skilful farmers, artisans, merchants, unpicturesque and often as uninteresting as their British congeners, to solve the practical problems of Asiatic life."[1] The Japanese, the Coreans, the Annamese, and other Asiatic races were once China's pupils, and what China has done China can do again. Why then are the Mongolians alone untouched by Theosophical activities? Col. Olcott once visited Japan, but none of our lecturers or leaders have been to China, perhaps because of the exclusiveness of this continent; but the day of China's 'splendid isolation' has passed. An era of co-operation has dawned. It is no longer in China a case of East *vs.* West or West *vs.* East, but of eastern ideals modifying western practices, of western practices purifying eastern ideals. Some Chinese even anticipate a political alliance with the sister Republic on the other side of the Pacific, and advocate a German-American-Chinese alliance. Much water must flow beneath the chimerical bridge before this takes place, but the desire testifies to the change China has undergone. The West has ever laid stress on freedom; the East emphasises authority. China's position has always been midway, and she now occupies the unique privilege of being able to set the keynote for the new world-civilisation, by

[1] Quoted in *Intellectual and Political Currents in the Far East*, by Paul S. Reinsch, pp. 193, 194.

founding a society combining the western idea of liberty with the eastern conception of obedience. When the alertness of the western concrete outlook is blended with the contemplativeness of the eastern abstract mind, and divestiture, as the law of the universe, is recognised by both, our human evolution will culminate in a revolution more complete than anything the world has yet seen.

To assist in making this dream an actuality, I invite those possessing the necessary qualifications, temperamental and financial, to consider China as a field for Theosophical activity. Here also are the Divine Deposits; here a new nation has been born; but her life problems are still unsolved, for neither rebellions, revolutions nor political changes are cures for economic and social evils. But, if China now learns how to conjoin her old eastern habits with her new western ideals; if she make Religion and not Expediency the corner-stone of her new civilisation; if she realise that to work for the whole, rather than for a part, is to move with the current and therefore to prosper; if she resist the temptation to permit western luxuries to obscure spiritual possibilities; then she may yet become the head of a Federation of Asia, which will be the beginning of a World-Unity, in which all nations shall unite in loyalty to one great Spiritual Head—a central Government under which every nation and each individual may enjoy unhindered opportunity for self-realisation.

C. Spurgeon Medhurst

THEOSOPHICAL IDEAS IN CONTEMPORARY POETRY

By MARGUERITE M. C. POLLARD, F. T. S.

(*Concluded from p.* 529)

FIONA MACLEOD, another poet of the Keltic Renaissance has well expressed the Keltic passion for a spiritual destiny and for spiritual beauty:

> Strange reversals, strange fulfilments, may lie on the lap of the Gods, but we have no knowledge of these, and hear neither the high laughter nor the far voices. But we front a possible because a spiritual destiny greater than the height of imperial fortunes, and have that which may send our voices further than the trumpets of East and West. Through ages of slow westering till now we face the sundown seas, we have learned in continual vicissitude that these are secret ways whereon armies cannot march. And thus has been given to us a more ardent longing, a more rapt passion in the things of outward beauty and in things of spiritual beauty.

According to Fiona Macleod's theory, the Kelts have derived their ideality from a closer communion with the occult forces of the cosmos than other early races had. It is his belief that it is their destiny once more to be Hierophants of the Ancient Wisdom:

> I do not think that our broken people had no other memories and traditions than other early peoples had. I believe they stood more near to ancient forgotten founts of wisdom than others stood. I believe that they are the offspring of a race who were in a more close communion with the secret powers of the world we know, and the secret powers of the world we do not know, than were any other people. I think their ancient writings show it, their ancient legends, their subtle and strangely spiritual mythology. I believe that, in the East, they lit the primitive genius of their race at

unknown and mysterious fires; that, in the ages, they have not wholly forgotten the ancestral secret: that, in the West, they may yet turn from the grey wave that they see, and the grey wave of time that they do not see, and again, upon new altars, commix that primeval fire.

It is this faith which has been the source of the burning patriotism that has characterised Irish poetry for the last sixty or seventy years. We find the white flame of patriotism alike in the 'Dark Rosaleen' of James Clarence Mangan in the early days of Queen Victoria, and in the poetry of Yeats, of George Russell, and of Moira O'Neill to-day. We see it in Dora Sigerson's 'Ireland':

'Twas the dream of a God
And the mould of His hand,
That you shook 'neath His stroke,
That you trembled and broke
To this beautiful land.

Here He loosed from His hand
A brown tumult of wings,
Till the wind on the sea
Bore the strange melody
Of an island that sings.

He made you all fair
You in purple and gold,
You in silver and green,
Till no eye that has seen
Without love can behold.

The poetry of Meredith, another Kelt, is also rich in Theosophical teaching. Theosophy makes no appeal to the passions. It appeals to the intellect and to the higher emotions. Meredith's appeal is intellectual not sensuous:

Drink of the faith in the brains a full draught
Before the oration:
'Tis known how the permanent never is wist,
In blood of the passions: mercurial they,
Shifty their issue: stir not that pit.
Wisdom is not born of blood heat.

The Soul is bound to the wheel of birth or death as long as it continues to stir that pit. The Wisdom-Religion teaches that there is no escape from reincarnation until sensation is mastered. Wisdom, Meredith tells us, in 'A Faith on Trial,' belongs only to those who have mastered sensation:

> And out of the sensual hive
> Grown to the flower of brain.

Only when sensation is mastered, can we begin to be conscious on higher planes. Meredith seems to suggest this when he makes the Earth-Spirit say that the sensual

> See not above or below,
> Farthest are they from my Soul.

They are farthest from the Earth-Soul in that they, least of all, realise the one life in all, the divine life in themselves. Humanity can only rise by the flesh becoming spiritualised; the physical vehicle must be rendered more susceptible to spiritual guidance. It must be refined:

> Would humanity soar from its worst
> Winged above darkness and dole,
> Flesh unto Spirit must grow.

The Spirit of man, while realising the necessity of living in harmony with natural laws, yet recognises intuitively that there are infinite heights to scale, that illumination succeeds illumination, Initiation succeeds Initiation, through endless æons. The Spirit uses Earth's gifts, yet aspires:

> Dreams of a higher than it,
> A scale, still ascending, to knit
> The clear to the loftier clear.
> 'Tis Reason herself, tip-toe
> At the ultimate bound of her wit
> On the verges of Night and Day.

But it is only through contact with the things of sense that the Spirit gradually evolves. Sensation is mastered through experience, not through asceticism. No faculty comes to perfection till the one next above it begins to develop, and is able to put it to use. " Spirit uses my gifts, yet aspires."

The senses are the servants of Mind, and aid the development of mental powers, as the mental powers will in their turn become the servants of the developed spiritual faculty. The Earth-Spirit is the handmaiden of the great Mind, but Reason must conquer the brute. She is the

> Guide to the Holies from sense withheld,
> She wrestles with our old worn Self.
> She is the world's one prize,
> Our champion, rightfully head.

In taking the view that " flesh helps soul," Meredith is in agreement with Fiona Macleod, who says:

> Man is not alone: the Angel of the Presence of the Infinite is with him. I do not, with Blake, look upon our world as though it were at best a basis for transcendental vision, while in itself a 'hindrance and mistake,' but rather as a wiser has said, to an Earth spiritualised, not a Heaven naturalised. With him, too, I would say: 'I have a fondness for the earth, and rather a Phrygian way of regarding it, despite a deeper yearning to see its glades receding into the Gardens of Heaven.'

In the 'Ode to the Comic Spirit' Meredith asserts the power of laughter to slay the brute in man, and to link man to man in brotherhood. The Comic Spirit saves us from our lower selves. " Spirit must brand the Flesh that it may live," but this can only be done through the right use of the brain in laughter. " The test of true comedy is that it shall awaken thoughtful laughter."

Meredith lays great stress upon the teaching of the Higher Self. If we would find God we must find Him

in ourselves. This is the first great lesson of his poetry, and the second is that we only reach the Divine in us through a knowledge of earth. Here he touches upon the great question of the purpose of incarnation.

Man's nature is threefold, and only when the three parts are duly harmonised can he be truly happy. Man is a *unity* when Brain and Blood and Spirit are well balanced, when the lower self is subdued, and the Vision of the divine possibilities of his nature is realised.

> Blood and Brain and Spirit, three
> (Say the deepest gnomes of earth)
> Join for true felicity.
> Are they parted? then expect
> Some one sailing will be wrecked:
> Earth that Triad is. She hides
> Joy from him who that derides,
> Showers it when the three are one.

From Mrs. Besant's lectures on 'The Coming Race' we have learnt that the day of Individualism is over and the day of Community is coming. This is one of the great ideas of Meredith's poetry. In 'Earth and Man', Meredith teaches that Man's work in the world is Service, and for this work of Service the quality most needed is strength. The quality of strength depends on a due development of the triad—Brain, Blood and Spirit. Man may fall in two ways—either by despising the instincts and senses, or by living only in the senses, unmindful of Reason and Spirit:

> But that the senses still
> Usurp the station of their issue, mind,
> He would have burst the chrysalis of the blind
> As yet he will.

Meredith comes very close to Theosophical teaching when he says that the key to all spiritual growth is courage—moral, intellectual, spiritual, imaginative courage. We are reminded of the tests applied to candidates

for Initiation by a passage in 'The Woods of Westermain'. The woods perhaps represent the occult life, thick-set with tangles. Its terrors are not insuperable, but those who enter must be pure in heart. Nature is full of symbolic meaning and those who would study her mysteries must have purified their vehicles. Only when purity has been attained can the Vision of God be granted.

> Enter these enchanted woods
> You who dare.
> Nothing harms beneath the leaves
> More than waves a swimmer cleaves.
> Toss your heart up with the lark,
> Foot at peace with mouse and worm,
> Fair you fare.
> Only at the dread of dark
> Quaver as they quit their form
> Thousand eyeballs under hoods
> Have you by the hair.
> Enter these enchanted woods
> You who dare.

This sounds like a picture of the astral world, or of the mysterious trials experienced by the neophyte in the Hall of Learning.

The importance of courage is also brought out in the poem called 'Melampus.' Melampus is a good physician, and, because of his fearlessness of any living thing, the snakes, that he saved from death and reared, have given him to understand the language of the birds. In 'The Ancient Mariner' we have the history of a man who broke the harmony of nature, the law of love, by taking life. Melampus fulfils the law and walks among all creatures:

> With lore exceeding *a simple love of the things*
> That glide in grasses and rubble of woody wreck. . . .
> For him the woods were a home and gave him the key
> Of knowledge, thirst for their treasures in herbs and flowers.

The secrets held by the creatures nearer than we
To earth he sought, and the link of their life with ours.

His love of all living things opened his eyes to the hidden secrets of Nature:

Divinely thrilled was the man.
Where others hear but a hum and see but a beam,
The tongue and eye of the fountain of life he knew.

Love also gave him the key to the hearts of men:

Melampus dwelt among men: physician and sage,
He served them, loving them, healing them; sick or maimed,
Or them that frenzied in some delirious rage
Outran the measure, his juice of the woods reclaimed.
He played on men, as his master, Phoebus, on strings,
Melodious: as the God did he drive and check.

It is interesting that Meredith represents him as being brought specially into touch with the Solar Deity:

He drew the Master of Harmonies, voiced or stilled,
To seek him; heard at the silent medicine root
A song, *beheld in fulfilment the unfulfilled.*
Him Phoebus, bending to darkness, colour and form
Of light's excess, many lessons and counsels gave.

Theosophy teaches that when the disciple is ready the Master is at hand. The disciple really draws on, attracts, the Master. Melampus' stage of development is represented as being a very high one. He had transcended the limitations of time, so that to him things to come were present—he "beheld in fulfilment the unfulfilled," and his Master was the LOGOS, the Lord of Life Himself, in whose Name all Initiations are given.

In order to be one with the life of Nature, as was Melampus, self must be conquered. No true harmony is possible while selfishness exists—until the personality is destroyed. This is the meaning of the mystic counsel which enthrals the imagination of poets: "Lose thyself to find Thyself." The whole of Nature is our larger Self.

Drink the sense the notes infuse,
You a *larger* Self shall find,
Sweeter fellowship ensues
With the creatures of your kind,
Aye, and Love, if Love it be
Flaming over *I* and *me*.

Steady progress must be made through conflict and the gradual illumination of the understanding. The 'dragon of self' must be conquered—that dragon which is the product of disharmony in the three worlds of the senses, of the intellect, and of the Spirit. In the tangled woods of life—The Woods of Westermain—if we walk aright, we shall find that

Change, the strongest son of Life
Has the Spirit here to Wife.

If we look past the sense we shall find Spirit shining in permanence. But it is the earth that gives us the key to unlock all doors:

She being Spirit in her clods,
Footway to the God of Gods.

The purpose of our life is Service, and until we realise this we can never realise that the kingdom of heaven is within us. Meredith says in *Diana of the Crossways*:

Service is our destiny in life or in death. Then let it be my choice living to serve the living, and be fretted uncomplainingly. If I can assure myself of doing service, I have my home within.

The reward of Service is to know the hidden secrets of Nature:

For love we Earth, then serve we all:
Her mystic Secret then is ours.

From the lower standpoint, that of the form, Meredith recognises the existence of evil, but, like Browning, he teaches that from the higher standpoint

The evil is null, is naught.

Pain and sorrow and suffering are in reality our friends and teachers. Through them we learn the divine power within us. We may compare Mrs. Besant's noble words:

> I would not greatly care were I to lose all the joys my life has held, but I would not give up *one* pain.

Theosophists to-day are looking to the greater Ones now incarnating amongst us. We are realising very keenly our responsibility to a younger generation that shall be born with higher powers than those which we ourselves possess. The great inspiration of our lives is this feeling of responsibility towards the younger generation. This feeling also is expressed in Meredith's poetry:

> Thou, under stress of the strife,
> Shalt hear for sustainment supreme
> The cry of the Conscience of Life;
> *Keep the young generations in hail,*
> *And bequeath them no tumbled house.*

Francis Thompson's genius has now for some time been recognised in the literary world, and one poem, at least, 'The Hound of Heaven,' has attracted the attention of the general public; but he has yet to make his way among the masses. A writer in *The Academy* says that it will be profoundly interesting for those who love him to watch the growth of his reputation as a poet.

> The greater a poet's message, the more profound his thought, the larger his range, and the more exquisite his note, the deeper and more incessant will be his demand upon his reader. That is why the great poets have had to wait for their recognition. Only the few will or can co-operate at the beginning, but they are the leaven; and now whole masses can see the poetic purport of Shelley, Coleridge, Keats and Wordsworth, of whom the contemporary criticism was a thing over which you laugh or cry as the mood has you. Those who see in Francis Thompson an authentic poet have at any rate the profound interest of watching the various stages in the making of their immortal.

All the criticism on Francis Thompson is extremely interesting. Chesterton's is excellent:

> With Francis Thompson we lose the greatest poetic energy since Browning. In his poetry, as in the poetry of the universe, you can work infinitely out and out, but yet infinitely in and in. These two infinities are the mark of greatness, and he was a great poet.

Le Gallienne says that he is simply Crashaw, born again but born greater. Others, again, think that the resemblance to Crashaw is not very strong, and that he is a twentieth century mystic with a seventeenth century manner. One writes:

> This gift of dreadful vision is not found in Crashaw or in Patmore, in Donne or in Herbert, and therefore it seems to me that Thompson is essentially more akin to Blake, Coleridge, and Rossetti than to the ecclesiastical mystics.

Thompson reminds one of Wordsworth and of Traherne in his reverence for childhood and in his faith in the child-heart:

> Know you what it is to be a child? It is to be something very different from the man of to-day. It is to have a Spirit yet streaming from the waters of baptism; it is to believe in love, to believe in loveliness, to believe in belief; it is to be so little that the elves can reach to whisper in your ear; it is to turn pumpkins into coaches, and mice into horses, lowness into loftiness, and nothing into everything, for each child has its fairy Godmother in its own soul; it is to live in a nutshell and to count yourself the King of infinite space: it is
>
> To see a world in a grain of sand,
> And a heaven in a wild flower,
> Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
> And eternity in an hour.

Thompson, himself, retained a good deal of the child's soul in manhood. He too, like Shelley, was to some extent "the magnified child. . . with the genuine child's power of investing little things with imaginative interest".

It was Thompson's view that artistic production depended to some extent on environment. A certain

amount of retirement and aloofness seemed to him essential for creative work :

> Men given to retirement and abstract study are notoriously liable to contract a certain degree of childlikeness. . . . . Most poets, probably, like most saints, are prepared for their mission by an initial segregation, as the seed is buried to germinate : before they can utter the oracle of poetry, they must first be divided from the body of men. It is the severed head which makes the seraph. The poet must in some degree be lifted above the sordid cares of life.

He lives detached days ;
He serveth not for praise ;
For gold
He is not sold.

He asketh not world's eyes ;
Nor to the world's ears he cries—
Saith, " These
Shut, if ye please ! "

In his poem ' Poet and Anchorite,' Thompson declares himself separated by his poetic vocation to a life of solitude :

Love and love's beauty only hold their revels
In life's familiar, penetrable levels ;
What of its ocean-floor ?
I dwell there evermore.

As a poet of Pain the spiritualiser, Thompson knows that joyous human fellowship is not for him :

I deem well why Life unshared
Was ordained me of yore.
Therefore must my song-bower lone be,
That my tone be
Fresh with dewy pain alway.

From his earliest youth he knew himself to be ' a consecrated Spirit,' one destined to carve out a path for himself, for whom the beaten track could not suffice :

From almost earliest youth
I raised the lids o' the truth,
And forced her bend on me her shrinking sight ;
Ever I knew me Beauty's eremite.
In antre of this lowly body set.
Girt with a thirsty solitude of soul.

In his essay on Shelley Thompson tells us what is "the one all-sufficing motive for a great poet's singing". Other things may support him afterwards, but there can only be one genuine creative impulse. In the devachanic world he sees the vision of the heavenly realities, of which all earthly phenomena are but shadows, and when he comes once more into earth-life it is impossible for him to refrain from uttering what he knows of divine truth.

> The one all-sufficing motive for a great poet's singing is that expressed by Keats:
>
> I was taught in Paradise
> To ease my breast of melodies.
>
> Precisely so. The overcharged breast can find no ease but in suckling the baby-song.

In this wonderful essay Thompson also raises a question which has often received the attention of Theosophical writers. He asks:

> Why should it be that the poets who have written for us the poetry richest in skiey grain, most free from admixture with the duller things of earth—the Shelleys, the Coleridges and the Keats—are the very poets whose lives are among the saddest records in literature?

One of the explanations given by Theosophy is that the life-force which pours more strongly through the poet than through lesser men stimulates all the lower centres as well as the higher; so that, until the poet has learnt by experience to control and direct the life-force, he is peculiarly liable to every kind of mental and moral shipwreck.

Another explanation is that Pan is always the tutor of Apollo, and that knowledge of the strange lessons of the Pan-world is part of the necessary equipment of the poet whose mission it is to find the Hidden Deity in the

darkest and remotest corners of His universe. Just as the highest principle in man, Ātmā, is reflected in his lowest vehicle, the physical, so perhaps for the poet the most profound experience is the realisation of the presence of the Supreme Ishvara in regions where Love and Beauty and Spiritual Truth are rarely sought. Some such explanation occurred to the mind of Thompson, who in his own life had come closely at grips with the same problem :

> Is it that (by some subtile mystery of analogy) sorrow, passion and fantasy are indissolubly connected, like water, fire and cloud; that as from sun and dew are born the vapours, so from fire and tears ascend the 'visions of aerial joy'; that the harvest waves richest over the battlefield of the soul; that the heart, like the earth, smells sweetest after rain; that the spell on which depend such necromantic castles is some spirit of pain, charm-poisoned at their base? Such a poet it may be, mists with sighs the window of his life until the tears run down it; then some air of searching poetry, like an air of searching frost, turns it to a crystal wonder. The God of golden song is the God, too, of the golden sun; so peradventure songlight is like sunlight, and darkens the countenance of the soul. Perhaps the rays are to the stars what thorns are to the flowers; and so the poet, after wandering over heaven, returns with bleeding feet.

Francis Thompson was essentially a Mystic, a Catholic of the most universal type. It is in religious poetry that his greatest strength lay. A religious subject at once calls forth all his most splendid powers of expression, the almost oriental exuberance of imagery, the impassioned eloquence, the wonderful musical cadences and rhythms.

The poem 'In No Strange Land,' unfinished as it is, is the work of a seer :

> O world invisible, we view thee,
> O world intangible, we touch thee,
> O world unknowable, we know thee,
> Inapprehensible, we clutch thee!

Does the fish soar to find the ocean,
The eagle plunge to find the air—
That we ask of the stars in motion
If they have rumour of Thee there?

Not where the wheeling systems darken,
And our benumbed conceiving soars!—
The drift of pinions, would we hearken,
Beats at our own clay-shuttered doors.

The angels keep their ancient places;—
Turn but a stone, and start a wing!
'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces,
That miss the many-splendoured thing.

But (when so sad thou canst not sadder)
Cry;—and upon thy so sore loss,
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder
Pitched between Heaven and Charing Cross.

Yea, in the night, my Soul, my daughter,
Cry,—clinging Heaven by the hems:
And lo, Christ walking on the water
Not of Gennesareth, but Thames.

In 'The Night of Forebeing' Thompson shows the relationship which exists between man, the microcosm, and the universe, or macrocosm. The manifested universe is passing through a vast evolutionary process to which the smaller evolutionary process in the world of man corresponds:

My little-worlded self! the shadows pass
In this thy sister-world, as in a glass,
Of all processions that revolve in thee:
Not only of cyclic Man
Thou here discern'st the plan,
Not only of cyclic Man, but of the cyclic Me.
Not solely of Mortality's great years
The reflex just appears,
But thine own bosom's year, still circling round
In ample and in ampler gyre
Toward the far completion, wherewith crowned,
Love unconsumed shall chant in his own furnace-fire.

Thompson's greatest poem is 'The Hound of Heaven'. It has been splendidly praised. One critic writes:

> 'The Hound of Heaven' seems to us the most wonderful lyric in the language. It fingers all the stops of the Spirit, and we hear now a thrilling and dolorous note of doom, and now the quiring of the spheres, and now the very pipes of Pan, but under all the still sad music of humanity. It is the return of the nineteenth century to Thomas a Kempis. It is not too early to say that people will still be learning it by heart two hundred years hence, for it has about it the unique thing that makes for immortality. Burne Jones said of it: "Since Gabriel's 'Blessed Damozel' no mystical words have so touched me as 'The Hound of Heaven'."

The poem deals with the pursuit of the resisting soul by the love of Christ. Gradually it is stript of all its treasures, and naked and defenceless lies at the feet of its tremendous Lover. With the surrender of self-will comes the realisation that nothing is lost, but all things found and possessed in Him.

We have listened to some of the voices of the dawn, to those "enchanted children, born into a world unchildlike; spoiled darlings of Nature, playmates of her elemental daughters; 'Pan-like Spirits beautiful and swift,' laired amidst the burning fastnesses of their own fervid minds: bold feet along the verges of precipitous dream; light leaders from crag to crag of inaccessible fancies; towering geniuses whose souls rise like a ladder between heaven and earth with the angels of song ascending and descending it". When the Master of Harmonies, the sweetest of all singers, the Supreme Poet of the Cycle comes forth, may it be our great privilege to hear him also and to lead others to hearken to his song.

M. M. C. Pollard

THE JOY OF INDIA

By ELISABETH SEVERS

Charm irresistible, the lovely something
We follow in our dreams, but may not reach.
The unattainable Divine Enchantment
Hinted in music, never heard in speech.

Laurence Hope

CONTRARY to the usual western preconceived ideas with regard to India, it is not a country of sorrow but one of much joy. Many of its natural climatic conditions make for happiness. The warmth of the sun, the beauty of the sky, the almost startling clarity of the atmosphere, the fertility of the land, the sensation of space, of room to move and stretch in, to grow and expand—surely these are elements which should help to make man contented with his lot.

And the people seem to be content. The very poorest coolies do not look unhappy. Their poverty does not make them present that miserable, degraded, almost inhuman aspect of the very poor in England. The coolie women, from the nature of their work, the heavy baskets they carry poised so surely on their heads, bear themselves with a splendid upright carriage, that one's English recollections of working women make it difficult to associate with great poverty. I often envy these dark-skinned women toilers of Southern India, their dignity of carriage and their muscular capacity. Dressed in the dark red garments they affect here, near Madras,

they present a very picturesque appearance, and do not look at all unhappy or oppressed by their heavy work. The children of the poorer classes seem also quite contented little morsels of almost naked humanity. They are attractive in appearance, with their large dark eyes and pretty, childish, uncovered limbs. Their lack of clothing does not seem due so much to the pinch of poverty as to the power of the sun, and a brown skin does seem sufficient clothing in the tropics. The silver ornaments even the poorest children wear give them, to the western eye, a festival and well-to-do appearance. Though poor, very ghastlily poor, according to our western standards, these Indian children do not suffer so much from their poverty as our poor children suffer in our English slums.

The servants we employ seem to be generally in a happy childlike frame of mind. One can hardly, it is true, think of them as responsible, grown-up fathers of families—there is something so ingenuous and youthful about them. A very little seems to amuse and interest them, and they certainly seem much more contented with their work than do our English servants, with their but half-concealed fear of being 'put upon' if they demean themselves by too closely attending to our wishes, and their resolve instantly to assert themselves when the necessity to their minds arises. Your Indian servant is anxious to please you; he observes your ways carefully so as to carry out your idiosyncrasies and preferences. The western domestic, as a rule, does only what he or she must do, and is quite callous as to pleasing you or the reverse.

I do not believe there is in India that sullen, jealous, persistent suspicion and hatred of the working class

against the well-to-do, which is becoming such a canker spot in western life. The atmosphere seems much less surcharged with dangerous elements in India than in England; for though the dangerous anarchistic element undoubtedly exists, it is confined to the very few. But against this mere handful of the discontented must be reckoned the mass of the educated Indians, and the millions of patient and hardworking ryots, who know, quite well, what they owe to the British Rāj, by whose strong and just administration it has come about that he who sows is sure he will reap his crop in safety.

And the ryot counts in India. He is a quantitative asset of importance. Your first long Indian journey convinces you of the truth of the oft-heard statement that India is, before all, an agricultural country. You may pass a whole day in the train without, it appears, arriving at a town or city of much importance, whereas the many stoppages, in the leisurely eastern fashion at which even mail-trains travel, often occur at tiny crowded Indian villages, or at a station that appears to be without any external justification for its being at all, but which is probably a convenient point of contact for some agricultural district. And as one travels over the wide plains of India, and notices how few and far between are the roads that intersect their loneliness and far-stretching expanse of sandy land, and remarks how very seldom one sees any house of any pretence or importance—though villages abound—one also realises that these Indian plains are not in reality lonely at all, but are on the contrary very much populated. One can go but a very little way in the train without seeing goats or cows or buffaloes grazing, and patient-looking figures

keeping watch and ward over these precious possessions. Wherever there is water in India—and there seems to be a good deal of water in India, either naturally or artificially, by irrigation, tanks, etc.—people are washing their bodies, their garments, or their utensils, or fetching water in bright brass lotas. Every field, in which anything in the way of a crop is growing, has one or more persons doing something to the soil or plants. The plains of India, wide and lonely as they look in their entirety, are on a closer view closely set around and companied by animal and human fellowship. And the ryot in his field or tending his cattle makes India what she is as a totality in the present, *the* agricultural country of Asia, peopled by a patient, inarticulate, and, in the main, contented population.

The visit of the King-Emperor, George V, to India has rejoiced the heart of the poor and lowly of his Indian subjects. To see, with their own eyes, the face of their King who, to the Indian peasant represents, it must be remembered—bizarre as the sentiment may seem to the western mind—Divinity itself, is a joy of joys, a sight to be for ever treasured by memory, and to be handed down to generations still unborn.

The Indian peasant has compensations for his apparent poverty, the compensations Mother Nature always gives her children who depend directly on her for sustenance. He starts with the enormous advantage of limitation of desires: he is naturally contented because his wants are so few. A thatched shed for shelter, two cloths for clothes, a meal of rice or some other grain, and he has all he needs; a wife is not only a matter of course, but a religious and social obligation;

a son completes his circle of necessity. The companionship of his village equals provides him with social intercourse, and the gossip his soul loves.

Simplicity of outlook is his and the unconscious nurturing of his Spirit in natural beauty makes his lot a happy one. The joys of India do not lie in the cities of India; they are few and far between. Her joys exist in the crowded villages of huddled huts on her dry, dusty, yet fertile plains. Perhaps pre-eminently, the Indian's joy is connected with his religion, with his temples, sacred tanks and rivers. The multitudes that throng the ghāts of Ganges at Benares, or of any other sacred river, are plainly happy. They are performing their religious duties with an *abandon* that in itself gives happiness. The worshippers in the temple—be it pilgrims filling the vicinity of the God's Image to suffocation, or the chance comer with his marigold garland and his pūjā offerings—are also happy. Religion is to the Indian mind connected with joy, with family festivals at once social and spiritual. Religion is one of the influences, if not the chief, which make the Indians—an essentially religious race—the contented people they are. The aim of Indian philosophy is to put an end to pain, and, in India, religion and philosophy are one. In some strange, inexplicable fashion, the joys of India influence the soul, the Spirit, even of the foreigner. There have been moments when I have felt the pure joy of living, of existence, seize me in India as I have never felt it in any western land. It was a joy unknown to me until I visited the East.

"All partial beauty is a pledge of beauty in its plenitude," and the beauty of India's azure skies and clear ambient air, charmed deep blue sea-waters, tall

green-crowned palms, huge dark butterflies and gorgeous flaming flowers heavily scented, filling the air with perfume, seizes on me, and inspires and uplifts my soul. "There are moments when the soul takes wings: what it has to remember, it remembers: what it loves, it loves still more: what it longs for, to that it flies." Very, very easy is it for the soul to take high flights in India. The waters of Lethe are powerless in India to drown remembrance of the soul's long past; dead though that past should be by every human reckoning, it survives. In India the past becomes the present with a startling reality, that the waters of Nepenthe have mercifully deprived of its former bitterness and the resurrected past yields the joy of present knowledge. Love, and all that that emotion holds of mingled joy and pain ("Love is a tyrant ministering to the soul with persecutions"), ministers to the soul in India with even more than her customary forcing of human evolution. If the soul cannot reach in India that it longs for, the disaster of Icarus may be repeated and in the fall—descend into Hades!

If one keynote of India is joy, another is intensity of feeling. Men and women of western birth (for the Indian I cannot speak) love and joy and suffer in India with an intensity unkown in western lands, as both poet and novelist have testified. The genius of the Tropics, which knows no moderation, enfolds humanity in its close embrace and communicates to them its own intensity of nature, and so dowers them with an increased keenness of sensation. And so it is that those joys of the inner life that are the deepest joys of man, because they are connected with the Eternal, the Divine in him, are felt so much more vividly in the East, are

in a word *realised* there—not imaged only, as is so often the case.

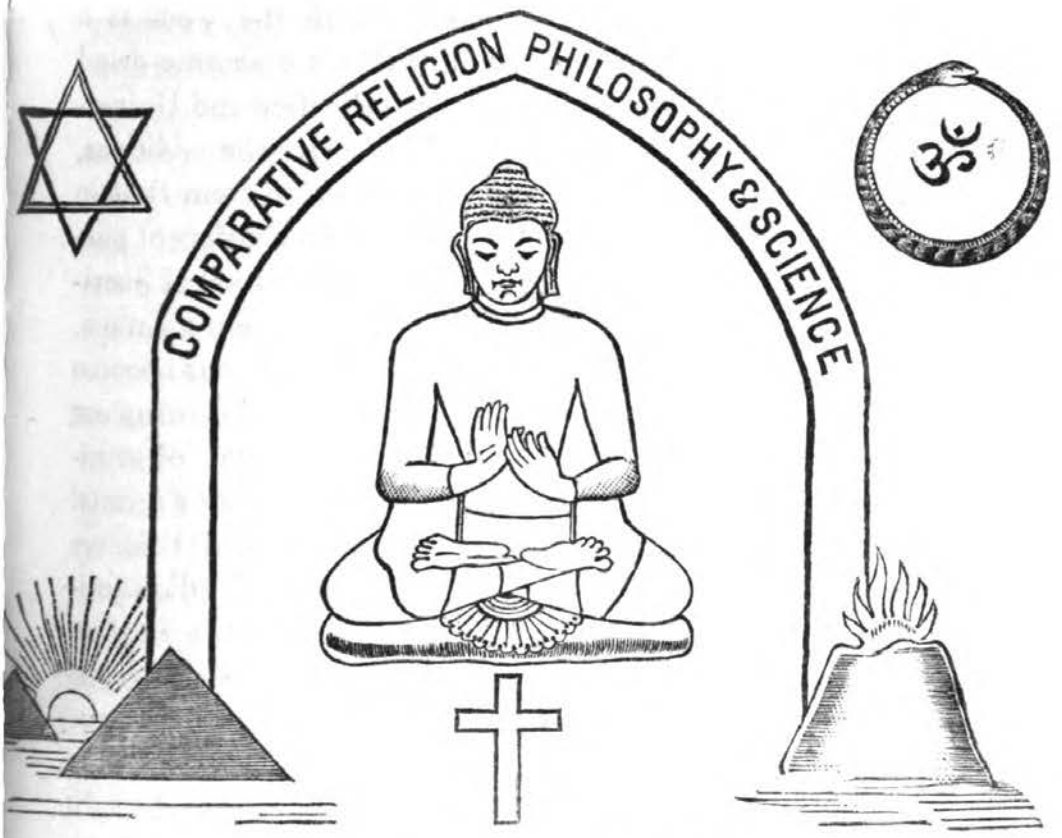
Man believes in India that he is divine, and so has moments when the claims of the mortal elements in him relax and he soars upward. And soaring, he partakes of the bread of Angels, and hears the music of the spheres, and knows something of that Spirit of pure bliss which is the divine characteristic. For God is Joy as well as Love, and this great fact, so overlooked in the West, when not, oh! blasphemy, denied, is glimpsed in India. Perchance because the religious thought of India has ever taught that Brahman is joy and that the knowledge of God is bliss, this thought, maintained, reiterated through the centuries, has so impregnated the Indian atmosphere that in moments of exaltation or of aspiration it touches and influences the soul. In a finite world of manifestation, that necessarily reflects its origin but imperfectly and partly, all that the sensible world is and has owes its being elsewhere; and joy, the joy alike of super-humanity, of humanity and of the sub-human kingdoms, has its origin in the divine joy of Being. The Hinḍūs teach that creation is the līlā, the play, the sport of God, that it is pure joy to Him to manifest and to bring forth His Worlds. It is the reflection of this divine joy of creation that man experiences when in his puny fashion he creates, and by worthily creating co-operates with his Lord in the world's becoming.

The joy that makes a woman, as the wise old Psalmist knew, forget the pangs of child-birth "for joy that a man is born into the world" in the body she has conceived, fashioned and brought forth: the joy that an artist feels when he gazes on his handiwork: the

joy of giving form and name to that which before was unmanifest: this is one of the greatest, the purest joys of man. And one of the joys of India lies in the inspiration she gives so bountifully to those who visit her shores, to the stranger within her gates. If inspiration has been lost in other lands, surely a visit to India restores and revivifies the imaginative faculty. The inspiration of India unveils eyes that had become clouded, and enables them again to see truth and beauty—and the two are one as poets have ever taught—more clearly; it unseals deaf ears that they may hear more intently; it lays hands on the soul, stripping it of the stained garments of pride and self-will in which it had clothed itself, that naked, the soul may contact Reality. Naked indeed the soul sometimes feels herself to be in India, naked and stripped of all that had formerly held her imprisoned on earth, and in that sense of spiritual nakedness lies India's deepest joy. It is *the* boon India can give humanity, India, the spiritual world-mother among the nations.

Elisabeth Severs

Like the doctrine of evolution itself, that of transmigration has its roots in the world of reality; and it may claim such support as the great argument from analogy is capable of supplying. Huxley: *Evolution and Ethics.*



THE PATH OF SERVICE IN THE VEḌAS[1]

By A. MAHADEVA SHASTRI, F. T. S.

MY study of the Veḍic Law of Marriage has led me on to the study of the Veḍic Law of Sacrifice known as Soma-yāga, which has a very significant bearing on the Veḍic ideal of marriage and married life. Soma-yāga originally meant service to the Divine Lord, a life of self-sacrifice and universal love in imitation of the Divine

[1] A paper read at the T. S. Order of Service Meeting held on 28th December 1912, at the time of the T. S. Convention.

Lord, and in harmony with the Law of Evolution which indicates the will of the Divine Lord. But the Soma-yāga which we now find described in the Veḍa is a vast body of rituals worked out in such elaborate detail that the basic Law of Service, Self-sacrifice and Universal Love is well-nigh lost sight of. By the additions, alterations and varied adaptations effected from time to time, from different points of view, and for different purposes not always consistent with the basic Law of Sacrifice and Love, what might originally have been a simple, significant and effective ritual of Soma-yāga has become a heavy mass of cumbersome and almost meaningless ritual, a vast system composed of a number of semi-independent magic rites and ceremonies involving animal sacrifice and liquor-drinking. As a result of all this, we have to dig very deep into the system of the Veḍic sacrificial ritual in order to get at the trace of the Path of Service which lies submerged at the base beneath the vast superstructure that has risen above. It would have remained invisible and unrecognised, were it not that the Theosophical teaching, which has shed so much light on the Veḍic Religion, on the world-evolution of the Purāṇas, and on the Occultism of the Yoga-shāṣtras, has stimulated us to investigate and trace the Path of Service which lies hidden beneath the ritual, symbolism and imagery of the Veḍas, Smṛṭis, Purāṇas and Iṭihāsas. I now propose to sketch this Veḍic Path of Service in its bare outline.

The Brāhmaṇa's Triple Debt

The Veḍas make but an incidental reference to the Path of Service, when treating of animal sacrifice

in connection with the Soma-yāga. By way of extolling the severance of flesh-slices from the heart, the tongue and the chest of the slaughtered animal, which are to be offered to Ḍevas through the sacred fire, it is said as follows:

A Brāhmaṇa, on becoming such, becomes indebted in three ways: by spiritual devotion (*brahmachārya*) to Rishis, by sacrifice (*Yajna*) to Ḍevas, by progeny (*prajā*) to Piṭṛs. Free from debt is he who has children, who sacrifices, and who leads a life of spiritual devotion. One verily cuts away this (indebtedness) by chopping off (the slices of flesh): wherefore the offerings of flesh-slices are called *chops* (*Taiṭṭirīya-Samhiṭā*, VI, iii, 10).

Ignoring for the present the reference to the animal sacrifice, we may understand the rest of the passage to mean that the Brāhmaṇa owes his status, as such, to the Piṭṛs, Ṛṣhis, and Ḍevas, and is therefore indebted to them, and that he discharges this triple debt by bringing forth progeny, by leading a spiritual life, and by engaging in sacrifice.

Let us see how a Brāhmaṇa, as such, incurs the triple debt. We are given to understand that three factors go to make a Brāhmaṇa:

For the twice-born, according to the teaching of the Shruṭi, the first birth is from the mother, the second when the loins are girded with the munjā grass, the third when the consecration for sacrifice takes place. (*Manusmṛṭi*, ii, 169).

The three factors which thus, according to Shruṭi, go to make a Brāhmaṇa may be stated as follows:

1. Good parentage and sound training (in childhood).

2. Spiritual instruction and training in spiritual life (in youth).

3. Devotion to the Divine Lord and to the Divine Hierarchy (in later life).

These three factors respectively represent the contribution of the three Divine Agencies at work in the

furtherance of human evolution, and therefore constitute the Brāhmaṇa's triple debt to the Hierarchy.

His Debt to Piṭṛs

The Brāhmaṇa owes his good parentage to Piṭṛs, the creative orders in the Divine Hierarchy headed by the mighty Beings called Prajāpaṭis, such as Marīchi, Aṭri, etc. It is their function to see that humanity is supplied with suitable bodies, wherein the advanced souls may incarnate and work out their spiritual progress. Piṭṛs generally effect their purpose through human parents; but when, owing to the periodical degeneracy of a people, no worthy human parents are available to give birth to bodies of the required standard of excellence, they themselves incarnate among men for the purpose. Thus every Brāhmaṇa is indebted to Piṭṛs for the fine human organism which he has obtained through his parents, and for the early training which those parents have given him in his childhood.

His Debt to Ṛṣhis

To Ṛṣhis is the Brāhmaṇa indebted for the instruction in spiritual truths and for the training in spiritual life which he received from the teacher in youth. Ṛṣhis are the appointed guardians of the spiritual interests of humanity. Besides spreading broadcast the great spiritual truth through the great religions and their scriptures, they rouse and stimulate the spiritual nature of man directly from the higher planes. He feels, thus, a hankering for spiritual life. He then approaches a teacher for instruction, resides with him

for some years, leading a life of spiritual devotion under the eye of the teacher, and receives from him instructions for further progress. As the formulæ (manṭras) of the Upanāyana (ceremony of Initiation) tell us, the pupil is first taught the great truth that he is one with the Divine Lord of the Universe, nay, the Divine Lord Himself; that, leading a spiritual life, he should so control the body and the mind as to make them subservient to the behests of the Spirit within; that he should look up for all spiritual instruction to the Divine Lord Himself as embodied in the teacher; that he should render to the teacher such service as he would render to the Divine Lord; the teacher all the while professing to act only under the inspiration of the Divine Lord and the Hierarchy. Thus living in perfect trust in his Divine Self, and in the teacher as the embodiment of the Divine Lord and the Divine Hierarchy, the student learns all that is necessary for his further progress in this life. Thereby he becomes indebted to Ṛṣhis.

His Debt to Ḍevas

The Brāhmaṇa is indebted to Ḍevas for the high level of development to which his mind and senses have attained. This development is the handiwork of Ḍevas, who provide proper environment calculated to bring out the latent powers of the mind and the senses. In the long course of evolution which lies behind him, the mind and the senses have attained the power of comprehending the external and internal worlds; and at a further stage they can be completely withdrawn at will from the world of forms and fixed upon the Divine Life

behind the forms and on the Divine Self within. When a man is able to do this, he becomes a channel for a continuous inflow of Divine Life. Then he is fit to take part in the work of the Divine Hierarchy, and his further progress lies in this co-operation. Now is the time for Yāga-ḍīkṣhā, for the consecration of the whole life to the Divine Service; and, by taking this step, he attains the full status of a Brāhmaṇa.

A True Brāhmaṇa

Thus a Brāhmaṇa is one whose physical body is pure and healthy; whose spiritual aspiration has been fully awakened; who, having been taught the Divinity of his true Self, seeks to realise his unity with Brahman, the Divine Lord; who has learned to control the body and the mind and the senses by the Spirit within; who has been given instructions for his further spiritual progress; who can invoke the Divine Intelligences and act as a channel for their Divine Life; who has consecrated his whole life by devoting all his powers to the service of the Divine Lord and the Hierarchy.

The True Brāhmaṇic Status is Independent of Caste and Sex

We thus see that a man becomes a Brāhmaṇa by Yāga-ḍīkṣhā, by the consecration of his life to the service of the Divine Lord, by doing all work for His glory. Good parentage and early training in spiritual life are of value only as leading to this step, as impelling a man to lead a life of self-sacrifice and universal love.

Hence the formula of declaration in the Ḍīkṣhā ceremony: "He has consecrated his life to the Divine Service, and has become a Brāhmaṇa." Commenting on this declaration, the Shruṭi says:

> Uncertain, as it were, is his origin heretofore; for the Rākṣhasas, they say, pursue women, and so the Rākṣhasas implant their seed therein. But, he, forsooth, is truly born who is born of the Brahman, of the sacrifice; wherefore let him address even a Kṣhaṭriya or a Vaishya as Brāhmaṇa, since he who is born of the sacrifice is born of Brahman (and hence is a Brāhmaṇa). (*Shaṭapaṭha-Brāhmaṇa*, III, ii, 1-40).

This gives us to understand that the spiritual status as a Brāhmaṇa is quite independent of the distinctions (such as Brāhmaṇas, Kṣhaṭriyas, Vaishyas, etc.), which depend on the social or civil functions that by heredity they are best fitted to discharge. It is the consecration of one's whole life to the Divine Service that makes one a true Brāhmaṇa, whatever one's birth, profession or civil function may be, and whatever may be one's sex.

The Brāhmaṇa is bound to discharge the Three Debts

We have seen how in the attainment of the full status of a Brāhmaṇa, a man becomes indebted to Piṭṛs, Ṛṣhis and Ḍevas. It becomes, then, a moral necessity for him to pay back to the Hierarchy what he has received from it. And as the sole concern of the Hierarchy is the evolution of humanity, the Brāhmaṇa can pay off the debt due to it by co-operating in its work, by doing a part of the work which it does for humanity, so that its work may be lightened, and human evolution may progress a little more rapidly.

In thus co-operating with the Hierarchy, the Brāhmaṇa makes real onward progress towards the main

goal of his aspiration. In fact, his further progress runs along the line of co-operation with the Hierarchy. To those who are at the threshold of the Path of Service, or who have only just begun to tread it, this co-operation presents itself as the legal discharge of a debt incurred, or as a moral necessity. But, as a matter of fact, it is the path which alone can take the Brāhmaṇa to the goal he seeks, to the realisation of his oneness with the Divine Lord. For, by co-operating with the Hierarchy, he makes himself a channel through which the Divine Life will flow as It flows through the Hierarchy. It is through the Hierarchy that the Divine Lord carries on the world-evolution; and therefore whatever the Brāhmaṇa does by way of co-operation in the work of the Hierarchy constitutes service to the Divine Lord. As he progresses in this work of co-operation with the Hierarchy, he forms a more and more efficient medium for the flow of the Divine Life needed for the evolutionary progress of humanity and the whole sentient existence. Then there comes a stage when work in the service of the Lord will constitute the very nature of his being, the joy of his life. As he approaches perfection in this line of Service, he realises more and more the true Divinity of his Self, as manifesting the Divine Powers needed for the evolution of the world. Thus the path of co-operation with the Hierarchy leads the Brāhmaṇa to the level of Brahman, Prajāpaṭi, the Lord of Creation—which is the goal of his aspiration.

The Brāhmaṇa's Life of Service

From this point of view, we are able to understand the full significance of the words of the Shruṭi quoted

above: "Free from debt is he who has children, who sacrifices, and who leads a life of spiritual devotion." Rearing a family in a worthy fashion, living a life of self-sacrifice and service, and leading a life of spiritual devotion, the Brāhmaṇa discharges his debt to the Hierarchy. Then he will be free to leave the human world and to pass on to the higher worlds.

Let us study a little more closely the life of the Brāhmaṇa here mapped out. For a Brāhmaṇa, man or woman, seeking fellowship with the Divine Lord and trying to realise the divinity of the true Self in man, the first and foremost duty is to seek a worthy partner in life. The first steps on the path of liberation and immortality would seem to lie in married life. The parties to the marriage should both be Brāhmaṇas, devotees of Brahman, cherishing the same aspiration, striving to grow into the likeness of Brahman, seeking to attain unity with the Divine Lord of the Universe, and devoted to the service of the Divine Lord and the Divine Hierarchy. They should both have attained some spiritual development, some degree of spiritual culture, having spent their youth under a spiritual Guru, and having, under his instruction and guidance, learned to control the body, the senses and the mind, and having learned from him the basic spiritual truths and the main laws of spiritual evolution. The Veḍic Law further lays down that the man and the woman to be united in marriage should be of different *goṭras,* that is to say, of different religious temperaments, and brought up on two different lines of spiritual culture; so that their conjoint life may prove advantageous to both, the one contributing to the other what that other lacks. Marriage means—as the chief marriage formula indicates—

the solemn vow of a man and a woman to live together a life of spiritual devotion in mutual love and harmony, thinking, proposing and acting in unison, joining together in all the concerns and enjoyments of life. It is the fulfilment of this vow that constitutes married life. It is no wonder that such a pair (we are told) give birth to valiant Heroes, noble Sages, and God-men. This verily is the way to discharge the debt to Piṭṛs. Such a progeny reared and brought up by such parents really forms a noble contribution to the work of the Creative Orders of the Divine Hierarchy.

Spiritual Devotion in Married Life

The married life is also a life of spiritual devotion (brahmachārya). In fact we are told that married life according to the Veḍic ideal alone constitutes the brahmachārya *(spiritual life)* which leads to liberation. According to the *Veḍic Law,* the married couple should continue the life of spiritual devotion, a life of Spirit free from material lust and sensuality. Sexual continence forms its special feature. Even the act of creation in which they engage forms a conscious direction of the divine energy for a divine purpose, for the furtherance of the spiritual evolution of humanity as a whole. The life of spiritual control over the material organism, begun in early youth under the guidance of the teacher, is thus to be carried on in the period of manhood. While themselves leading a life of Spirit in this fashion, they bring up their children for the same kind of life, and also train such other youths as offer themselves for spiritual training and instruction and are found worthy of it. In this way the Brāhmaṇa discharges the debt to Ṛṣhis.

Sacrifice and Service in Married Life

Further the married life is one of continual sacrifice, a life of strenuous activity dedicated to the service of the Divine Lord and the Hierarchy of Ḍevas. The sole concern of this life is the furtherance of evolution in co-operation with the Divine Hierarchy. In his single-minded devotion to the service of the Divine Lord, the Brāhmaṇa becomes a channel of the Divine Life, directing it for the benefit of humanity and the whole sentient existence. In this way he realises his oneness with the Divine Lord, who, as Viṣḥṇu, preserves and maintains the universe in its orderly evolution. This is the true meaning of Soma-yāga, the realisation of Soma (or Viṣḥṇu) as known to the true Brāhmaṇas, as the One in whom the whole universe abides, whose Glory is seen in all that is glorious, as the Veḍic Sage has sung in the famous nuptial hymn :

> By Soma are the Āḍityas strong, by Soma mighty is the Earth; and within these stars too hath Soma his place. One thinks he hath drunk Soma when they have brayed the plant; but of Soma whom Brāhmaṇas know, no one ever tastes.

By acting as a channel for the flow of the Divine Life needed for the world's evolution, the Brāhmaṇa co-operates with Ḍevas. This is the Sacrifice (Yajña) which secures freedom from the debt of Ḍevas, as it lightens and advances their work. Whether the Brāhmaṇa works for the benefit of the world as a philosopher, as a scientist, or as a philanthropist, he is discharging the debt to Ḍevas. While thus co-operating directly with the Divine Hierarchy in the best interests of humanity, the Brāhmaṇa serves it indirectly by helping the younger aspirants to do the same by instruction, advice and co-operation.

The Goal of the Path of Service

Such is the Path of Service marked out for the Brāhmaṇa who strives for immortality, in pursuance of the Veḍic command: "Let every mortal being seek fellowship with the Divine Lord." No man can escape death till he has learnt to be completely at one with the Divine Lord and realised the divinity of his true Self. For this at-one-ment and realisation, he has to unfold the triple Divine Nature of his Self, by co-operating with the three Agencies of the Divine Hierarchy, who represent the Shiva, Viṣhṇu and Brahmā aspects of the Supreme Lord of the Universe. Thus the Veḍic Path of three-fold Service secures an all-round spiritual development of man. Not till perfection in this line of Service is attained, is a man free from the bonds of earthly life. His attempts, till then, to rise above humanity will all be vain. This truth is shadowed forth in the *Manusmṛti*:

After paying the three debts may he fix his mind on deliverance. He who without paying them seeks deliverance goes downward. (vi, 35).

When the discharge of the triple debt is complete, then only a man may think of finally leaving this world; till then he must be engaged in one or all of the three lines of Service.

The Veḍic Householder is the True Samnyāsin

The Veḍic Path of Service is, as we have seen, a life of intense and strenuous activity divested of all selfish interest. Lord Shrī Kṛṣhṇa refers to this when he says:

Whoso, not seeking the fruit of action, performs the action which ought to be done, he is a Samnyāsin and a Yogin,

not he who is without fire and without action *(Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā*, vi, 1*)*.

Here, the active service of true renunciation and devotion is contrasted with the life of the so-called Samnyāsin who has merely renounced the external sacred fires and the rituals therewith connected. He who treads the Veḍic Path of disinterested service to the Divine Lord is, in the opinion of the Lord Shrī Kṛṣhṇa, a true Samnyāsin and Yogin. It is this life of service, this life of beneficent unselfish activity and spiritual devotion which the Veḍic Law expects every householder to lead; so that the householder of the Veḍic Law is, according to the Lord Shrī Kṛṣhṇa, a true Samnyāsin and Yogin. Such householders work their way up towards liberation by discharging the triple debt; and in fact, a complete discharge of the obligations due to the Hierarchy is possible only to the householders, men and women, leading a married life of intense unselfish activity in ardent spiritual devotion on the lines of the Veḍic Law. Their life is different from that of the civic householders, whose religious life consists of rituals involving the maintenance of the external sacred fires. The fire which the Veḍic householder maintains is the Divine Fire within, shining in all splendour and beauty in the mind and the heart intent on service of the Divine Lord and His Hierarchy. This fire and this activity never cease in the life of the Veḍic householder, and they constitute the true Samnyāsa and Yoga which are really one, as the Lord says:

What they call Samnyāsa, that do thou, O Pāṇḍava, know as Yoga. Verily, no one who has not renounced personal interests can become a Yogin. (*Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā*, vi, 2).

The ritualistic activity of the householder ordained in the Institutes such as *Manusmṛti,* is only a shadow of the Veḍic Path of Service, as all rituals and symbols are mere shadows and signs of real facts. The rituals known as *Brahmayajña, Ḍevayajña,* and *Piṭṛyajña* consist in reciting manṭras, pouring water, and offering oblations into the sacred fire. This is but a poor substitute for the actual world-wide Service in co-operation with the Divine Hierarchy. The life of the ordinary Samnyāsin is likewise one of rituals, though not connected with external fires, and is solely directed to the furtherance of personal culture, without any conscious concern for the world's progress. Of small account, by the side of the Veḍic householder's life, indeed, is the spiritual life of such a Samnyāsin, or of the householder who thinks he has discharged the debt due to the Hierarchy when he has offered some water or butter, or, worse still, some slices of flesh cut from an animal slaughtered for the purpose.

The Veḍic Path of Service is devoid of Ritual

Such rituals are not for the men and the women who tread the Veḍic Path of service, who live a life of unselfish world-wide activity in the Service of the Divine Hierarchy. This can be made out from the ritualistic section of the Veḍa itself. I have already spoken of Ḍīkṣhā, the process of consecration which makes one a Brāhmaṇa. Even this process now survives only in the form of a ritual elaborately worked out. Primarily, as indicated by the manṭras connected with the ritual, Ḍīkṣhā, means cutting oneself off from all personal concerns and devoting all thought, speech and action solely to

the contemplation of the Divine Lord and to His Service. The devotee (Ḍīkṣhiṭa) maintains this attitude throughout the waking life; and, when retiring for sleep at night, he prays to the Divine Fire—to the Divine Lord and Self shining forth in his devout mind—to keep watch that, in his sound sleep, the evil powers may not attack him, and that he may awake in time. He gets up again at midnight and adores the Divine Fire, for having so far kept his devotion inviolate. Again, when he awakes in the last watch of the night, he prays to the Divine Lord that his mind may never wander away from the Lord, and that he may grow strong in the strength of the Lord and continue the life of self-sacrifice and service till he safely reaches the goal of the Path. Then he seeks the protection of the mighty Ḍevas whose habitat and sphere of work is manas. In this connection the Brahmavāḍins (Theologians) ask a pertinent question: Should the devotee (Ḍīkṣhiṭa) observe, or should he not observe, the daily morning and evening ritual of making offerings of milk and butter in the sacred fire? The answer is given in the negative. In the current practice, too, the Ḍīkṣhiṭa is released, during the period of Ḍīkṣhā, from the observance of morning and evening Agnihoṭra ritual, as also of the morning and evening Saṇḍhyāvanḍana prayers, both of which are the ritualistic substitutes for the meditation on the Divine Self within, which is practised by the true Ḍīkṣhiṭa just before and after the nightly sleep. The reason assigned for the omission of the morning and evening rituals is very significant. The Veḍa explains as follows: the Ḍīkṣhiṭa having offered *himself* as a sacrifice to the Divine Lord, his body would constitute the substance to be offered in

the sacred fire. That shall not be, as it would mean his death. On the contrary, it is said that the sanctified milk which the Ḍīkṣhiṭa has to drink at the close of his prayer to God and Ḍevas goes to feed the Ḍevas, by way of feeding the vital organs through which the Ḍevas act, and thereby constitutes the Agnihoṭra. This is the explanation given from the ritualistic point of view. But the real explanation which it suggests is this: Ḍīkṣhiṭa is one who has sacrificed his personal interests in life and has devoted his whole life to the service of the Divine Lord and the Hierarchy. He has, therefore, risen above all rituals in which, not the man himself and his whole life, but something belonging to him, are offered to God and Ḍevas symbolically. Thus, rituals are not meant for the men and the women who, seeking to realise in consciousness their Divine potentialities, dedicate their whole life to the Divine Lord and the Hierarchy for active service in the interests of humanity as a whole and the world-progress.

The Modern Hiṇḍu Ritualistic Life is Unreal.

This ideal of active service in co-operation with the Divine Hierarchy, unconnected with all ritual, has long been forgotten by the Hiṇḍūs who profess to follow the Veḍic Law. The Hiṇḍūs, as a whole, have all along remained a pious people; but their piety has taken a ceremonial turn. Their religious life is one round of rituals and ceremonies, which are often very perfunctorily observed, and have become quite unreal and almost useless. But their observance is insisted on in all orders of holy life, including the Samnyāsins. Complete freedom from rituals in spiritual life is allowed by the

Institutes only to the Samnyāsin of the highest or Paramahamsa order, who lives almost by and for himself, but with some definite end in view. Very few, however, avail themselves of this freedom, inasmuch as the public now-a-days looks askance at those who resort to it. Indeed, too many of these do not lead the life which ought to go with it, namely, the life of a real student of Brahmaviḍyā.

The Place of Ritual in Spiritual Life

It must not, however, be understood that rituals are of no use altogether. They have their place and use in the spiritual life of a man. When closely examined, rituals will be found to consist of elements which serve different purposes and are of different values. Some are symbolic processes placing the body and the mind in particular attitudes which open the organism for the inflow of Divine Grace. Others constitute exercises and processes which secure the health and purity of the mind and the body. Others again partake of the nature of ceremonial Magic, involving incantations and manipulations of substances setting free forces which act beneficially upon the organism and its environment. As to the use of these rituals in religious life, the Hinḍū religious teachers estimate it variously. Some inculcate a life-long observance, while others would dispense with them altogether. The Veḍānṭic teachers, inclined to neither extreme, seem to take a reasonable view of the place of the ritual in the spiritual life of man. According to Shrī Shankarāchārya, when a man goes through the daily round of rituals enjoined in the Shruṭi and the Smṛṭi, with no longing for the immediate fruits of his

actions, seeking only the knowledge of Brahman which will lead to liberation, his organism becomes healthy and refined, his mind becomes pure ; and in due course, he will get an intuitive glimpse into the true nature of the Self and be able to discriminate the real and the unreal. There ends the purpose of the ritual. For further development he may give up the ritual entirely.

Samnyāsa without Ritual

He then formally renounces all ritual and becomes a Samnyāsin of the Paramahamsa order. Even this renouncement of rituals is done with some ceremony, simply with a view to impress the people with the holiness of his future vocation. His is not an idle life. He is freed from rituals merely because he will have so much to do by way of study and practice of higher Yoga. He is not without fire either. Though he has not to maintain the external fires, he has to generate and tend the sacred fire within, as the Smṛṭi says :

> Having established the sacred fires in himself, the Brāhmaṇa should go forth from the house. (*Manu*, vi, 38.)

By Ḍhyāna and Ḍhāraṇa, by dwelling constantly on the Divine Self within in devotion and love, he develops the Divine Fire in himself. With this Fire burning within, he should perfect his control over the mind and the senses and the body. He should cultivate absolute truthfulness, practise sexual continence, abstain from all cruelty, be kind to all, and learn to love the whole sentient existence. He should study Scriptures, reflect and meditate upon their teaching till the intellect is firmly convinced of the truth that the Self in man is one with the Divine

Lord of the Universe. This involves the practice of Yoga in its higher stages, wherein the mind, concentrated upon the Supreme Brahman, reaches an intuitive perception of the same truth. As a student of Brahma-viḍyā the Paramahamsa has a definite aim, and follows an intelligible method to achieve his purpose. He is therefore above all the rules of Varṇa and Āshrama which enjoin rituals and ceremonies; for these do not help him in the achievement of the end in view, namely, the perfecting of Self-knowledge.

The Path of Liberation

When he has attained this true knowledge of the Self, then for a practical realisation of the Divine Self in him, he has yet to tread the Path of Service, to lead a life of self-sacrifice and service in co-operation with the Divine Hierarchy. Perfection in this leads to liberation from the trammels of the earth. When oneness with the Divine Lord has been realised in the sphere of human evolution, he is free to pass on to the higher regions and other universes, there also to realise his oneness with the Divine Lord. Thus progressing on and on, he will at last realise his oneness, amounting almost to identity, with the Supreme Lord of the whole Universe.

A. Mahadeva Shastri

THE DATE OF RĀMA

A Speculation

By A. D. Watson

IN all sacred records that exist in various languages there occur details belonging to the forgotten and prehistoric past: curious natural history facts, a strange geography, descriptions of monsters, of sub-human creatures, and of pygmy and giant human beings.

No dates, as far as the writer is aware, are assigned to any of these, and the general tendency of the present-day reader has been to regard portions that coincide with what is now known as historical, and to throw the remainder, not consistent with accepted experiences, into the region of fancy, fable and myth.

These works were in all instances derived from the Mysteries, and were meant for the instruction of the neophyte; the necessity for them will appear if it is granted that one of the powers he began to evolve was the memory of past incarnations, when he would begin to perceive the circumstances surrounding his early recollections, and actually find them detailed by tradition, or the inner vision of those who had trodden the Path before him.

In the Theosophical writings are given some details of an Atlantean continent and race destroyed by water,

or flood, or, in more modern language, by sinking under the sea; and of a Lemurian continent and race, prior to the Atlantean, which was destroyed by fire, or, in modern language, by volcanic action.

Many confirmations of these facts are to be found in existing records, and although these exist among peoples now separated by vast geographical areas, it ought not to be thought that the wide diffusion of the knowledge of the facts proves their universality; indeed their very existence disproves that, for the cataclysms caused emigrations of the survivors, who carried the facts with them, even though the bulk of the people perished in the cataclysms.

There are many confirmations of the existence of two continents, named in Theosophical literature Atlantis and Lemuria, to be found in ancient literature. The first of these is mentioned in the *Timæus* and *Critias* of Plato; details are given of the Atlantic continent, and a hint is dropped of the Lemurian in the interpretation given in the *Timæus* of the story of Phaeton:

> The story, for instance, that is current among you that Phaeton, the offspring of the Sun, once attempting to drive his father's chariot, and not being able to keep the track observed by his parent, burnt up the surface of the earth and perished himself, blasted by lightning, is generally regarded as fabulous; but it, in point of fact, refers to a declination (or parallax) of the heavenly bodies revolving round the earth, and indicates that, at certain long intervals of time, the earth's surface is destroyed by mighty fires..... And again when the Gods, to purify the earth, deluged its surface with water.

A footnote to this in Böhn's translation also says:

> It was the opinion of Heraclitus and many of the old philosophers that the earth would be periodically destroyed by fire and water; the notion was borrowed, perhaps, from the Egyptians; compare Herodotus II, Chapter 142.

In reading the above quotation it must be remembered that to peoples without scientific instruments, or

for that matter, with them, a change in the direction of the earth's axis to the plane of its orbit would appear as a change in the declination of the heavenly bodies. Such a change is going on even now, as is well known to students of astronomy, and is generally attributed to the attraction of the earth by the other planets of the system. The account is, therefore, all that could be desired from a scientific point of view.

On these two continents, it is stated in Theosophical teachings, there developed forms of life peculiar to them, monstrous animals and sub-human races, dwarfs and giants; and, above all, during these epochs the distribution of land and water on the earth's surface was totally different from the present.

What wonder, then, if the existence of the satyrs and fauns of the Greeks, of dragons and flying camels, should be mentioned in records relating to the time when they were in existence?

Putting aside all biblical dates as useless, let us consider history, and see how far back it carries us. The statement, in the *Timæus* of Plato, by the Egyptian priest was that he would "relate the laws and more illustrious actions of those states which have existed nine thousand years, and when more at leisure he would take the sacred writings themselves, and recount an exact history in every particular". As to this be it remembered that Solon, to whom it was stated, was three generations before Plato, and the date given to the *Timæus* is about 350 B. C.; also in proof that this story of Solon was not regarded as a fable, we find the fact of Solon being taught by an Egyptian priest mentioned and the name of the priest—Sonchis of Saïs—given by Plutarch, who lived about A. D. 60. (See Plutarch's *Morals*.)

The following passage occurs in Laing's *Human Origins*:

> Manetho's dates, however, were so inconsistent with preconceived ideas based on the chronology of the Bible that they were universally thought to be fabulous. They were believed either to represent the exaggerations of Egyptian priests, desirous of magnifying the antiquity of their country, or, if historical, to give in succession the names of a number of kings and dynasties who had really reigned simultaneously in different provinces. So stood the question, until the discovery of reading hieroglyphics enabled us to test the accuracy of Manetho's lists by the light of contemporary monuments and manuscripts. . . . . Manetho's lists of the reigns of dynasties and kings, when summed up, show a date of 5,867 B. C. for the foundation of the united Egyptian Empire by Menes, a date absolutely inconsistent with those given in *Genesis*, not only for the Deluge, but for the original creation. . . . . .
>
> Chaldean chronology, therefore, leads to almost exactly the same results as that of Egypt. In each case we have a standard or measuring rod of authentic historical record of certainly not less than eight thousand, and more probably nine thousand or ten thousand, years from the present time; *and in each case we find ourselves at this remote date in the presence, not of rude beginnings, but of a civilisation already ancient and far advanced.*

The historical period may therefore certainly be considered to extend to 9,000 B. C.; but this figure will in no wise give any data for calculations for the geological periods that went before. As to geological considerations, Laing in *Human Origins* says:

> Hormer sank ninety-six shafts in four rows, at intervals of eight miles, across the valley of the Nile at right angles to the river near Memphis and brought up pottery from various depths, which at the known rate of deposit of the Nile mud of about three inches per century, indicate an antiquity of at least eleven thousand years. In another boring a copper knife was brought from a depth of twenty-four feet and pottery from sixty feet below the surface. . . . . a depth of sixty feet at the normal rate of deposit would imply an antiquity of twenty-six thousand years.

In general the two sciences of geology and evolutionary biology are not able to fix definite periods; they rather are able to give the order of the periods in which

particular rocks and their corresponding forms of life occurred; and such figures as are given by different authorities are so divergent as hardly to form definite data. All, however, are quite large enough to account for circumstances recounted in the records derived from the Mysteries: for the existence of monstrous animals, varieties in man not now met with, and above all a distribution of land and water totally different from that which now exists.

If dates for man upon earth can be pushed back, the early records have everything to gain in the matter of their truth; and even such details as the voyage of Odysseus may begin to have a meaning; when the voyager reached the 'turning of the sun,' or a tropic, the attempt to put the Atlantic isles in the Mediterranean would cease, as the probability of a different geography from that which now exists would be recognised and the praises of Homer, by Strabo, as a great geographer may come to have a meaning.

As yet, however, nothing that can be found has availed to push the date much beyond a few thousand years B. C. Even the astronomical calculations, which are absolute, cannot give a date from Egyptian monuments much earlier than Khufu, about 4,235 B. C.; and what is now about to be put forward will be, as far as the writer knows, the first attempt to carry a date for man back no less than twenty thousand three hundred years, and probably very much farther.[1]

The Indian records derived from the Mysteries form a new literature to which scholars, only a short time back, had no access; and it is well known that Indian scholars have claimed for the periods recorded

[1] Outside Theosophical teachings, presumably.—Ed.

in this literature an extent of time which no one trained in biblical schools is at all likely to concede. The epochs however even as given by Indian scholars, so far as I am aware define dates only for the great cycles of the past history of the world and not for the events related in the books; and the link that is lacking is the identification of points in the detailed histories, with contemporaneous ones in the cycles.

The present calendars date from an epoch called the iron age, or kali yuga, which commenced with Kṛṣhṇa, and began in the year 3,122 B.C.; the year A.D. 1878 concluding the first 5,000 years of that cycle. All the planets were said to have been in one House at that time, and Cassini gave it as his opinion, from the tables of Trivalore that he examined, that this conjunction of the planets was one actually observed by the Indians; and he also stated that, as a matter of fact, this conjunction did then occur.

One of these Indian texts is the *Rāmāyaṇa,* but on enquiry at Benares the writer was told that no date could be fixed for Rāma. In this account of Rāma there are mentioned giant inhabitants of ancient India, a sub-human race of beings called monkeys, who however had speech, and a town called Laṅkā, the seat of a giant ruler.

The only other detail the writer could glean from Benares was a geographical detail quoted to him from an old text: that three towns were on the same meridian, *viz.,* Laṅkā, Ujjain, and a third, the name of which is not now remembered as the quotation is lost. In this quotation there was found the method of fixing certain data for the time of the existence of Laṅkā and the date of Rāma.

There was another statement in the same quotation, that Laṅkā was situated where the meridian of Ujjain cut the equator. A reference to a map clearly showed this to be south of the extreme end of the Maldive Archipelago.

Next, there were Darwin's 'coral reefs' showing his visit to this site, which can be read of in his own book. The Archipelago is 470 miles long and 50 miles wide, and undoubtedly formed a land that has been gradually sinking. The great depths to which the coral extends, 250 and 300 feet, and the slow rate of the growth of the coral is another fact he establishes. "On one of the Maldive atolls Captain Moresby bored to a depth of 26 feet; when his auger broke, the material brought up was perfectly white, finely triturated, coral rock." All these facts went to show that the town of Laṅkā, for which we have such an absolute geographical position, was situated on a site now some 200 or 300 feet below the surface of the ocean and therefore must have been very ancient.

Of the three towns mentioned in this quotation, Laṅkā has sunk below the ocean; another cannot now be identified; but the third, *viz.*, Ujjain in Gwalior, is still in existence; and the unit meridian of Indian astronomy is reckoned from that place to this day.

The geographical position given for Ujjain in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* is lat. 23°-11′-10″ north, long. 75°-51′-45″ east. The moment the latitude is examined, the suggestion presents itself that, if Laṅkā marked the intersection of the unit meridian with the equator, Ujjain probably marked its intersection with the Tropic of Cancer.

Astronomically the data needed for fixing the position of the heavenly bodies are the declination

and the right ascension; one of these is measured from the plane of the equator, the other from the great circle passing through the centre of the sun at the vernal equinox; the latter is reckoned in time.

Whenever the reckoning is carried out in time the measurement becomes uncertain, first because of the inaccuracy of time-keepers, which the ancients did not have, and secondly because of the fact that every second of time—since 24 hours correspond with 360° of arc, and both degree and hour are similarly divided—becomes the equivalent of 15 seconds of arc.

If, therefore, in measuring the right ascension of bodies, a point on the earth could be obtained of which the meridian corresponded with the equinoctial or solstitial colure, the right ascensions would become simple angles, which could be read with considerable accuracy on large graduated circles, or, in modern times, with an equatorially mounted instrument.

The next step in the reasoning is a big one, and is historical.

In *The Secret Doctrine,* i, 230, the following passage occurs, quoted from Kenealy's *Book of God*:

> The well of Syene, made 5,400 years ago, *when that spot was exactly under the tropic,* which it has now ceased to be, was . . . so constructed that at noon, at the precise moment of the solar solstice, the entire disk of the sun was seen reflected on its surface—a work which the united skill of all the astronomers in Europe would not now be able to effect.

Also in Marsham Adam's *The Book of the Master,* the following passage occurs:

> We find that on the island of Philae at the 'Gate of the Nile' there is an ancient inscription, a passage which lays great stress on the 'Great Vault of the Sun according to his time' as a characteristic feature of the spot; and of an enclosure over which 'the Sun stood in the centre'. Such a description could not be true at present, for as *the latitude of*

the island is a little more than 24° *while the tropical boundary is less than* 23½°, the sun could not be vertical to any part of it. But since for a very long period, the obliquity of the ecliptic has been gradually lessening, the tropical boundary must have been greater in former ages and the phenomenon would have been visible, and very noticeable, about the time of Khufu. For calculating the diminution given by Airy, *viz.*, about ½ a minute of arc per century, we find the obliquity at that epoch was very nearly 24°. *The position of Philae would be almost vertically under the sun at the summer solstice, and would mark for all time the position of that orb relatively to the earth,* at the epoch from which the hieroglyphic calendar dates its reckoning.

It is doubtful, in the above quotations, whether Syene and Philae have not been intermixed, but as both places are close together it will cause no great difference in the argument. The position of Syene is lat. 24°-6′-20″ north, and long. 32°-51′-0″ east, as taken from a small scale map in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*; and Philae has almost the same longitude.

From the above it may be concluded definitely:

(1) That the ancients did fix the position of sites on the earth, the meridians of which coincided at the winter solstice with the solstitial colure, and also marked the intersection of this circle with the tropical parallel of latitude; and the writer knows of no method by which this could be effected more accurately, both for time and position, than the reflection of the sun vertically upwards from water at the bottom of a well.

(2) That there exists authentic history in Egypt that one such place was so fixed.

(3) That the existence of such a fixed place would be a great convenience for astronomical measurement, besides giving a ready means of identifying small changes, sensible only to the more refined instruments of modern times, such as those due to changes in the obliquity of the ecliptic and precession.

That Ujjain was a place similarly fixed by the astronomers of India is therefore very probable; and the probability is strengthened by the existence of the traditional claim for a great age for the site.

In addition to historical considerations, there is an astronomical one, of which it is not possible to give the details in an article such as the present, but it amounts to this—that if such a place could be accurately fixed on the earth, what is known as the celestial latitude and longitude could be easily measured (in modern times by an instrument mounted as an alt-azimuth). The prime vertical would become the ecliptic, and the meridian of the place would pass through the pole of the ecliptic which could never happen except at a place on the Tropic of Cancer at which a solstitial colure should transit at apparent noon. The measurements of latitude and longitude, rather than of declination and right ascension, are now being advocated in astronomy, as the ecliptic is a plane practically stable in space, whereas the equator is variable.

To proceed to actual figures, the figures from latitude are given first.

(1) The present latitude of Ujjain is given as 23°-11′-10″ and the following is the latest information on the obliquity of the ecliptic given by Professor Newcomb, *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* (Ninth Edition), xxv:

> Recent research enables us to compute the obliquity of the ecliptic, at past and future epochs, with an error not exceeding 1″ per century elapsed. The result is shown in the following table. (Here follows a table of little value as it is for the period 3,000 B. C. to A. D 3,000.)
>
> The obliquity was at a maximum about 7,200 B. C. or 9,100 years ago, when its value was 24°-13′. It will reach a minimum about 9,600 years hence, when its value will probably be between 22°-30′ and 22°-40′, *but cannot be more exactly stated.*

Since the latitude of Ujjain is less than the present obliquity (in A. D. 1,900 given as 23°-27′-8·3″), and since in past time the obliquity was increasing, the obliquity must have reached a maximum and then worked back to that of Ujjain—that is, from the present time 9,100 years elapsed to the maximum value it had, and then 9,100 years more to reach its present value. The obliquity, 18,200 years ago, was what it is now, *viz.*, 23°-27′-8″, and, as Ujjain is 23°-11′-10″, the difference 0°-15′-58″ still has to be made up; this at the rate of 45½″ per century would require, in whole centuries, 2,100 years. So that for the obliquity to be equal to the latitude of Ujjain 18,200+2,100 years have elapsed, or 20,300 years. Next, the whole epoch given in the above quotation is 2(9,100+9,600)=37,400 years. So that after 20,300 years back from the present time the obliquity would be the same as the latitude of Ujjain, and it would again come back to it after epochs of 37,400 years. From these data the following table is made. The latitude of Ujjain was the same as the obliquity of the ecliptic:

	20,300	years ago	or	18,400	B. C.
also	57,700	years ago	or	55,800	B. C.
also	95,100	years ago	or	93,200	B. C.
also	132,500	years ago	or	130,600	B. C.

That is, the Tropic of Cancer passed through Ujjain at these dates only. One of these must be the date of Rāma.

Let our readers carefully observe that when the whole cycle of obliquity is spoken of, in the quotation from Professor Newcomb, the minimum obliquity is capable of a variant of 10′, the equivalent of over 13 centuries; and if the cycles are repeated two or three times, as in the

above table, many more centuries of possible variation will be introduced. Also the figure given for diminution by Airy is said to be half a minute per century, or 30″ as against 45·5″ given by Proctor in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. With the former figure, the first result would be 21,400 instead of 20,300, a difference of 1,100 years.

Before, however, Ujjain could fulfil the conditions detailed it would be necessary for the apparent sun to culminate over the meridian of Ujjain exactly at the moment of the solstice. The argument for this involves the L. C. M. of the seconds in two angles, one the longitude of Ujjain eastwards from the meridian where this occurs now, and the other the angle of movement eastwards of such a point on the earth in one tropical year.

An approximation made for the present position of Ujjain and this movement leads to a conjecture (for it is no more) that, of the periods before tabulated, 55,800 B.C. is the correct one.

Since this was written, the following passage was found in the *Imperial Gazetteer of India* on the subject of land formation, in olden times, near the Maldive Islands.

> That India and the southern and central parts of Africa were once united into one great stretch of nearly continuous dry land is proved by overwhelming evidence. In the first place, besides the remarkable correspondence among the plants which flourished during Upper Palaeozoic times in India, South Africa, and the portions of East Africa which have been explored, there is an agreement between the peculiar generalized labyrinthodonts and reptiles, of which remains are found in the Pānchet series of India and in corresponding beds in South Africa. So far as this evidence goes, it points either to a complete land connexion, or to an approximation sufficiently close to permit free migration of land animals and plants.

There is still another piece of evidence as to the existence of the old Indo-African continent, all the more striking because it belongs to an entirely different field of observation. It is found that between the Seychelles, which are connected by comparatively shallow waters with Madagascar and Africa, and the Maldives, which are on the Indian continental platform, there exists a submarine bank, preventing the ice-cold Antarctic currents that characterize the greater depths in the South Indian Ocean from extending into the Arabian Sea, which has thus a higher temperature than the water at corresponding depths to the south of this bank. We have here the remains of the old continent, depressed sufficiently to cut off India from South Africa, but still enduring as a bank between the great abyssal depressions to the north-west and the south-east.

A. D. Watson

VESPER HYMN

Day-time is ending, and slumber, descending
Soft as the dew, falls caressing and light.
Lord, ever tending Thy sheep and defending,
On us anew falls Thy Blessing to-night.

Master, Thy treasure of Love, beyond measure,
Steadfastly keeping, unshaken may we—
Through pain or pleasure, 'mid labour or leisure—
Find that, in sleeping, we waken with thee.

C. W. S. M.

Vesper Hymn

A MOSAIC FROM THE MARTORANA.

PORTRAITS OF THE CHRIST

By Annie Besant

I LATELY drew attention to the wonderful mosaic portraits of the Christ found in Sicily, the work initiated there by the monks of Mount Athos. The frontispiece of our November issue showed the Christ of the Capella Reale of the Palatina in Palermo, and in the picture of that exquisite Chapel now offered to our readers, this portrait may be seen over the high altar, above the Madonna and Child. In this we see again the gorgeous mosaic-work adorning archways and walls.

The Christ of the Martorana reproduces the same type, but is unusual in being a full-length seated figure. Those interested in *mudras* (significant arrangements of the fingers) may note that the Christ of Monreale has the fourth and fifth fingers bent to touch the thumb —the most usual benedictory form—while He of the Capella Palatina and the Martorana bends only the fourth finger, leaving three extended. The Martorana is one of the many Churches of Palermo, and it shows, in its mosque-like form, the influence of the Saracenic conquerors, who have left so deep a mark in Sicily. The lower part of its walls is lined with slabs of porphyry and marble, which produce a wonderfully rich fefect, while the arches which spring from the slender

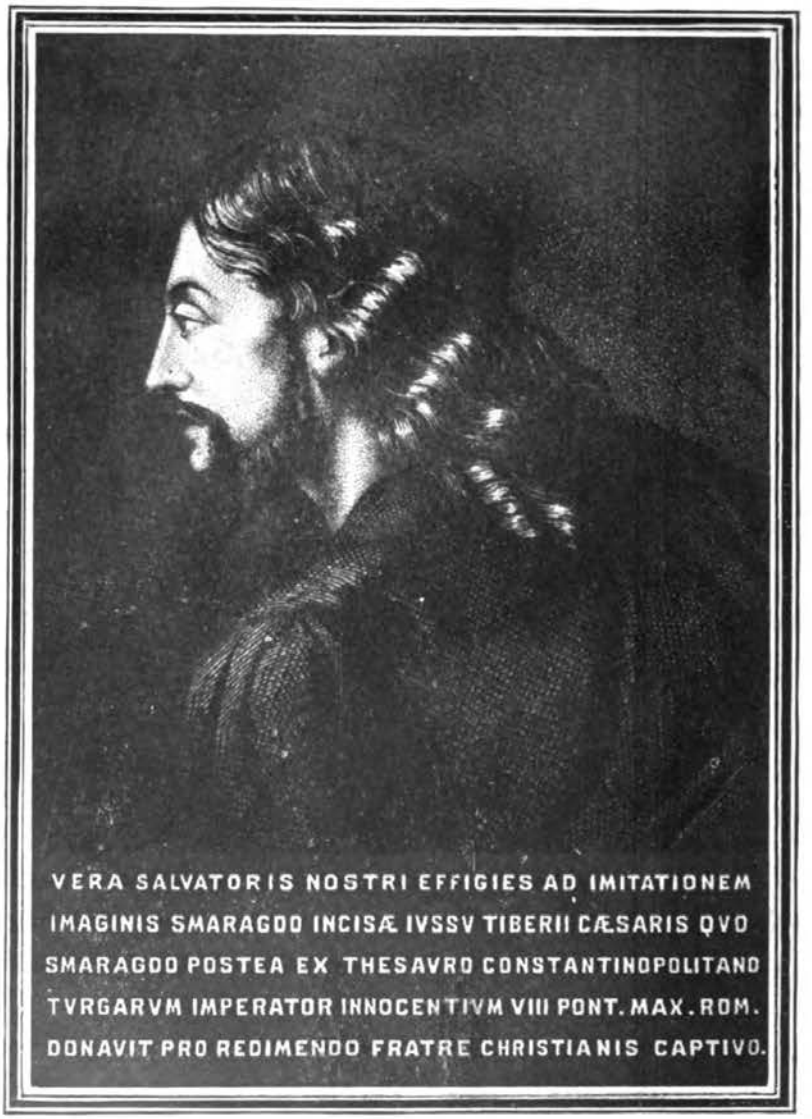
pillars, and all available spaces, are filled with the rich mosaics. It is said to have been originally superior to the Capella Reale, but has been much injured by tasteless nuns who lived in the adjoining convent for some hundred and thirty years, and worked their will on the Chapel. Happily the stately figure of the Christ has not been touched.

The curious mediæval portrait was sent to me from Germany, and represents the Christ in the armour of one of the priestly Orders of Knighthood; it also is in mosaic, and recalls the Mount Athos tradition.

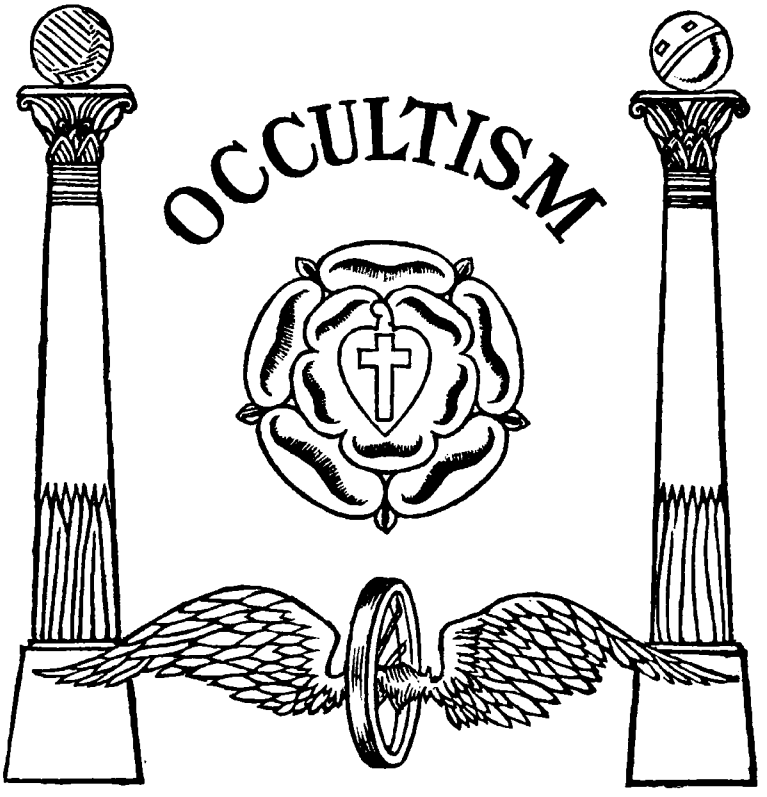
The fourth portrait is reproduced from that said to have been cut on an emerald in the time of the Emperor Tiberius. The forward-reaching figure and partly opened mouth give the portrait a curiously eager look. The traditional description makes the hair of the "colour of a chestnut fully ripe," and speaks of the gentle gravity and pathos of the Christ: "None have seen Him laugh, but many have seen Him weep." In reading the description, one feels that it is traditional rather than contemporaneous; that the writer is speaking of the 'Man of Sorrows' of the Church, rather than of the Divine Man as He really was when He walked among men. One turns with more satisfaction to the strong and virile face limned by the Athos monks in imperishable mosaic.

Annie Besant

FROM A MEDIÆVAL PAINTING.



FROM THE EMERALD.



THE MONAD

By C. W. LEADBEATER

THE information given in Theosophical literature on the subject of the Monad is necessarily scanty. We are not at present in a position to supplement it to any great extent; but a statement of the case, as far as it is at present comprehended among us, may save students some misapprehensions, such as are often manifested in the questions sent in to us.

That many misconceptions should exist on such a subject is inevitable, because we are trying to understand

with the physical brain what can by no possibility be expressed in terms intelligible to that brain. The Monad inhabits the second plane of our set of planes—that which used sometimes to be called the parānirvāṇic or the anupāḍaka. It is not easy to attach in the mind any definite meaning to the word plane or world at such an altitude as this, because any attempt even to symbolise the relation of planes or worlds to one another demands a stupendous effort of the imagination in a direction with which we are wholly unfamiliar.

Let us try to imagine what the consciousness of the Divine must be—the consciousness of the Solar Deity altogether outside any of the worlds or planes or levels which we ever conceived. We can only vaguely think of some sort of transcendent Consciousness for which space no longer exists, to which everything (at least in the Solar System) is simultaneously present, not only in its actual condition, but at every stage of its evolution from beginning to end. We must think of that Consciousness as creating for Its use these worlds of various types of matter, and then we must think of that Divine Consciousness voluntarily veiling Itself within that matter, and thereby greatly limiting Itself. By taking upon Itself a garment of the matter of even the highest of these worlds, It has clearly already imposed upon Itself a certain limitation; and, equally clearly, each additional garment assumed as It involves Itself more and more deeply in matter, must increase the limitation.

One way of attempting to symbolise this which has been found helpful is to try to think of it in connection with what we call dimensions of space. If we may suppose an infinite number of these

dimensions, it may be suggested that each descent from a higher level to a lower level removes the consciousness of one of these dimensions, until, when we reach the mental plane or world, the power of observing but five of them is left to us. The descent to the astral level takes away one more, and the further descent to the physical level leaves us with the three which are familiar to us. In order even to get an idea of what this loss of additional dimensions means, we have to suppose the existence of a creature whose senses are capable of comprehending only two dimensions, and then to imagine in what respect the consciousness of that creature would differ from ours, and thus try to obtain an idea of what it would mean to lose a dimension from our consciousness. Such an exercise of the imagination will speedily convince us that the two-dimensional creature could never obtain any adequate conception of our life at all; he could be conscious of it only in sections, and his idea of even those sections must be entirely misleading. This enables us to see how inadequate must be *our* conception even of the plane or world next above us; and we at once see the hopelessness of expecting fully to understand the Monad, which is raised by many of these planes or worlds above the point from which we are trying to regard it.

It may help us if we recall to our minds the method in which the Deity originally built these planes. We speak with all reverence in regard to His method, realising fully that we can at most comprehend only the minutest fragment of His work, and that even that fragment is seen by us from below, while He looks upon it from above. Yet we are justified in saying that He sends forth from Himself a wave of power, of

influence of some sort, which moulds the primaeval pre-existent matter into certain forms to which we give the name of atoms.

Into that world or plane or level, so made, comes a second life-wave of divine energy, and to it those atoms already existing are objective, outside of itself, and it builds them into forms which it inhabits. Meantime the first down-flowing wave comes yet again, sweeping through that newly-formed plane or level, and makes yet another, lower, plane with atoms a little larger and matter therefore a little denser—even though its density may as yet be far rarer than our finest conception of matter. Then into that second world comes the second outflowing, and again in that finds matter which to it is objective, and builds of that its forms. And so this process is repeated and the matter grows denser and denser with each world, until at last we reach this physical level; but it will help us if we bear in mind that at each of these levels the ensouling life of the second outpouring finds matter already vivified by the first outpouring, which it regards as objective, of which it builds the forms which it inhabits.

This process of ensouling forms built out of already vivified matter is continued all through the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, but when we come to the moment of individualisation which divides the highest animal manifestation from the lowest human, a curious change takes place; that which has hitherto been the ensouling life becomes itself in turn the ensouled, for it builds itself into a form into which the ego enters, of which he takes possession. He absorbs into himself all the experiences which the matter of his causal body has had, so that nothing whatever is lost,

and he carries these on with him through the ages of his existence. He continues the process of forming bodies on lower planes out of material ensouled by the first outpouring from the Third Aspect of the Deity; but he finally reaches a level in evolution in which the causal body is the lowest that he needs, and when this is attained we have the spectacle of the Monad, which represents the third outpouring from the First Aspect of the Deity, inhabiting a body composed of matter ensouled by the second outpouring.

At a far later stage the earlier happening repeats itself once more, and the ego, who has ensouled so many forms during the whole of a chain-period, becomes himself the vehicle, and is ensouled in his turn by the now fully active and awakened Monad. Yet here, as before, nothing whatever is lost from the economy of nature. All the manifold experiences of the ego, all the splendid qualities developed in him, all these pass into the Monad himself and find there a vastly fuller realisation than even the ego could have given them.

Of the condition of consciousness of the Solar Deity outside of the planes of His system, we can form no true conception. He has been spoken of as the Divine Fire; and if for a moment we adopt that time-honoured symbolism, we may imagine that Sparks from that Fire fall into the matter of our planes—Sparks which are of the essence of that Fire, but are yet in appearance temporarily separated from it. The analogy cannot be pushed too far, because all sparks of which we know anything are thrown out from their parent fire and gradually fade and die; whereas these Sparks develop by slow evolution into Flames, and return to the Parent Fire. This development and this return are apparently the

objects for which the Sparks come forth ; and the process of the development is that which we are at the present moment concerned to try to understand.

It seems that the Spark as such cannot in its entirety veil itself beyond a certain extent; it cannot descend beyond what we call the second plane, and yet retain its unity. One difficulty with which we are confronted in trying to form any ideas upon this matter is that, as yet, none of us who investigate are able to raise our consciousness to this second plane ; in the nomenclature recently adopted we give to it the name of Monadic because it is the home of the Monad ; but none of us have yet been able to realise that Monad in his own habitation, but only to see him when he has descended one stage to the plane or level or world below his own, in which he shows himself as the triple Spirit, which in our earlier books we call the Ātmā in man. Even already he is incomprehensible, for he has three aspects which are quite distinct and apparently separate, and yet they are all fundamentally one and the same.

It has been described in other books how one of these three aspects (or it would be more correct to say the Monad in his first aspect) cannot or does not descend below that spiritual level ; while in his second aspect he does descend into the matter of the next lower world (the intuitional), and when that aspect has drawn round itself the matter of that level we call it divine wisdom in man, or the intuition. Meanwhile, the third aspect (or rather the Monad in his third aspect) descends also to that intuitional plane and clothes itself in its matter, and adopts a form to which as yet no name has been attached in our literature ; but it also moves forward or downward one more stage, and

clothes itself in the matter of the higher mental world, and then we call it the intellect in man. When that threefold manifestation on the three levels has thus developed itself, and shows itself as Spirit, intuition and intellect, we give to it the name of the ego, and that ego takes upon himself a vehicle built of the matter of the higher mental plane, to which we give the name of the causal body. This ego so functioning in his causal body has often been called in our earlier literature the higher self, and sometimes also the soul.

We see the ego then to be a manifestation of the Monad on the higher mental plane; but we must understand that he is infinitely far from being a perfect manifestation. Each descent from plane to plane means much more than a mere veiling of the Spirit; it means also an actual diminution in the amount of Spirit expressed. To use terms denoting quantity in speaking of such matters is entirely incorrect and misleading; yet if an attempt is to be made to express these higher matters in human words at all, these incongruities cannot be wholly avoided; and the nearest that we can come, in the physical brain, to a conception of what happens when the Monad involves himself in matter of the spiritual plane, is to say that only part of him can possibly be shown there, and that even that part must be shown in three separate aspects, instead of in the glorious totality which he really *is* in his own world. So when the second aspect of the triple Spirit comes down a stage and manifests as intuition, it is not the whole of that aspect which so manifests, but only a fraction of it. And so when the third aspect descends two planes and manifests itself as intellect, it is only a fraction of a fraction of what the intellect-aspect of the

Monad really is. Therefore the ego is not a veiled manifestation of the Monad, but a veiled representation of a minute portion of the Monad.

As above, so below. As the ego is to the Monad, so is the personality to the ego. So that, by the time you have reached the personality with which we have to deal in the physical world, the fractionisation has been carried so far that the part we are able to see bears no appreciable proportion to the reality which it so inadequately represents. Yet it is with and from this ridiculously inadequate fragment that we are endeavouring to comprehend the whole! Our difficulty in trying to understand the Monad is the same in kind, but much greater in degree, as that which we find when we try really to grasp the idea of the ego. In the earlier years of the Theosophical Society there were many discussions about the relations of the lower and the higher self. In those days we did not understand the doctrine even as well as we understand it now; we had not the grasp of it which longer study has given us. I am speaking of a group of students in Europe, who had behind them the Christian traditions, and the vague ideas which Christianity attaches to the word 'soul'.

The ordinary Christian by no means identifies himself with his 'soul,' but regards it as something attached to himself in some kind of indefinite way—something for the saving of which he is responsible. Perhaps no ordinary man among the devotees of that religion attaches any very definite idea to the word, but he would probably describe it as the immortal part of him, though in ordinary language he talks of it as a possession, as something separate from him. In the *Magnificat,* the Blessed Virgin is made to say: "My soul doth magnify

the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." She may here be drawing a distinction between the soul and the spirit, as S. Paul does; but she speaks of them both as possessions, and not as the I. She does not say: "I as a soul magnify; I as a spirit rejoice." This may be merely a question of language; yet surely this loose language expresses an inaccurate and ill-defined idea. That idea was in the air all about us in Europe, and no doubt we were influenced by it, and at first to some extent we substituted the term 'higher self' for 'soul'.

So we used such expressions as 'looking up to the higher self,' 'listening to the promptings of the higher self,' and so on. I remember that Mr. Sinnett used sometimes to speak a little disparagingly of the higher self, remarking that it ought to take more interest than it seemed to do in the unfortunate personality struggling on its behalf down here; and he used jokingly to suggest the formation of a society for the education of our higher selves. It was only gradually that we grew into the feeling that the higher self was *the man*, and that what we see down here is only a very small part of him. Only little by little did we learn that there is only one consciousness, and that the lower, though an imperfect representation of the higher, is in no way separate from it. We used to think of raising 'ourselves' till we could unite 'ourselves' with that glorified higher being, not realising that it was the higher that was the true self, and that to unite the higher to the lower really meant opening out the lower so that the higher might work in it and through it.

It takes time to become thoroughly permeated by Theosophical ideas. It is not merely reading the books,

it is not merely hard study even, that makes us real Theosophists; we must allow time for the teaching to become part of ourselves. We may notice this constantly in the case of new members. People join us, people of keen intelligence, people of the deepest devotion, truly anxious to do the best they can for Theosophy, and to assimilate it as rapidly and perfectly as possible; and yet with all that, and with all their eager study of our books, they cannot at once put themselves into the position of the older members; and they will sometimes show that, by making some crude remark which is not at all in harmony with Theosophical teaching. I do not mean to suggest that the *mere* efflux of time will produce these effects, for obviously a man who does not study may remain a member for twenty years and be but little forwarder at the end of that time than he was at the beginning; but one who patiently studies, one who lives much with those who know, enters presently into the spirit of Theosophy—or perhaps it might be better said that the spirit of Theosophy enters into *him*.

Evidently, therefore, new members should never intermit their studies, but try to understand the doctrines from every point of view. Year by year we are all growing into the attitude of those who are older than ourselves, and it comes chiefly by association and conversation with those older students. The Masters know almost infinitely more than the highest of Their pupils, and so those highest pupils continue to learn from association with Them; we who are lower pupils know much less than those who stand above, and so we in turn learn by association with them; and in the same way those who are not yet even at our level may learn something from similar association with us. So always

the older members can help the younger, and the younger have much to learn from those who have trodden the road before them. It was in this gradual way that we came to understand about the higher and the lower self.

If we try to express the relation of the personality to the ego, we can best put it by saying that the former is a fragment of the latter, a tiny part of him expressing itself under serious difficulties. We meet a person on the physical plane; we speak to him; and we think and say that we know him. It would be a little nearer the truth if we said that we knew a thousandth part of him. Even when clairvoyance is developed—even when a man develops the sight of his causal body, and looks at the causal body of another man—even then, though he sees a manifestation of the ego on his own plane, he is still far from seeing the real man. I have tried, by means of the illustrations in *Man, Visible and Invisible,* to give some indication of one side of the aspect of these higher vehicles; but the illustrations are in reality absolutely inadequate; they can give only faint adumbrations of the real thing. When any one of our readers develops the astral sight, he may reasonably say to us, as the Queen of Sheba said to King Solomon: "The half was not told me." He may say: "Here is all this glory and this beauty, which surrounds me in every direction and seems so entirely natural; it should be easy to give a better description of this." But when, having seen and experienced all this, he returns to his physical body and tries to describe it in physical words, I think he will find much the same difficulties as we have done.

Yet remember that when, using the sight of the causal body, a man looks at the causal body of another,

it is not even then the ego that he sees, but only matter of the higher mental plane which expresses the qualities of the ego. Those qualities affect the matter, cause it to undulate at different rates, and so produce colours, by observing which the character of the man can be distinguished. This character, at that level, means the good qualities which the man has developed; for no evil qualities can express themselves in matter so refined. In observing such a causal body, we know that it has within it all the qualities of the Deity—all possible good qualities, therefore; but not all of them are developed until the man reaches a very high level. When an evil quality shows itself in the personality, it must be taken to indicate that the opposite good quality is as yet undeveloped in the ego; it exists in him, as in every one, but it has not yet been called into activity. So soon as it is called into activity its intense vibrations act upon the lower vehicles, and it is impossible that the opposite evil can ever again find place in them.

Taking the ego for the moment as the real man, and looking at him on his own plane, we see him to be indeed a glorious being; the only way in which down here we can form a conception of what he really is is to think of him as some splendid angel. But the expression of this beautiful being on the physical plane may fall far short of all this; indeed, it must do so—first, because it is only a tiny fragment; and secondly, because it is so hopelessly cramped by its conditions. Suppose a man put his finger into a hole in the wall, or into a small iron pipe, so that he could not even bend it; how much of himself as a whole could he express through that finger in that condition? Much like this is the fate of that fragment of the ego which is put down

into this dense body. It is so small a fragment that it cannot represent the whole; it is so cramped and shut in that it cannot even express what it is. The image is clumsy, but it may give some sort of idea of the relation of the personality to the ego.

Let us suppose that the finger has a considerable amount of consciousness of its own, and that, being shut off from the body, it temporarily forgets that it is part of that body; then it forgets also the freedom of the wider life, and tries to adapt itself to its hole, and to gild its sides and make it an enjoyable hole by acquiring money, property, fame and so on—not realising that it only really begins to live when it withdraws itself from the hole altogether, and recognises itself as a part of the body. When we draw ourselves out of this particular hole at night and live in our astral bodies, we are much less limited and much nearer to our true selves, though we still have two veils—our astral and mental bodies—which prevent us from being fully ourselves, and so fully expressing ourselves. Still, under those conditions we are much freer, and it is much easier to comprehend realities; for the physical body is the most clogging and confining of all, and imposes upon us the greatest limitations.

It would help us much if we could suppose away our limitations one by one; but it is not easy. Realise how in the astral body we can move quickly through space —not instantaneously, but still quickly; for in two or three minutes we might move round the world. But even then we cannot get anywhere without passing through the intervening space. We can come into touch at that level with other men in their astral bodies. All their feelings lie open to us, so that they cannot deceive

really I?" And he will discover that it is not he at all, but something else that is trying to get hold of him and make him feel thus. He has the right and the duty to assert his independence of that thing, and to proclaim himself as a free man, pursuing the road of evolution which God has marked out for him.

Thus it is at present our business to realise ourselves as the ego; but when that is fully accomplished, when the lower is nothing but a perfect instrument in the hands of the higher, it will become our duty to realise that even the ego is not the true man. For the ego has had a beginning—it came into existence at the moment of individualisation; and whatever has a beginning must have an end. Therefore even the ego, which has lasted since we left the animal kingdom, is also impermanent. Is there then nothing in us that endures, nothing that will have no end? There is the Monad, the Divine Spark, which is verily a fragment of God, an atom of the Deity. Crude and inaccurate expressions, assuredly; yet I know of no other way in which the idea can be conveyed even as well as in words such as these. For each Monad is literally a part of God, apparently temporarily separated from Him, while he is enclosed in the veils of matter, though in truth never for one moment really separated.

He can never be apart from God, for the very matter in which he veils himself is also a manifestation of the Divine. To us sometimes matter seems evil, because it weighs us down, it clogs our faculties, it seems to hold us back upon our road; yet remember that this is only because as yet we have not learned to control it, because we have not realised that it also is divine in its essence, because there is nothing but God. A Sūfī sage

once told me that this was his interpretation of the cry which rings out daily in the call of the muezzin from the minaret all over the Muhammadan world: "There is no God but God, and Muhammad is the Prophet of God." He told me that in his opinion the true mystical meaning of the first part of this cry was: "There is nothing but God." And that is eternally true; we know that all comes from Him, and that to Him all will one day return, but we find it hard to realise that all is in Him even now, and that in Him it eternally abides. All is God—even the desire-elemental, and the things which we think of as evil; for many waves of life come forth from Him, and not all of them are moving in the same direction.

We, being Monads, belonging to an earlier wave, are somewhat fuller expressions of Him, somewhat nearer to Him in our consciousness than the essence out of which is made the desire-elemental. In the course of our evolution there is always a danger that a man should identify himself with the point at which he is most fully conscious. Most men at present are more conscious in their feelings and passions than anywhere else, and of this the desire-elemental craftily takes advantage, and endeavours to induce the man to identify himself with those desires and emotions.

So when the man rises to a somewhat higher level, and his principal activity becomes mental, there is danger lest he should identify himself with the mind, and it is only by realising himself as the ego, and making that the strongest point of his consciousness, that he can fully identify himself with it. When he has done that, he has achieved the goal of his present efforts; but immediately he must begin his effort over again at that higher level,

and try gradually to realise the truth of the position we laid down at the beginning, that as the personality is to the ego, so is the ego to the Monad. It is useless at our present stage to endeavour to indicate the steps which he will have to take in order to do this, or the stages of consciousness through which he will pass. Such conceptions as can be formed of them may be arrived at by applying the ancient rule that what is below is but a reflection of that which exists in higher worlds, so that the steps and the stages must to some extent be a repetition upon a higher level of those which have already been experienced in our lower efforts.

We may reverently presume (though here we are going far beyond actual knowledge) that when we have finally and fully realised that the Monad is the true man, we shall find behind that again a yet further and more glorious extension; we shall find that the Spark has never been separated from the Fire, but that as the ego stands behind the personality, as the Monad stands behind the ego, so the Solar Deity Himself stands behind the Monad. Perhaps, even further still, it may be that in some way infinitely higher, and so at present utterly incomprehensible, a greater Deity stands behind the Solar Deity, and behind even that, through many stages, there must rest the Supreme over all. But here even thought fails us, and silence is the only true reverence.

For the time, at least, the Monad is our personal God, the God within us, that which produces us down here as a manifestation of him on these all but infinitely lower levels. What his consciousness is on his own plane we cannot pretend to say, nor can we fully understand it even when he has put upon himself the first veil, and become the triple Spirit. The only way to

understand such things is to rise to their level, and to become one with them. When we do that we shall comprehend, but even then we shall be utterly unable to explain to any one else what we know. It is at that stage, the stage of the triple Spirit, that we can first see the Monad, and he is then a triple light of blinding glory, yet possessing even at that stage certain qualities by which one Monad is somehow distinct from another.

Often a student asks: "But what have we to do with it while we are down here—this unknown glory so far above us?" It is a natural question, yet in reality it is the reverse of what should be; for the true man *is* the Monad, and we should rather say: "What can I, the Monad, do with my ego, and through it with my personality?" This would be the correct attitude, for this would express the actual facts; but we cannot truthfully take it, because we cannot realise this. Yet we can say to ourselves: "I know that I am that Monad, though as yet I cannot express it; I know that I am the ego, a mere fraction of that Monad, but still out of all proportion greater than what I know of myself in the personality down here. More and more I will try to realise myself as that higher and greater being; more and more I will try to make this lower presentation of myself worthy of its true destiny; more and more will I see to it that this lower self is ever ready to catch the slightest hint or whisper from above—to follow the suggestions from the ego which we call intuitions—to distinguish the Voice of the Silence and to obey it."

For the Voice of the Silence is not one thing always, but changes as we ourselves evolve; or perhaps it would be better to say that it is in truth one thing always, the voice of God, but it comes to us at different levels as

we ourselves rise. To us now it is the voice of the ego, speaking to the personality; presently it will be the voice of the Monad, speaking to the ego; later still the voice of the Deity, speaking to the Monad. Probably between these last two stages there may be an intermediate one, in which the voice of one of the seven great Ministers of the Deity may speak to the Monad, and then in turn the Deity Himself may speak to His Minister; but always the Voice of the Silence is essentially divine.

It is well that we should learn to distinguish this voice—this voice which speaks from above and yet from within; for sometimes other voices speak, and their counsel is not always wise. A medium finds this, for if he has not trained himself to distinguish, he often thinks that every voice coming from the astral plane must necessarily be all but divine, and therefore to be followed unquestioningly. Therefore discrimination is necessary, as well as watchfulness and obedience.

Does the Monad, in the case of the ordinary man, ever do anything which affects or can affect his personality down here? I think we may say that such interference is most unusual. The ego is trying, on behalf of the Monad, to obtain perfect control of the personality and to use it as an instrument; and because that object is not yet fully achieved, the Monad may well feel that the time has not yet come for him to interfere from his own level, and to bring the whole of his force to bear, when that which is already in action is more than strong enough for the required purpose. But when the ego is already beginning to succeed in his effort to manage his lower vehicles, the real man in the background does sometimes interfere.

In the course of various investigations it has come in our way to examine some thousands of human beings; but we found traces of such interference only in a few. The most prominent instance is that given in the twenty-ninth life of Alcyone, when he pledged himself before the Lord Gautama to devote himself in future lives to the attainment of the Buddhahood in order to help humanity. That seemed to us then a matter of such moment, and also of such interest, that we took some trouble to investigate it. This was a promise for the far-distant future, so that obviously the personality through which it was given could by no means keep it; and when we rose to examine the part borne in it by the ego, we found that he himself, though full of enthusiasm at the idea, was being impelled to it by a mightier force from within, which he could not have resisted, even had he wished to do so. Following this clue still further, we found that the impelling force came forth unmistakably from the Monad. He had decided, and he registered his decision; his will, working through the ego, will clearly have no difficulty in bringing all future personalities into harmony.

We found some other examples of the same phenomenon in the course of the investigations into the beginnings of the Sixth Root Race. Looking forward to the life in that Californian Colony, we recognised instantly certain well-known egos; and then arose the question: "Since men have free-will, is it possible that we can already be absolutely certain that all these people will be there as we foresee? Will none of them fall by the way?" Further examination showed us that the same thing was happening here as with Alcyone. Certain Monads had already responded to the call of the higher

Authorities, and had decided that their representative personalities should assist in that glorious work; and because of that, nothing that these personalities might do during the intervening time could possibly interfere with the carrying out of that decision.

Yet let no one think, because this is so, that he is compelled from without to do this or that; the compelling force is the real you; none else than yourself can ever bind you at any stage of your growth. And when the Monad has decided, the thing will be done; it is well for the personality if he yields gracefully and readily, if he recognises the voice from above, and co-operates gladly; for if he does not do this, he will lay up for himself much useless suffering. It is always the man himself who is doing this thing; and he, in the personality, has to realise that the ego is himself, and he has for the moment to take it for granted that the Monad is still more himself—the final and greatest expression of him.

Surely this view should be the greatest possible encouragement to the man working down here, this knowledge that he is a far grander and more glorious being in reality than he appears to be, and that there is a part of him—enormously the greater part—which has already achieved what he, as a personality, is trying to achieve; and that all that he has to do down here is to try to make himself a perfect channel for this higher and more real self; to do his work and to try to help others in order that he may be a factor, however microscopic, in forwarding the evolution of the world. For him who knows, there is no question of the saving of the soul; the true man behind needs no salvation; he needs only that the lower self should

realise him and express him. He is himself already divine; and all that he needs is to be able to realise himself in all the worlds and at all possible levels, so that in them all the Divine Power through him may work equally, and so God shall be all in all.

C. W. Leadbeater

A NOTE

A short poem, rather original in idea, in treatment, is contributed to the *Academy* by Mr. G. M. Hort, under the title 'A Man's Bargain'. The opening verses are:

If I cry out for fellowship,
A comrade's voice, a comrade's grip,
A hand to hold me when I slip,
An ear to heed my groan;
Renew that hour's dark ecstacy,
When all Thy waves went over me,
And Thou and I, with none to see,
Were joined in fight alone.

If I demand a sheltered space
Set for me in the battle-place,
Where I at times could turn my face,
A screened and welcome guest;
Decree my soul should henceforth cease
From its wild hankering after peace,
And rest in that which gives release
From the desire of rest.

If I for final goal should ask,
Some meaning for the long day's task,
Some ripened field that yet may bask
Secure from hurricane;
Point to Thy locust-eaten sheaves,
The burnt-out stars, the still-born leaves,
And by the toil no hope retrieves,
Nerve me to toil again!

WORK ON HIGHER PLANES

By WELLER VAN HOOK, M. D.

NOW that the atmospheres of the astral and lower mental planes are, for America, so much cleaner than they were, and that their comparative purity is held for them by great Beings against the time of His Coming, we may well believe that many things may, for the time, be done there which formerly could not have been thought of. And no doubt many people will now be able to work in generous measure of consciousness there, who would ordinarily not be strong enough to cope with the difficulties of that life.

Frequently staunch and well-seasoned Theosophists ask if they can be supposed to be awake and helping, forgetful of Mr. Leadbeater's statement that a vast body of people of the higher type of humanity are now busy above in sleep, and that enthusiastic Theosophists must certainly be active there when their hearts are so fixed on service.

During this period of special blessing, there will no doubt be a great work to be done on the physical and the higher planes, among and through the established organisations of the world, especially among the religious bodies and the almost equally consecrated people engaged in teaching, in healing the sick, and in governing. And it may well be imagined that suitable persons

will be chosen in the various organisations to receive counsel and give aid in this work—so important is it that advantage be taken of the great outpouring of grace.

The added powers of the Theosophical Society through the recent addition of some of its members to the ranks of the great Lodge, as told by Mrs. Besant, are cause for our most profound gratitude to the Masters. And we shall do well to use every effort to bring them into our American work as far as possible.

Mr. Leadbeater has told us that the man who functions on the astral and lower mental planes ought to set himself, each night, some definite task of his own discovery or devising, in order that he may develop his own knowledge, intuition, discrimination and judgment as to work of this kind. It is but a step to add that each should also train himself, during the day-time, the 'physical-consciousness' period, to some definite type of work which he believes would have an important bearing on the astral work. This training will give the man the astral plane command of the needed data with which to work. For example, it would be of great value on the astral plane for a Freemason to know not only the routine of Masonic facts, but also the relation of Masons to religions, governments, etc., and especially to the jurisdictions of Masonry in America and the distribution of Masonic Lodges. Moreover, a continuous effort for a number of years to do the same work will give skill as well as knowledge and general helpfulness.

There is always, first, the duty to help our Theosophists in all kinds of ways on the higher planes, though it is now the time during which *it is especially desired to use the Society as a weapon for outside work.* The claims of Theosophy always come first.

But international relations, peace movements, the work, in its larger aspects, of the great religious bodies, the semi-religious organisations that are trying to blend the efforts of our churches, the work of scientific bodies, of the congresses of philosophy, hygiene, sociology, etc., need attention. Masonry, medical work, sick-nursing, charitable institutions need, and may well receive, more or less directive aid. All the arts need careful assistance. Now-a-days scholars are reviving the ancient and honourable practice of wandering " in straunge landes," and we hear of exchange-professorships being regarded as a necessary phase of scholastic life. What a world of good might be accomplished with a little aid to them, if we might be permitted to render it!

Let every Theosophist, then, take up some line of collateral higher-planes interest with the thought, if permission is given in token of the wisdom of his choice, of doing some good outside our immediate ranks to the great body of humanity among whom our lines are cast.

The undersigned has collected some data pertaining to various organisations and will be pleased to correspond with those interested.

Weller Van Hook

31, N. State Street, Chicago, Ill., U.S.A.

ADYAR IN CONVENTION

By WILLIAM H. KIRBY, M.A., F. T. S.

LAST evening as I rode in at the gates of the Theosophical Society's grounds in Adyar after the thousands and thousands had left who, during the last week, had come and gone from their spiritual pilgrimage here, the impression stole in on me of how peaceful yet how alive everything was, how pregnant the whole atmosphere, how strong the power of this week's crowded memories.

As when a tired but exultant athlete, the race being won, flings himself down on the grass and, though his body be weary and panting and his nerves still throbbing with the strain, feels nevertheless with peculiar clarity and distinctness every detail, every feature, every incident of the race; feels too the delicious repose of conscious strength and work well done; so was the feeling pervading the Headquarters, the fields and paths and shady groves of Adyar, as the sinking sun drew out all tones of colour from the charged magnetic atmosphere and painted the tired paths with wondrous purple shadows.

All day jhutkas, carriages, bullock-waggons, motor-cars, bicycles, and every form of conveyance, practical and unpractical, picturesque and otherwise, had noisily and unceasingly been carrying away once more into

the outer world our guests and brothers. As spokes in a wheel radiate out from centre to circumference, so our visitors to this centre have now dispersed in all directions from the hub to the circumference of the Theosophic wheel; each going forth as an important factor in the place he occupies, enriched, a messenger, bearing with him all he has been able to receive, filled with added power, a new inspiration for those he dwells and works among.

But, though the place was empty, the annual pilgrimage over, and the signs of the great departure evident on all sides, yet the atmosphere of Adyar was full, charged, throbbing, strong, with the power of work well done pervading the now still surroundings. Moreover beyond and above all this, there rested a sense of blessing, a sweet, gentle feeling of delicious repose, of utter confidence in the present and of joyous, certain promise in the future. This sense of peace and benediction, that can always be felt by the sensitive here in Adyar, was wonderfully present on returning from wishing friends God-speed at the station in the city, and entering once more the quiet precincts of what our President has truly called 'Master's land,' that evening when all had once again departed save the abiding spirit of the place.

Let it be said at once that the Convention has been an exceptionally successful one in many ways; and how should it have been otherwise when its dominant notes were: serenity, good-will, harmony?

There have been Conventions when any little matter, any small wrinkle on the surface of things, has offered a pretext for discussion, gossip or dispute. I remember some where trivial incidents, trifling

discomforts, little blemishes, had been magnified by useless talk into grievances and sore spots. Nothing of the kind has happened at this Convention. It seemed as if all had tacitly resolved that nothing of the kind *should* happen. Incidents, little inconveniences, slight blemishes there may have been, now as before, but what there has not been is the tendency to take them up and make much of them. Rather has the excellent spirit grown up amongst all of bearing good-humouredly with any of these trivialities, in the knowledge that time gradually improves most things, and that, in any case, such trifles pass and are not worth noticing.

It says much for the evolution of the Theosophical Society's members in general, that though the past year has by no means been free from troubles and attacks, local and otherwise, yet now, when representatives and delegates, not of this country alone but of practically all civilised nations scattered over the world, have come together to discuss the Society's affairs, the Convention has met, acted, and parted in a spirit of utmost harmony and good-will, proving to the world at large in a dignified manner the Society's strength and virtue.

The encouraging phenomenon has been witnessed in this Convention of new stamina in the Society, of new and conscious strength in the corporate body through growth in the individual members.

We have been rather accustomed in past times to look to Mrs. Besant, to Mr. Leadbeater, or to other of our foremost and more experienced teachers to be the sole givers of strength and inspiration on the occasion of gatherings such as these. And we have come with the intent to take and to carry away with us—quite

unselfishly it may be and for the good of others—all that we could lay our hands on in the way of spiritual food. But instead this time there appears to me to have been a subtle change in the attitude of most. People came as much to give to our leaders and to each other as to take; a change that produced the strength and the harmony of the proceedings. Members, consciously or unconsciously, seem to have determined to bring to the feet of those from whom they have received so much teaching and help the offering of their personal homage and allegiance, and the precious tribute of their loyal support and co-operation.

It has been perhaps due to a reaction, the logical outcome, the revulsion of feeling, produced in the heart of every earnest and good member against the odious attacks from without and the tedious discussions and sophistries indulged in for some time within the circle of one of the Society's publications. All true members wanted fresh air. So each came determining that he at least would not respond to any echo of unprofitable things, but rather would strenuously manifest his opposition thereto and bring with him only love, confidence and broadmindedness. Thus it has happened, as always, that out of evil good has come. For our members, knowing the Theosophical ship to be staunch and true, knowing in whose hands the tiller is set, knowing who watch over its course and destinies, rally round in their numbers smiling and confident, self-controlled, ready to bear burdens, ready to serve, and faithful in all things with the loyalty of trust and devotion. How foolish those who talk of credulity, of lamb-like subservience, of blind adherence! It is they who are blind, who do not see that such a congress of hundreds

of representative men and women, drawn from all parts of the world, from all ranks of the social scale, from all grades of human thought and belief, could not possibly be held together harmoniously even at one open meeting, let alone for a whole week, where the subjects treated are those which touch the very heart and are most vital to each hearer, unless there existed a fundamental and common bond of union. Do these would-be wise men imagine that in a Society like ours no one has ever thought but themselves? Do they not understand that nearly all have embraced the larger faith because they have outgrown the lesser; have abandoned the dialects of religion because they are learning to speak the language of Universal Religion? No, a Society such as ours could not be held together for a day by the credulity or the blindness of its Fellows. It is the broad platform of its principles which allows all to stand secure and to find their appointed place in God's plan for humanity. It is the response to the big things—our common ideals—which finds an echo in the heart of each, sounding a true note for each, which, in a Convention such as this one of ours just over, produces a symphonic and beautiful chord of sympathy and strong devotion.

That this was so was clearly evidenced by another significant and prominent feature. From the very first it became evident that Convention members desired to show Mr. C. W. Leadbeater their appreciation of his work and how glad they were to have him back here again. The applause and acclamation accorded him, and the almost insistent manifestations of good-will shown him by the crowded audiences that he addressed, were more than sufficient confirmation of the respect and

confidence that are universally felt for Mrs. Besant's great colleague, to whom the whole Society is so much indebted.

Besides all this, one more thing was clear. No one wanted to talk on any unpleasant or unprofitable subjects, of which all are now thoroughly bored and tired. Everyone wanted to enjoy his Convention and make the occasion a festive and positive reply in itself to all detractors inside and outside the Society. In this, members succeeded thoroughly and it remains as a solid and dry matter of fact that this Convention has, both in its public and private meetings, proved an unqualified success.

The Convention programme of 1912 was a very full one, and the arrangements were perforce of a more than usually difficult nature, the numbers attending being again larger than have ever been dealt with before. Notwithstanding the good-will and efforts of all concerned, it will have to be borne in mind on a future occasion that it is now-a-days a very big business to manage and adequately provide for the great numbers that attend a Convention such as this. Already this year, with everyone doing his level best, it was more the adaptability and kindly spirit of all concerned that helped matters out, than the practical efficiency of the arrangements themselves, both as regards Europeans and Indians. It has all become much more complicated in its details, and requires capable experience to handle, and long and careful preparation and organisation beforehand. The work falls on the few, who, however willing, need more help. Certainly all concerned should be thankful that everything has gone off so well, and in turn they should be heartily thanked

for their arduous and willing labours. There was no hitch anywhere, and though the crowding was unavoidable, all went off with the utmost good temper and harmonious spirit. This vigorous growth of attendance and interest in the Society's Conventions is the best answer to critics and traducers.

The first public lecture delivered was that by Mr. G. S. Arundale under the great banyan tree at Blavatsky Gardens, his subject being 'Education as Service'. Mr. Arundale's considerable experience as Principal of the Central Hindū College at Benares made him peculiarly fitted to speak on the subject, and it was evident that it was one close to his heart, one on which he felt deeply all he said. We were reminded of much that is so clearly put in that latest and most suggestive little volume of Alcyone's which was written this summer, and has since appeared under the same title of *Education as Service*. The keynote to the whole subject is that the teacher's office is not only to instil learning and knowledge into the pupil's mind, but also to evolve his character and awaken his inner nature to a wider understanding of men and things through bonds of mutual affection and trust. It is in this personal relation and tie that the responsibility and the power for good of the teacher lie.

The 27th December was a very full day. Beginning with an E. S. (Section) meeting in the early morning, the heavy business of official reports on the work done during the year all the world over had to be undertaken. Here again the Society's unexampled growth was shown by the fact that a second and equally long sitting had to be provided for that which could now no longer, as formerly, be covered by the one meeting.

I refrain from any kind of detailed or orderly report of proceedings, since all that will come in the official volume issued annually for that purpose. Suffice it to say that on all sides, in all countries, growth and vigour are manifest. India has had some slight transitory difficulties, due chiefly to the hostility of its late General Secretary, Babu Bhagavan Das, to the Order of the Star in the East, and to his somewhat illiberal writings on the subject in the Sectional periodical. But this is now past and over with the termination of his period of office. Germany too has shown an even greater intolerance and a still narrower spirit; the result being that the recent attitude of the General Secretary, Dr. Steiner, and his followers towards those who did not think like them has brought about the request of the General Council to the President to cancel the German Sectional Charter. It is quite certain that the temporary loss of membership thereby entailed will, in good time, be made up again as loyal members in Germany join the new Section when that shall have been formed. In all other Sections the reports showed unvarying progress and steady increase in work and the spreading of Theosophical thought.

Mr. C. W. Leadbeater's Question Meetings, both open and E. S., were evidently much enjoyed and appreciated. His breezy manner and lucid, practical style of dealing in detail with Theosophical questions both entertained and instructed the large audiences assembled to hear him. Each evening at 5-30, for four successive evenings, the President delivered her public lectures under the banyan tree at Blavatsky Gardens. Who, having been present, will forget these memorable and beautiful evenings? Apart from the

vastness of the subject-matter covered and the masterly sweep of our President's oratory; apart from all the help, all the instruction, all the inspiration that in ever-new form and with ever-fresh vitality she is able to pour into the hearts of her hearers; the whole setting of the picture was so beautiful, the surroundings so appropriate to the bigness of the subject, that no one with any artistic feeling could have been otherwise than intensely satisfied and uplifted by the beauty of it all, the harmonious blending of all that the senses could perceive and the mind comprehend.

Beginning in daylight, passing on into twilight with the shadows growing longer and longer, we would see through the branches and stems the sun set in all his glorious splendour of colour, taking with him into the west the light of his day's beneficence in the east, yielding quickly to the oncoming shroud of night; and one by one we would see above us the diamond brightness of the stars pierce holes in the canopy of heaven. So too, down under the banyan tree, one by one the little electric lamps suspended in the ample branches twinkled and shone out in the dark recesses of the friendly old tree, spreading its long, grey arms out over the sea of uplifted faces that gazed with rapt attention on the solitary white-clad, white-haired figure we all love, whose musical voice and powerful look and gesture dominated the huge gathering, and gave the people the teaching and the message they had all come so far to seek.

Of the four public lectures given by the President under the banyan tree, the third stands out to my mind as the greatest and most comprehensive of the series. It is in fact one of the biggest and most powerful that

I have heard from our President for a very long time. The four subjects taken for these lectures were as follows: 1. 'Theosophy or Parāviḍyā.' 2. 'Theosophy, the Open Road to the Masters.' 3. 'Theosophy, the Root of all Religions.' 4. 'The Theosophical Society, Its Meaning, Purpose and Functions.' The lectures themseves were very ably reported this year, thanks to the painstaking and excellent work of our stenographic and typewriting members. The local papers had full and accurate accounts of the proceedings, and already copies of these have been sent broadcast to most other countries. The four addresses themselves will be shortly issued in book form, and become precious material for all labourers in the field.

Two other meetings took place under the banyan tree: the Anniversary Meeting, where some fifteen or twenty short speeches were made in the several languages of the various representatives—a meeting, this, that is always popular, as bringing home more clearly to all how wide-spread and how universal is the Theosophic movement; and the final meeting, when Mr. B. P. Wadia delivered an eloquent address on the 'Theosophic Life,' revealing many of the qualities of a promising and effective speaker.

Besides these gatherings in the open air, many and sundry other meetings were held in the big Central Hall, or in one or other of the places devoted to special purposes. The Convention of the Indian Section which took place on the 28th and 29th December will be fully dealt with in its Sectional magazine, and it therefore is enough to say that no jarring note marred the proceedings. Paṇḍiṭ Iqbal Narain Gurtu, who is the Headmaster of the C. H. C. in Benares, was elected

General Secretary for the coming year, and all who know his fine character and well-balanced temperament will feel that the Indian Section is fortunate in the choice of its new General Secretary and will be well led.

Mention must be made of the T. S. Subsidiary Activities, which produced some extremely interesting reports and discussions. There was a T. S. Order of Service meeting, where the two subjects treated were: 'The Path of Service in the Veḍas,' presented by A. Mahadeva Shastri, and 'Facts and Ideals of Theosophical Service,' an address by Mrs. Georgia Gagarin. There was also on the following day a Sons of India meeting, where Professor E. A. Wodehouse spoke on 'The Sons and Daughters of the Empire'. A number of interesting subjects, dealing with educational work and the problems it presents, were opened up by several papers read or handed in at the Educational Conference by the principal workers in these fields. It is worth while just to enumerate them: 'The Educative Value of a Language,' by Professor E. A. Wodehouse; 'Secondary Education in Ceylon,' by Principal F. L. Woodward of the Buḍḍhist College, Galle; 'The Place of Intuition in Education,' by Principal F. Arundale of the C. H. C. Girls' School; 'The Education of the Depressed Classes in Southern India,' by Miss Kofel, Superintendent of the Olcott Pañchama Free Schools; 'The Methods of Presenting Spiritual Truths to Students,' by Principal G. S. Arundale, M. A., LL. B. of the Central Hinḍū College, Benares; besides one or two more which will be eventually included with those already mentioned in the published transactions of this branch of the Theosophical Subsidiary Activities.

It is surely a quite empty reproach, due only to ignorance of our many-sided activities, that Theosophists are only utopian dreamers instead of being, as they are, a leavening and beneficial influence in the activities of the outer world.

The Masonic meetings, both Craft and 18th Degree, were very well attended. Besides these, through the untiring exertions of a London member, here too in Adyar on the lines laid down in London this last summer, a Temple of the Rosy Cross has been founded, which, though confined to Theosophists alone, has already a large membership.

Of the various E. S. meetings, there is no necessity that I should speak here. All know that the heart of the Society beats the stronger for the life-currents that flow from the E. S. vivified by the Outer Head and the growing force of its members. All who attended drew inspiration and help from the more sacred and intimate character of its meetings.

Perhaps the most attractive gathering of the whole Convention was the one held on the 28th of December evening by members of the Star in the East, in commemoration of the memorable occasion at Benares described last year. As Mr. Arundale rightly said, the 28th of December evening is likely to be held by all O. S. E. members as one of their most sacred anniversaries, now and in times to come. Whatever may be said by those who do not know, no amount of empty scoffing can destroy or cancel from the memory of those who were at the meeting at Benares last year and saw what they saw and felt what they felt, the impressive experience that causes that date and that remembrance to be set apart for special commemoration each year. That there

was some slight echo of all this in those present this year was evident by the peculiarly simple and pleasant 'feel' of the assembled gathering. Mr. Arundale first, then Mr. Leadbeater and lastly Mrs. Besant spoke; but over and beyond all three, over and around the assembly, there seemed to hover the spirit of gentleness and simplicity, the memory of the Head of the Order so much beloved by all. Though far away in England on that night, doubtless the tender, loving thought of his devoted followers brought something, however indefinite, of his presence into their midst and sweetened the whole proceedings. What blind and bigoted folly on the part of would-be wise-acres and Society-savers to attempt to quench any spark of hope, any little flame of belief or devotion that, growing strong in the human breast, fills it with the warmth of kindness and nourishes it with the desire to offer and give itself for the help of human kind! Are not beliefs and persuasions and aspirations as many as are the rays of the Sun? Do they not all lead eventually to the great central Light? What is this presumption among the blind that would dash down every glimmer of light, every nascent ray of hope, from those who watch for the spiritual dawning and are beginning to see? What is this conceit of the stiff-necked that would take away each prop, cut off every little tendril that the human plant puts out when spring is coming, and when it is trying to creep upwards to the light and warmth of the Sun? A great One has said: "It were better that a millstone were hung about his neck and that he were cast into the depths of the sea than that he should offend one of these little ones." Oh, when will people who claim liberty of thought for themselves allow others that same liberty to think and

believe what they can, and what will make their lives better, happier and more useful? Truly, one thought that at least for this was the Theosophical Society founded!

Looking over the course of this great and successful Convention, to my mind three meetings stand out predominantly. Curiously enough they form a sort of trinity of power, love and intellect. They are: the President's masterly third public lecture on 'Theosophy, the Root of all Religions'; the O. S. E. meeting with its peculiarly gentle, loving atmosphere; and the strong, vigorous and combative reply of Mrs. Besant at the end of the meeting on the T. S. policy, wherein she pulverised the opposers and squarely and fairly set forth the views she held and the platform she stood for, informing at the same time the world that the Society has borne long enough the charges against its honour and reputation, and that she will henceforth, as its President, take prompt and vigorous action wherever and whenever necessary to uphold the Society's good name. The announcement that the General Council of the Theosophical Society had formally voted a unanimous resolution of support and sympathy in the action she was taking and the burdens she was enduring for the Society's welfare was received with cordial endorsement and applause by all present. Votes of confidence in both our leaders, Mrs. Besant and Mr. C. W. Leadbeater, proposed and seconded by Sir Subramania Iyer and Judge Khandalavala, were voted and passed by acclamation by all but one of the delegates and members assembled. These and many other outward signs showed the judgment of the mass of the Convention on all current topics, and revealed the

unshaken belief that all is quite well with the T. S. and its leaders. For that all is well and that the Society is steadily improving and increasing in its growth, despite anything that the shortsighted may say, is shown on all sides in the outer and material things and in the inner and spiritual channels of force.

I have alluded to the expansion and development recorded in the official reports of the various Sections all the world over. Here too in Adyar this growth was rendered objective to us by a very interesting set of magic lantern pictures, most charmingly coloured, shown to us by Mr. C. S. Best, who had the genial idea of exhibiting to the assembled delegates on the very first evening of Convention the extensive developments accomplished and yet to be accomplished on the Adyar estate. Not only were charming and picturesque views of sea, river and quiet nooks passed before us, showing the beauties of the place in which so much is centred and to which so many have come or desire to come; but the possibilities and progress and development of its many-sided activities were detailed before our eyes. In this way members could pick out and choose beforehand the points of interest which in the ensuing week they would visit or inspect at close quarters. We were shown the huge building of Leadbeater Chambers, which has grown up and been filled since last Convention here; the new electric powerhouse and installation; the completed Hindū kitchen and restaurant; and some of the more important buildings such as the enlarged Vasantā Press, from which the streams of Theosophical literature flow forth, and the new extension of the yet growing Theosophical Publishing House

whose business is increasing every year. Many of these pictures can be found in the *Adyar Album*, a collection of photographs done by J. Krishnamurti, which all lovers of Adyar should have in their homes, that their thoughts may become more definite as they think of this centre of Theosophical life. It is of interest to mention in passing that the Theosophical Publishing House sold over four thousand rupees' worth of books during Convention week, and has just brought out those very important works of our President and Mr. Leadbeater, *Man: Whence, How and Whither,* and *The Hidden Side of Things,* which between the two mean something like two thousand pages of absorbingly interesting matter. I want to draw attention also to an exquisite little work by C. Jinarajadasa, full of deep thought and wisdom, entitled *In His Name,* which all should buy and keep. Each of the several establishments that I have enumerated above means a separate staff of organised and technically capable managers and assistants, and most strenuously and thoroughly do they all succeed in carrying out their several duties, often under conditions of considerable difficulty.

We were also shown the extensive plans of improvements in the gardens and grounds, the numerous agricultural experiments being tried by Mr. Huidekoper; and if only cordial financial support is now accorded to these improvements, the Society's property, we are assured, will in a very short time become self-supporting and increasingly valuable. The dairy, the bakery, the farm, the workshops and carpenter's sheds, all these necessary adjuncts to a growing community were shown, and the mind travelled on in fancy and revealed

how things were likely to grow and be perfected from these beginnings of 'the Colony'. Though not shown to us by the magic lantern at this Convention, somewhat of a nightmare I unfortunately lapsed into made it appear that at this rate at some future Convention we shall be shown the steam laundry, the central kitchen or 'bhojanashāla' for *European* varieties of food, the Theosophical 'Army and Navy stores,' the motor and carriage garage where conveyances, big and small, from the automobile to the rickshaw, can be hired for a reasonable figure, the art studio, the concert-hall and music-rooms, the new library buildings, and great lecture-hall, and, finally, streets of new Hinḍū 'vilas,' European bungalows, and international hotels that, with their surrounding and supplementary buildings and servants' quarters, will make us feel as noisy as Calcutta and as dusty as Madras, and convert the country into town and the simple and inexpensive life into all that is complicated and costly, but *up-to-date!* Long may this dream be averted! For are we not here to lead a simple and almost ascetic life, and to withdraw from what the world considers necessities, but which are really only the costly complications of existence? One exception may perhaps be made to these remarks, and that is in the matter of the library. It has grown and grown, and new buildings are already really needed to house adequately the splendid collection of Oriental literature that makes the Adyar Library almost unique of its kind and highly thought of all the world over. Some hold that a great lecture hall is needed, but we seem to have done very well under the banyan tree, and in this climate there are no draughts, and the air is so much purer, nature so much more picturesque, and the heavens so

much better a ceiling over our heads, than anything man can devise. Of one thing I feel certain that, whatever are the vicissitudes in the business of growing, in the words of Ella Wheeler Wilcox:

I know that there are no errors in the great eternal plan,
And that all things work together for the final good of man.

So too in our Society the errors of to-day will be the experience for to-morrow, and all this growing wave of desire to do and to be, of strenuous effort to help and to serve in the world's enlightenment and uplifting, must make for progress, must tell for good.

So many Gods, so many creeds,
So many paths that wind and wind,
While just the art of being kind
Is all the sad world needs.

As our leaders grow older the burden of responsibility and work on their shoulders is multiplied by this very growth on all sides that we are witnessing. With the great hope before us of the coming World-Teacher, it is an instant duty with us, here and now, to try to prepare men's minds for the message He will bear; for time presses on all sides and the needs of the world of men grow more urgent each day. How good it is to feel that, as time advances, more and more are coming forward prepared consciously to share the burden, and that to every one of us, in his own measure and in his own place, is given the privilege of knowing something of the scheme of things, and therefore of having it as his particular incumbent duty to fill that place loyally and worthily! As the time draws near, as the preparation grows, we see souls drawn from here, there and everywhere, apparently by chance, regardless of age and condition, into groupings round this or that

person. We see the army of helpers defining themselves into categories of usefulness, entrusted with this or that other piece of work. The world is the field, and those who to-day are close to our leaders to-morrow are far; but what are these limitations of distance but illusions? All work in the great work; each has his place, his karma to bear, his duty to fulfil, and his particular relation to the Masters of the Wisdom. It is They who guide; let us see that we accomplish as far as in each of us lies. The Thirty-seventh Convention is over, and we go back to live and labour in our several ways. Let us joyfully face the future and find our place and our work in the great Plan, remembering that:

All roads that lead to God are good,
What matters it, your faith or mine?
Both centre at the goal divine
Of love's eternal Brotherhood.

William H. Kirby

THE SECRET OF A STAR

By Eva M. Martin, F. T. S.

(Continued from p. 597)

VI.

Each sun is a thought of God and each planet a mode of that thought. To know divine thought, O souls, you descend and painfully ascend the path of the seven planets and of their seven heavens. What do the Constellations? What say the Numbers? What revolve the Spheres? O lost or saved souls, they speak, they sing, they roll . . . your destinies!

Fragment (from Hermes)

God made the whole.
He set the sun in heaven, and round it there
Wrought the huge orbs that sail the sea of air:
In these He locked Himself, in each a part,
His power, His knowledge, His all-loving heart.
And lo, at length He saw set forth in space
The flawless mirrored likeness of His face.

Clifford Bax

IT was very quiet in the book-lined library at Sellwood Manor. Outside the open windows the trees were standing motionless in the summer heat, and in the room itself there was no sound save the occasional turning of pages.

Humphrey Peterson sat at his desk, with a pile of books before and around him. Each one lay open at some particular page, or contained a slip of paper, evidently as a marker of some special passage. He took up, apparently at random, one volume after another,

reading a line here and a paragraph there, with an expression of the most intent interest on his keenly intellectual old face.

These were a few of the passages that held his attention:

Hermes is a generic name, like Manu and Buḍḍha. It means, at the same time, a man, a caste, and a God. As man, Hermes is the first, the mighty Initiator of Egypt; as caste, it is the priesthood, guardian of occult traditions; whilst as God, it is the planet Mercury, assimilated to a whole category of Spirits, divine Initiators; in a word, Hermes presides over the supraterrestrial region of the celestial Initiation. In the spiritual economy of the world, all these things are bound together by secret affinities as by an invisible thread. The name of Hermes is a talisman which sums them all up, a magic sound evoking them into existence. Hence the prestige it possessed. . . . . The doctrine of the Fire-Principle and of the Word-Light, contained in the *Vision of Hermes*, will remain the summit and centre of Egyptian Initiation.[1]

He turned over the pages to a later part of the book and read again:

The seven spheres attached to the seven planets symbolise seven principles, seven different states of matter and spirit, seven different worlds which each man and each humanity are forced to pass through in their evolution across a solar system. The seven Genii or the seven cosmogonic Gods signify the superior, directing Spirits of all spheres, the offspring themselves of inevitable evolution. . . . . The great septenary which enfolds the universe does not vibrate in the seven colours of the rainbow and the seven notes of the scale, only; it also manifests itself in the constitution of man, which is triple in essence, but sevenfold in its evolution.[2]

Another was taken up:

The grandiose conception of Thoth as the inspirer of all sacred writings and the teacher of all religion and philosophy was Egyptian and not Greek; and it was but a sorry equivalent that the Greeks could find in their own pantheon when, in the change of God-names, they were forced to translate 'Thoth' by 'Hermes'. . . . . Thoth was thus the Oversoul of all priests; and when some of the Greeks came to know better what the inner discipline of the true priestly mysteries connoted, they so felt the inadequacy of plain

[1] *Hermes and Plato*, by Edouard Schure.

[2] *Ibid.*

Hermes as a suitable equivalent for the Egyptian name which designated this great ideal, that they qualified 'Egyptian Hermes' with the honorific epithet 'Thrice-greatest'.[1]

He next read the passage which is printed at the beginning of this story, and another from the same source:

I behold thee, Hermes, Son of God, slayer of Argus, Archangel, who bearest the rod of knowledge, by which all things in heaven or on earth are measured.

Double serpents entwine it, because as serpents they must be wise who desire God.

And upon thy feet are living wings, bearing thee fearless through space and over the abyss of darkness; because they must be without dread to dare the void and the deep, who desire to attain and to achieve.

Upon thy side thou wearest a sword of a single stone, two-edged, whose temper resisteth all things.

For they who would slay or save must be armed with a strong and perfect will, defying and penetrating with no uncertain force. . . . . Nor is this all thy equipment, Son of God; the covering of darkness is upon thine head, and none is able to strike thee.

This is the magic hat, brought from Hades, the region of silence, where they are who speak not.

He who bears the world on his shoulders shall give it to thee, lest the world fall on thee, and thou be ground into powder.

For he who has perfect wisdom and knowledge, he whose steps are without fear, and whose will is single and all-pervading;

Even he must also know how to keep the divine secret, and not to expose the holy mysteries of God to the sense of the wicked.

He turned rapidly to the appendix at the end of the book, and read:

As is well-known to students of occult science, the name of Hermes has from pre-historic times been for the western world the synonym at once for profound problems and for interpretative insight, his claim to have possessed "the three parts of the knowledge of the whole cosmos"—science, philosophy, and religion—having always been recognised. . . . It is sufficient to know, as an indubitable historical fact, that some of the profoundest of the sages of old claimed Hermes *the Divinity* as the source of their knowledge. . . . It was as the

[1] *The Hymns of Hermes*, by G. R. S. Mead.

Divine Principle itself of Understanding that he was recognised by the Hermetists in the saying: "Est in Mercurio quicquid quaerunt sapientes," as also by the famous Neoplatonist, Proklos, when he thus wrote: "Hermes, as the Messenger of God, reveals to us His paternal Will, and—developing in us *the* intuition—imparts to us knowledge. The knowledge which descends into the soul from above excels any that can be attained by the mere exercise of the intellect. Intuition is the operation of the soul. The knowledge received through it from above, descending into the soul, fills it with the perception of the interior causes of things. The Gods announce it by their presence, and by illumination, and enable us to discern the universal order."

For "in the Celestial, all things are Persons"; and it is as Persons that the Divine Principles manifest themselves in and to the soul, being seen and heard of it, when duly receptive and percipient . . . . . Now of all those who have been enlightened by Hermes, the doctrine is identical, and it is the basic doctrine of all sacred scriptures.

"Truly a deeper and more sublime conception than that of the Greeks," murmured the old man, and taking up another volume he read:

In the myths of the wind, Mercury (or Hermes) was one of the principal personifications. According to the ancients, he was born of the sky (Jupiter) and the plains (Maia), and after a very few hours' existence assumed gigantic proportions, stole away the cattle of the Sun (the clouds) and, after fanning up a great fire in which he consumed some of the herd, glided back into his cradle at dawn. With a low, mocking chuckle at the recollection of the pranks he had played, he sank finally into rest. His name, derived from the Samskṛṭ *Sarameias,* means "the breeze of a summer morning"; and it is in his capacity of God of the Wind that he is supposed to waft away the souls of the dead; for "the ancients held that in the wind were the souls of the dead". Mercury is the "lying, tricksome Wind-God who invented music," for his music is but "the melody of the winds, which can awaken feelings of joy and sorrow, of regret and yearning, of fear and hope, of vehement gladness and utter despair".[1]

And another:

In the Assyrian religion, Nebo, the last of the five planetary deities, presided over Mercury. It was his special function to have under his charge learning and knowledge. He is called "the God who possesses intelligence," "he who hears from afar," "he who teaches and instructs". The tablets

[1] *The Myths of Greece and Rome,* by H. A. Guerber.

of the royal library at Nineveh are said to contain the "wisdom of Nebo". He is also, like Mercury, the minister of the Gods, but scarcely their messenger. . . . He has a number of general titles, implying divine power... 'the sustainer,' 'the supporter,' 'the ever-ready,' 'the guardian of heaven and earth,' 'the lord of the constellations,' etc.[1]

The Mithraic Christians actually continued to celebrate Christmas Day as the birthday of the Sun, despite the censures of the Pope. When they listened to the Roman litany of the holy name of Jesus, they knew they were listening to the very epithets of the Sun-God—God of the skies, Purity of the eternal light, King of glory, Sun of justice, strong God, Father of the ages to come, Angel of great counsel. . . . They knew that the Good Shepherd was a name of Apollo; that Mithra, like Hermes and Jesus, carried the lamb on his shoulders; that both were mediators, both creators, both judges of the dead; that the chief mysteries of the two cults were the same. . . . It is now generally admitted that the Christian figure of the lamb-bearing Good Shepherd is taken from the statue of Hermes Kriophorus, the Ram-bearer (*Pausanias*, vi, 33).[2]

Peterson laid down the book, and stood for a few moments in deep thought.

"How far back the belief stretches!" he said aloud. "And under how many different names does it appear! Mithra, Nebo, Sarameias, Thoth, Hermes, Mercury, Raphael. . . . ah! may it not be possible that this thrice-greatest One—he who can be traced back into the dimmest ages of the world's religions, he who has been known by all races and in all lands in different forms—is it not possible that even in these modern days he may bring into closer touch with himself a few rare, outstanding souls, here and there existing, who have been subjected to his influence in some intense degree throughout their earthly evolution, and are thus especially fitted to receive from him some portion of that eternal and secret Wisdom whose guardian and interpreter he is? If it be true, as the Occultists say, that his planet, the

[1] *Religious Systems of the World.* (Swan, Sonnenschein)
[2] *Ibid.*

planet Mercury, is to be the next scene of humanity's progress when, long hence, all the earth-lessons have been learned, all the more reason why he—or Pan and he, the God of this planet and the God of the next—should be the only two of all the old Greek hierarchy of whose presence the souls of men are sometimes still aware. The 'pipes of Pan' have been heard by many, even in these latter days. I could name at random a dozen books—and more than a dozen poems—in which there figures that great Nature-God, glad-eyed and simple-hearted, yet wrapped in some mysterious awfulness so great that to see him is to die. Indeed, all the present-day 'nature-books,' books on gardening, the 'Simple Life,' the 'Call of the Wild,' the 'Back to the Land' movement, and all that ilk, are obvious survivals—possibly revivals—of the influence of the God Pan. What is it Blackwood says in *The Centaur*, that last extraordinary book of his? Ah, here it is!

> Worship, he now understood, of course invited 'the Gods,' and was the channel through which their manifestation became possible to the soul. All the Gods, then, were accessible in this interior way, but Pan especially—in desolate places and secret corners of a wood . . . He remembered dimly the Greek idea of worship in the Mysteries: that the worshipper knew actual temporary union with his deity in ecstasy, and at death went permanently into his sphere of being.

"And yet I do not fancy that man will ever again come into touch with the Earth-Spirit as in the early days, though much of what he learnt then has been forgotten, and must be—is being, I believe—revived. Nevertheless, that lesson, that experience, is of the past. There are new influences at work now, and it seems not unreasonable to suppose that one of the most powerful is the influence of Mercury, or Hermes. Not the old Hermes, as pictured by the Greeks, for that God

was only a dim reflection, a mere shadow of the reality —but a new and vaster Hermes, a Being greater than the mind of man as yet can conceive . . ."

He picked up Lord Lytton's *Zanoni* and read:

Life is the one pervading principle, and even the thing that seems to die and putrify, but engenders new life, and changes to fresh forms of matter. Reasoning then by evident analogy—if not a leaf, if not a drop of water, but is no less than yonder star, a habitable and breathing world . . . common sense would suffice to teach that the circumfluent Infinite, which you call space—the boundless Impalpable which divides the earth from the moon and stars—is filled also with its correspondent and appropriate life.

" And William James makes the same suggestion. Where's that passage in which Blackwood quotes him? What an extraordinary unity of thought there is on these subjects, when one comes to look into them!"

The old man's eyes were shining with excitement, and he seized the other book again with the zest of an ardent hunter following a trail.

Every element has its own living denizens. Ether, then, also has hers—the globes. " The ocean of ether, whose waves are light, has also her denizens—higher by as much as their element is higher, swimming without fins, flying without wings, moving, immense and tranquil, as by a half-spiritual force through the half-spiritual sea which they inhabit"—sensitive to the slightest pull of one another's attraction: beings in every way superior to us.

" Life everywhere!" Peterson murmured. " Spirit everywhere! ' God is seen : God in the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in the soul, in the clod.' Browning knew it—and Wordsworth, and Shelley, who saw ' the one Spirit's plastic stress sweep through the dull, dense world,' and Emerson—who spoke of ' the primal mind, that flows in streams, that breathes in wind '. All the poets knew it! Carpenter knows it, too—that modern poet the boy is so fond of quoting:

And a voice came to me, saying:

In every creature, in forest and ocean, in leaf and tree and bird and beast and man, there moves a spirit other than its mortal own,

Pure, fluid, as air—intense as fire,
Which looks abroad and passes along the spirits of all other creatures, drawing them close to itself,
Nor dreams of other law than that of perfect equality;
And this is the spirit of immortality and peace.
And whatsoever creature hath this spirit, to it no harm may befall:
No harm can befall, for wherever it goes it has its nested home, and to it every loss comes charged with an equal gain:
It gives—but to receive a thousand-fold;
It yields its life—but at the hands of love;
And death is the law of its eternal growth . . . . . .
And it seemed to me, as I looked, that it penetrated all things, suffusing them.

And wherever it penetrated, behold! there was nothing left down to the smallest atom which was not a winged spirit instinct with life.

"William Blake, poet and mystic, gives the same identical teaching—he who could see a small bright spirit sitting in every blossom of a cherry tree! And Shakspere knew all about it as well as any of them:

There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;
Such harmony is in immortal souls."

He began to pace up and down the room, still lost in deep thought.

"And the seven spheres—the seven planets. . . Magnificent indeed is that conception of the guardian Angel of each planet, 'the seven great Spirits before the throne'—Raphael, the angel of Mercury, Zadkiel, the angel of Jupiter, Azrael, the angel of Venus, and all the rest. And between us and them a hierarchy of lesser Spirits, leading upwards step by step, rank by rank, to those great Ones, beyond whom remains only the triple Manifestation—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,

in terms of Christianity—of the Logos Himself. Each planet, as it were, the body of the Spirit that animates it, even as our bodies are animated by our Spirits—but the nature of that Spirit differing from and transcending ours even as our bodies differ from the planetary bodies. What a task has the New Astrology taken upon itself in endeavouring to interpret these influences upon the souls of men—not upon their outward lives, as the old Astrology did, but upon the inner Spirit, that which is the man himself!

"To grasp the scheme at all—this enormous scheme of the development of human souls along the seven planetary rays—one has to think of it in symbols. First to picture the still, clear, central Light, existing, pure and alive, 'before all worlds'—and floating in it untold millions of colourless motes—sparks of divinity—monads—potential human beings—potential souls. One has to see this central Light enclosed in a vast transparent lamp, through each of whose windows flows forth a great ray, carrying with it a vast stream of these as yet undeveloped monads. And each window is of a different colour, so that the ray passing through each vibrates at a different rate and corresponds to a different note in the cosmic scale of harmony. So it comes that every monad which is carried out into manifestation by those great Light-streams is dyed once and for all by the colour of the window through which it passes, responds evermore to that particular vibration, to that particular note. The other notes will be sounded in its subsequent development; it will be tinged by the other colours, moulded by the other vibrations; but the first primary impress will never be lost, will always be the key-note of that particular individual soul. And

back through the window by means of which it came forth will the soul, perfected and full-grown, return finally to unity with the One who is the Upholder and Creator of souls and planets alike—the central Life-source of the whole vast system. One has only to change the metaphor, to think of the seven windows as the seven planets, and the central Light as the life-giving sun, and there one has an explanation of the planetary influences as revealed by Astrology, and of the different types of men evolving on earth to-day. Complex beings though men are, moulded by many influences counteracting and overlapping one another, yet each is in his deepest essence an expression of one planetary 'type,' an expression of the one 'ray' along which he first came forth into manifested being."

He picked up a sheet of paper upon which a circular figure was drawn.

"The boy's horoscope bears it all out. Mercury in the mid-heaven, lord of the ascendant, sextile with Neptune in the House of Dreams and of the Higher Mind, and in close conjunction with Venus—Mercury, the Thinker, 'transforming the essence of all thought into Memory'. . . Mercury, the Bird of God, interpreter and mediator betwixt the inner and the outer. . . . 'Raphael, the physician of souls'. . . . And then Uranus rising, and in trine aspect to Neptune—the two planets of Mysticism in close harmony! Uranus, they tell us, is the octave, so to speak, of Mercury, and few souls are as yet capable of answering to his vibrations—none indeed, save those whose Spirits have forged ahead, and who are not bound and limited by conventional ways of thought. It is an influence that brings strange things into the life—sudden events, uncommon interests, and

strange, difficult tasks. But the strong position of Mercury is the most interesting point. Elevated in Gemini, its own airy positive sign, it gives much mental strength, power of clear thinking, love of fun and humour, and above all, desire for knowledge! As some old writer has said: 'Mercury in the heavens representeth the subtile vital Spirit, and is therefore seldom separated from the Sun any great distance, keeping always in his beams, even as the vital Spirit accompanieth the soul.' And with regard to the conjunction with Venus, we are told that this shows 'the heaven-born mind,' and is indeed 'the only aspect or position of Mercury which leaves it absolutely free to rise into the heaven-world—the Ḍeva-kingdom, the land of the Shining Ones.'... It has been so in the boy's case—absolutely free, in spite of every earthly obstacle."

He laid down the sheet of paper, and once more began to pace the room, following out his train of thought.

"In the far distant future when mankind migrates to the planet Mercury, there to continue under new conditions that æonian progress whose first stages only are begun on earth, those who even here and now have been in touch (consciously or unconsciously) with that mighty planetary influence will doubtless be the leaders and the teachers of the race in its new home. They will be able to point the way to the rest. Like their great prototype, they, in their turn, will be guides, messengers, interpreters. Having long known and worshipped the God Mercury in their hearts, they will at last have passed permanently 'into his sphere of being,' and through him will be brought into ever closer touch with the One God who

is the God of all the planets, whose Body and Symbol is the Sun. Mercury, the Angel-messenger, will bring them close to Him in the Spirit, even as Mercury the planet brings them close to the Sun in the physical universe. They will 'dwell in' the Spirit of Mercury, and be one with him, just as in primæval days men were one with the Earth-Spirit, loved her, worshipped her, and trusted her—that great Spirit whose body is this physical globe on and by which we live, whose consciousness was partially manifested in the old Nature-Gods, the Gods of the sea, the sky, the winds, the trees, and the fountains—all now forgotten, all withdrawn from the knowledge of sceptical, civilised man . . . . It seems that Mercury, in his earth-manifestation, becomes an Earth-God, the God of wind and rain. Otherwise he could, perhaps, never have touched the hearts of those old-time Nature-worshippers. By means of their Nature-love he influenced them, expressing himself, for the time being, through a part of the great Earth-consciousness. For no doubt the planetary Beings merge into one another, even as we humans meet and merge and express ourselves through one another . . . *when our love is great enough.* But when the old understanding of Nature and her secrets withered and died in the hearts of men, Mercury perforce must try new and subtler ways of influencing them—ways in which he could touch as before, but more deeply, more intimately and more successfully the souls of those who are evolving along the Ray of Spiritual Knowledge, Memory, and Sight—the Ray of Hermes."

The old man stood still in the centre of the room, lost to all things save the mental worlds that he so eagerly explored.

"Am I mad? or dreaming?" he asked himself with a grim little smile. "Or can it really be possible that this boy Lucien has actually known close companionship with one of those stupendously great and wonderful Beings? Not actually, indeed, with the Angel Raphael himself, but with a manifestation of some fragment of that vast Personality—a fragment which has been in touch with our earth ever since the earliest days, under different names, of which Hermes and Mercury are the best known. That fragment perhaps expresses the real Raphael, the real Spirit of the planet Mercury, in about the same degree as the Earth-Spirit was expressed by the God Pan; sometimes in a lesser degree, as the Earth-Spirit was expressed by the fauns and dryads; and sometimes, I verily believe, in a degree infinitely greater than any of these. The full revelation, of course, has not been given—in this life probably can never be given—but in some distant future that full and complete revelation will be made, and the soul of Lucien, I cannot but believe, is one of the first of those destined to receive it."

As he stood there, enthralled, and yet almost aghast at the blaze of his thoughts, the sound of a boy's clear, soft singing approached the window. It came nearer and nearer, under the trees, a strange, old-world song of worship and praise, sung to a slow melody of indescribable freshness and beauty. It broke in upon the old man's mind, cooling his mental fire, like a gentle influx of pellucid, crystal air.

VII

I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth.

Wordsworth

For several minutes Peterson stood with raised head, listening intently. The song drew nearer, and then ceased, and Lucien appeared at the window. He vaulted on to the sill, and as he sat there Peterson was struck anew by the vivid beauty of his face, outlined against a dark group of trees not far away.

"I have been lying under the trees," said Lucien, "remembering. And at last I remembered one of the old, old tunes that we used to sing in the white temple. I remembered it all as I lay there, and even some of the words, but most of it slipped back again, and I have only been able to keep a little part of the whole. Did you hear it?"

"I heard," said the old man, gravely. "It sounded very beautiful." Then, taking a step forward, he broke out enthusiastically: "Ah Lucien, I have seen light this afternoon! I begin now to realise—not only to believe—some of the things that you have told me, to fit them into their places in the universal scheme. See, I have been looking up references to the God Mercury. I want to collate them all, and to make a full and complete list, and, though I have scarcely started

yet, I am amazed—amazed!—at the widespread, ancient belief in him. Far, far back he figures, in many different religions, under varying names, but possessing always the same attributes. Students have frequently and firmly insisted on the fact that such beliefs as this were not borrowed, but sprang up spontaneously in different lands and among different peoples; but somehow, until now, the reality of it, the true meaning, never came home to me. Lucien, you have put life into these dry bones of learning. All my knowledge, before you came, was as dust, which the breath of your living experience has vivified."

The boy smiled, and listened with a kind of detached interest. All this studying of books, searching for references, comparing, criticising, and analysing, seemed to him a vain and unreal way of trying to show forth truths which he, in his deepest heart, *knew* to be unassailable. For him no such proofs as these were needed, because he knew. Yet, since coming to live with this eager, ardent scholar, young in mind and heart though old in body, he began to understand that for others who lacked his own close, personal knowledge, these things must be a help in pointing out the way.

The constant intercourse with so keen and penetrating a mind as Peterson's had developed the boy's own faculties to an astonishing extent. He was now able to carry on with ease conversations and arguments which some months back would have been utterly beyond him. For all practical purposes, his mental powers had been let lie fallow during his life at the Red Farm; now they were responding to stimulus in a way that showed them to be full of vitality, and of no mean order.

"How strange it seems", the old man went on, "—and yet how fated!—that in these last years my thoughts should have turned so much in the direction of the occult sciences and the esoteric teachings of religion. These studies have not, so far, much influenced my published writings, for they were merely tentative and experimental; but more and more have I been fascinated and overwhelmed by the immense amount of research which remains to be done in these regions—and especially by the vast field of revelation and suggestion opened up by the study of Astrology. Ah, if only I could recapture some of the knowledge possessed by those old priests of Egypt and Chaldæa! If only I could unearth some of those ancient secrets! But with your help, Lucien, I shall accomplish something. My time on earth cannot be long now, but it is never too late to begin. In a year, even in six months, much can be done towards opening up the way for others, at least. Yet how tantalising it is to think that perhaps even I, long ago, actually dwelt in the body of one of those ancient priests, actually was taught those star-secrets, those deep religious mysteries, that I now so long to understand! But I have no power of remembering. I have lost the faculty, if ever I had it, of bridging over the mysterious gaps which separate one earth-life from another."

"I think your horoscope suggests that it has only been lost for a time," said the boy, gently. "You know we found that Saturn had been your ruling influence throughout this life—wise old Saturn, who gives, before all things, the knowledge that is concrete, profound, and scientific. Mercury, although well-placed, was retrograde, and afflicted from the ninth House. May not

that explain the delay, and the long years that passed before you began to feel any interest in the inner things, in the true Wisdom that Mercury guards?"

"I believe you are right! The desire for true knowledge has been always there, but there have been many hindrances and limitations. Now at last the higher influence is beginning to make itself felt! Mercury, the divine mediator, the 'angel of the two-fold states,' is reconciling the intellect with the intuition, so that the two may work together in harmony."

"And when that is done, the power of memory may return," said Lucien. "I mean the individual, not the personal, memory—the memory of that immortal, reincarnating part of us which Mercury symbolises. That memory is one of his special gifts—that and the power of inner sight. It does not come easily to me yet to remember or to see the past—generally when I am out-of-doors, very quiet and alone . . . or in music . . . or sometimes a line of poetry may bring it . . . but so often some of it is lost before my earth-brain has had time to grasp it. The brain is such a slow old machine!"

He laughed, and sang again, half to himself, a few bars of the old Greek melody.

"But generally it comes out-of-doors?" questioned Peterson, eagerly. "Ah Lucien, I believe that is half the secret! If only we could get back into closer touch with the Earth, the great Mother of men, that wider knowledge would reach us far, far more easily than in our present separated state. Long ago men lived in close communion with the Earth-Spirit, and that communion has left a deep impress upon men's hearts, one that can never be effaced; but though I

think we are not meant to return to that early state in all its fulness, it seems that we have lost much of the beauty and vitality of the experience, and before we go much further we shall have to recover it. Some are recovering it already, rapidly, easily, as a child re-learns a lesson that has only been temporarily forgotten, and they are the ones who are ready for the next great step in evolution. In fact, I believe that some few have already succeeded in taking it, far in advance of the rest of mankind."

Lucien's face grew thoughtful.

"I wonder if that was what my mother meant," he said. "I remember so well her telling me never to be afraid of outside things, of dark or lonely places, or of anything that was a part of the Earth-Spirit. Perhaps she knew that if I loved the Earth, it would make it easier for Hermes to be my friend—for he himself comes sometimes in part of the Earth-Spirit's dress, the dress of the wind and the rain—so he must love her, too."

"Your mother knew that 'Nature never did betray the heart that loved her,'" quoted Peterson, softly. "What else did she tell you? Can you remember much?"

The boy shook his head.

"I was so little," he said. "I remembered many things she had told me when I heard them again from Hermes afterwards—but best of all I remember her telling me never to be afraid."

"A fearless spirit she had," the old man murmured. "I shall never forget my first sight of her in a crowded London drawing-room. Someone was singing—a song about larks and the sunrise, I remember vaguely—and,

as she listened, her face shone with a most gracious radiance, and all around her there seemed to be the faint fragrance of wide meadows and cowslip-scented winds. I was not imaginative in those days—books and old dead languages meant more to me than anything else in the world—but there must have been some germ in me even then that could feebly respond to and appreciate so fresh and joyful an influence as hers. We talked together for a little time, and I brought away with me an ineffaceable impression of a radiant, fearless spirit, eager, ardent, aflame, one might almost say, with love of Beauty and with desire for Truth. Nothing would have daunted her, no task would have been too hard, no danger too appalling, in her quest for the Truth and Beauty that her Spirit craved . . . When I saw her again, she had found both. Her quest was ended. Her eyes shone with the light of a great satisfaction. That was after her marriage—indeed, soon after you were born—and her husband died a few months later. But her satisfaction lay in no earthly things, and within no material boundaries. No worldly experiences could add to it, or take away from it, and I am quite sure that no loss or sorrow could shake its foundations. To look into her face was enough to tell one that: so glorious a certainty! so bright a joy! O Lucien, you are very like her sometimes!"

The boy's gaze was fixed far away, where the leafy tree-tops merged into the burning blueness of the August sky.

"And my father?" he asked, half under his breath.

"Him I never saw. He was a distant cousin, as you know, of the people at the Red Farm, and in much the same rank of life. He held the position of head

gardener at a big country place where your mother often stayed. They met, fell in love, and married—all within a few weeks. Scandal, of course, gossip, talk of all kinds! But what would she care? From the little I have heard of your father, I gather that he was one of Nature's gentlemen, as the saying is, and remarkably handsome; also that he had a great fund of nature-lore, an extraordinarily intimate knowledge of plants and birds, and of all the things in close contact with which his life was lived. No doubt that formed a bond between them, and there may have been other things, too. I know no more, but I am very sure that to no ordinary man, plain or handsome, rough or cultured, would the love of such a woman as your mother have been given."

"She spoke of him sometimes," said Lucien, "but not often. I remember very well one day when a robin, which had come close to us in the garden, flew away because I made a sudden movement, and I cried, she told me I must learn to be like my father, because all wild things loved him, and were never afraid."

Peterson nodded.

"I remember hearing that he could get rare flowers and plants to grow that would flourish in no other part of England. Roses blossomed under his care in a way that was said to be almost uncanny. I think the powers who arranged your heredity managed it very cleverly, Lucien," he added, half mischievously, "very cleverly indeed! . . . But whether those two were happy, in the ordinary sense of the word, is a problem I have often wished to solve. Not that it really matters, for your mother had that fundamental happiness of soul which no external forces can stir, or even ruffle. She aroused an extraordinary interest in me."

Lucien did not reply for a moment. He appeared to be meditating deeply, and scarcely to have heard his friend's last words.

"I think they were happy in more than the ordinary sense of the word," he said at length. "They loved each other . . . they loved the same things. But my mother knew more . . . saw further . . . and deeper. In spite of all my father's nature-knowledge, in spite of all his nature-love, her eyes were opened more than his."

"And her child's more than either," murmured the old man to himself.

No more was said, and as the golden splendour of the evening slowly invaded the quiet room, they still sat silent, old heart and young wrapped in a mystical cloud of memories and dreams.

(To be concluded)

Eva M. Martin

CHRISTMAS EVE, ADYAR

By M.

SOFTLY the silvery haze of the moonlight enwraps silent forms.

It is the mysterious night of Christmas when Nature pauses in wonder, because the Divine Birth is at hand. In many a clime I have seen the Christmas Night. Always, everywhere, it has had this same solemnity, this same pathetic stillness that fills my heart with awe and my eyes with tears.

I do not know what is the mystic Presence that spreads this sweetness o'er the world.

I felt it on the plains of heather of my land, whilst in far distant villages, church-bells were chiming, and under my feet the frosty earth was white. There the plain was as wide as the sea, and the starlit sky above was vast and deep. In the immensity around me the winds were hushed and all stood still.

I have felt it in the country in England, where the moon shone on quiet hills and trees full of damp fragrance. In the distance rang children's voices singing carols. The same silence, the same pathetic beauty.

I felt it in a big city. This time the moonlight shone on bustling crowds, hurrying to unholy pleasures. But for the soul that only lingered for a while listening to the Voices of the Sacred Night, there again was the same solemnity that reigned on the lonely plains. 'Venite Adoremus'—that anthem, breathed from the recesses of cathedrals and chapels, seemed to swell in the Night outside in spite of the restless crowds.

This year the moon shines once more on the Christmas Eve. Not on frosty plains of heather but on still drooping palm-leaves, not on bustling crowds but on the desolate billows of the Ocean. No church-bells are heard, no voices of children, no cathedral organs; and yet, stronger than ever the anthem, 'Venite Adoremus,' fills the dim scented magic Night. The tropical silence whispers it as did the northern plains, and the breezes here are hushed as they were there. Here too the trees stand motionless and light grey mists rest on the quiet earth. Once more the wondrous glory of the Christmas Night causes all nature to pause in silence, because the Divine Birth is at hand.

O Human Children—yet Divine—could you but see the true scene of Christmas Night? The painters who, above the cradle of the Child, figured angels dancing and embracing each other, had a glimpse of it. The composer of the 'Gloria in Excelsis' heard faint echoes of its music.

Human Souls—yet Divine—it is in your depths that reigns, serene, the Christmas Night. There, the winds are hushed and in the dusk all stands motionless. Glorious stars watch over your slumbers and the cry, 'Venite Adoremus,' rises up. Angels embrace each other singing 'Gloria in Excelsis'. The pathos that fills you here below is the echo of their song in your own Heaven, and the wonder in your eyes, the faint vision of their love.

Human Soul! watch and listen,
The Divine Voice speaks unto you.
It breathes the simple words that, in ancient days, the Master breathed to one of His disciples:
"Lovest thou Me?"
In this night of wondrous Peace, canst thou answer: "I love Thee"?
Then silently bow down, because in thee the Divine Birth is at hand.

M.

REVIEWS

The Hidden Side of Things, by C. W. Leadbeater, Two volumes. (THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE, Adyar Madras, India. Price Rs. 9 or 12*s*. or $3.)

In a very brief foreword the author tells us that this book has been in preparation for the last twelve years; some of it has been published in periodicals in the form of articles, but even these have been revised and additions made.

The volumes are of the deepest interest, unveiling those invisible things which are so much more real to the author than the visible things around him, the invisible things which make the visible world an unreal dream, and leave him unaffected by the thoughts and opinions of this dream-world that men call real.

The First Section is introductory, and explains the nature of the limitations amid which men live, and sketches the plan of the book—"how we are influenced, how we influence ourselves, and how we influence others". Then a man must realise that there is a wider world around him, a higher world above him, than the visible, and that life has a purpose, that there is a Divine Plan.

After this introduction, comes the Second Section, which deals with 'How We are Influenced'. We are influenced by the planets, the sun, by our natural surroundings, by nature-spirits, by centres of magnetism such as cathedrals and temples, by ceremonies, sounds, public opinion, occasional events, and unseen beings. All these are dealt with from their hidden side. Thus, under the influence of the sun, we have a description of the 'vitality globule' which renders at once intelligible H. P. B.'s 'fiery lives'—the puzzle of many a student of *The Secret Doctrine*. Under natural surroundings, taking water, we have "the life of the water itself, the elemental essence pervading it, and the type of nature-spirits associated

with it". Nature-spirits form a most fascinating subject—fascinating first the author, it is evident, and then the reader. The effect of the devotion of the old craftsman on the cathedrals he built or decorated is very beautifully put, but justice is not done to the feeling which lay behind the destruction wrought by the Puritans.

The second volume contains the third, fourth and fifth Sections. The ways in which we influence ourselves by our habits, our physical surroundings, our mental conditions and our amusements are all dealt with in Section III. The chapter on physical environment is particularly good, and deals with the furnishing and adornment of houses, the choice of books, jewellery, talismans, clothing, and the like. Students should consider earnestly all that is said of thought, especially in its influence on others, in the fourth Section.

Needless to say that we heartily commend these valuable volumes to our readers, and we congratulate them and ourselves that we have such a writer and teacher in our midst.

A. B.

Gitanjali, by Rabindra Nath Tagore. (The Chiswick Press, London, for the India Society. Price 10*s.* 6*d.* net.)

This short collection of exquisite prose poems is pure worship. A single quotation will illustrate the daring simplicity of these 'song offerings' better than any words of ours, but even then it is hard to choose from so wide a range of exalted thought. Listen to this :

> You came down from your throne and stood at my cottage door.
>
> I was singing all alone in a corner, and the melody caught your ear. You came down and stood at my cottage door.
>
> Masters are many in your hall, and songs are sung there at all hours. But the simple carol of this novice struck at your love. One plaintive little strain mingled with the great music of the world, and with a flower for a prize you came down and stopped at my cottage door.

Here and there a sterner call is heard, but never a discord or cry of despair. To this poet mystic there is music in the lightning flash as in the stars of an eastern sky.

> It quivers like the one last response of life in ecstasy of pain at the final stroke of death; it shines like the pure flame of being burning up earthly sense with one fierce flash.
>
> Beautiful is thy wristlet, decked with starry gems; but thy sword, O lord of thunder, is wrought with uttermost beauty, terrible to behold or to think of.

One leaves such pages under the spell of a soul at one with nature and near to her lord. A characteristic introduction has been written by W. B. Yeats. Our one regret is that the present price must debar many from a source of great joy.

W. D. S. B.

Myths and Legends of Japan, by F. Hadland Davis. (George Harrap & Co. London. Price 7*s.* 6*d.* net.)

In this delightful book, Mr. Davis has collected together a number of Japanese myths and legends, representative of the folk-lore of the country. They are accompanied by a series of most enchanting coloured illustrations by Evelyn Paul—so enchanting are they, that one hesitates to say how much the original MSS. may owe to their charm. The Kojiki and the Nihongi are the sources from which the early legends and myths of Japan are drawn, and their stories show a curious mixture of the poetical and the quaint, with the grotesque and the horrible. Early heroes and warriors are regarded as minor Divinities, and to them many a fascinating legend owes its source. The Japanese hero is refined by an innate love of poetry and of the beautiful, and his strength is combined with gentleness; all this is shown forth in the folk-tales of the country. What could exceed the tenderness of Benkei, when his master's wife gave birth to a child? What surpass the heroism of his death, standing before the bodies of the loved master and mistress, upright, yet pierced with a thousand arrows? Devils and goblins play a great part in these legends of the Far East, as does also Nature and her attendant sprites. Other nations have deified the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, and the greatest works of the Universal Mother: it is left for Japan to describe the red blossoms of the azaleas, as the 'fires of God,' and the white snows of Fuji as the garments of Divine Beings. The smallest of insects are made the subjects of ghostly tales; nothing is too insignificant to have a poetical explanation attached to it. We find ourselves laughing in one story over the antics of a kettle; in another, almost moved to tears when we read about a little Japanese quilt, that murmured: "Elder Brother probably is cold? Nay, thou probably art cold?" It is a truly delightful collection of fairy lore, and brings the sunshine and child-likeness of the Far East

before the eyes of the reader. And again, a word of high praise must be given to the coloured plates adorning it, which display such an artistic combination of rich eastern colouring with the daintiness and delicacy of the West. It is difficult to applaud sufficiently such illustrations as 'The Moon-Folk and the Lady Kaguya' or 'Hoori, and the Sea-God's Daughter'—and why should two only be selected, when all are of almost equal distinction? The final chapter of 'Myths and Legends of Japan' deals with the poetry of the nation. The 'tanka' a poem of five lines or phrases and thirty-one syllables, seems most typical of the charm of Japan's Muse. Though even more limited than the English Sonnet, the Japanese artist frequently succeeds in suggesting in the brief fragment that the poem has no end, and the imagination seizes it and turns it into a thousand, thousand lines. A play upon words is often indulged in, and this is practised not with the idea of provoking laughter, but of winning admiration for a clever and subtle verbal ornament. Charming as are many of the love poems, with their delicacy and absence of all sensuous feeling, it is the Nature poems of the country that are most supremely beautiful, and two or three exquisite examples by Chomei are given.

A book to be read by all those to whom the beauty, charm and subtlety of Far-Eastern Lands appeal.

K.

The Ethical and Religious Value of the Novel, by Ramsden Balmforth. (George Allen and Co., Ltd. London.)

"The various chapters in this little book were originally given as Sunday evening discourses to my congregation in Cape Town," begins the author in his preface. We congratulate this particular church on the happiness of possessing a minister of so wide and sympathetic an outlook on life. With Mr. Balmforth, as with a steadily increasing number of modern clergymen, the spiritual needs of man are no longer divorced from the needs of our common life. To him belongs that sane and true sight which ever sees "sermons in stones and good in everything". The book is a series of fascinating studies in some great novels of our age. "The novelist," says Mr. Balmforth, "is a critic and interpreter of life." He shows that

the aim, unconscious or otherwise, of the great novelists is fundamentally the same as that of the preacher—"to give us deeper insight, and with deeper insight, greater courage and strength of will and more abundant life". The great story-teller mirrors the minds and hearts of men, and by sympathy and imagination lifts us into a larger world than that wherein run the little grooves of the daily round of life. He is inclined to the opinion that the novel, being more universal in effect, exercises a wider influence than the sermons delivered in our churches, and proceeds with much insight and a most attractive lucidity of style, to 'point the moral' in a very real sense in such works as George Eliot's *Adam Bede*, Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables*, and others. Perhaps the quotation of the title of a single chapter or so will show the plan of this charming book better than anything else. Thus the first chapter deals with George Eliot's *Adam Bede* and the Supreme Moral Law, and the last with James Lane Allen's *The Increasing Purpose* and the Law of Development. Scattered through the book are many sayings of deep and tender wisdom; as when the author says: "Every nurse and every teacher of the young ought to pass an examination, not only of the head, but of the heart." And again: "Retribution itself is part of the law of Love—it is the means of purification."

C. M. C.

Star Lore of all Ages, by William Tyler Olcott. (G. P. Putnam & Sons, London.)

A most interesting collection of legends and traditions regarding the Constellations, and of great value to the student of stellar lore. We know of no other book which contains so much information on the subject. It deals with what is perhaps the most popularly interesting branch of Astronomy, not only in an interesting way, but in a way that must infallibly lead the reader on to a desire for further knowledge of this most fascinating science. It is well illustrated both with diagrams and with photographs of many famous pictures and statues illustrating ancient legends, and whoever reads it will never lack for interesting companions on a star-lit night.

A. M.

A New Conscience and an Ancient Evil, by Jane Addams, Hull House, Chicago. (The Macmillan Co., New York. Price 4s. 6*d*. net.)

This interesting book should prove most useful in spreading knowledge on a subject so painful that many otherwise conscientious women shrink from its closer acquaintance, fearing the emotional consequences. It can also be recommended for study to those who are engaged in combating the social evil of which it treats. The disclosure the book makes of the widespread business organisation which is the foundation of much modern evil is appalling—for no attempt is made by either art of words or emotional colouring to heighten the sense of the horrors it records. With the plain disclosure of facts and methods of social amelioration Miss Addams contents herself, and her style of dealing with her material is simple and restrained almost to austerity. She divides her subject under various headings very systematically. It is a common saying that you cannot make a nation moral by Act of Parliament; but you can make by Act of Parliament the way of the evil-doer more difficult. The result produced by the State of Illinois, which "passed the first pandering law in this country, changing the offence from disorderly conduct to a misdemeanour and greatly increasing the penalty," is encouraging to all social reformers. For the result was that "the white slave traders in Chicago have become so frightened that the foreign importation of girls to Chicago has markedly declined. It is stated that since 1909 about 1,000 white slave traders, of whom some thirty or forty were importers of foreign girls have been driven from the city." This is at least something to the good, and Miss Addams is right when she remarks: "If political rights were once given to women, one cannot imagine that the existence of the social evil would remain unchallenged in its semi-legal position." The desire to save humanity from hideous lives of suffering, disease and vice, to make the world a purer and a safer place to live in, is at the root of that fiery spirit of self-sacrifice to the cause of Women's Suffrage which is its distinguishing mark. The book ends with a note of hope. A new conscience, slowly, very slowly, with regard to this and other evils of the past and present is coming to the birth amongst us, as facts related in this book show and recent Acts of legislation testify. May that 'gallant correction' which

Miss Addams predicts soon blossom into strong maturity and full power! E. S.

Individuality and Art, by Hubert E. A. Furst. (Macmillan & Co., Ltd. Price 3*s.* 6*d.* net).

The thesis maintained by the author of this essay is that the individuality of Turner was the least important factor in the production of his Art. Outside influences, ranging from artistic forerunners, down to Charles I and the peculiar character of his mother's insanity, are cited as more potent in the matter than the artist himself. Mr. Furst writes with great gusto, if little grace, but whether his arguments will interest his readers to an equal extent must depend on the further question whether their minds are attuned to 19th century or 20th century thought. The student of the Ancient Wisdom will find his reasoning unconvincing.

Incidentally one finds interesting information about a number of painters, while a suggestion of considerable value is thrown out as to the probable connection between the discoveries of Galileo and the rise of the *Chiaroscuro* School of Painting. While the whole of intellectual Europe was engaged on the question of the heliocentric as opposed to the geocentric theory of our universe, the Painters, it is suggested, were led, as a direct result, to turn their attention to the solution of problems of Light and Shade, and we have Caravaggio and his group of *Tenebrosi* working in Rome, leading up at a later day to Rembrandt van Rhyn. On the whole, however, we cannot consider this little book as a very serious contribution to Art criticism. H. R.

Darneley Place, by Richard Bagot. (Methuen & Co., Ltd. London.)

This is an interesting novel with an occult setting. Mr. Bagot writes with his customary familiarity and charm of Italian life and character. He should, however, guard against a growing tendency to redundancy in words and repetition of matter. The incidents of the plot are rather scanty in comparison with the bulk of the book, which would have gained by compression. The main thought of the book is that the living can be influenced in their thoughts and actions by the dead. E. S.

The Times and the Teaching of Jesus the Christ, by the Author of *The Great Law*. (Longmans Green & Co., London. Price 12*s*. 6*d*. net.)

The author's previous volume, *The Great Law*, will be familiar to most of our readers as a valuable contribution to the literature of religion. The present volume is a worthy successor. It is an attempt to portray the life and teaching of Jesus in the light of the results of critical investigation up to date—its ultimate purpose, however, being not merely scholarly but religious, *viz.*, "to trace the relationship between God and man, and to indicate the path by which He is to be reached".

The book is divided into three distinct parts. Using the work of some of the best authorities, the author sketches in Part I the 'Historical and Political Background,' giving a very condensed summary of contemporary Jewish history. In Part II, he wisely adds to his historico-political background an outline of the social and religious situation of the period, treating not only of the 'three great sects,' the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes (with a chapter on 'The Messianic Hope'), but also of the Therapeutae, the Neoplatonists, and, above all, the Gnostics. Then in Part III he enters upon the subject proper —the life and teaching.

The sketch of the actual life of Jesus—though claiming no occult origin—very closely corresponds with that which our readers have long had before them in Mrs. Besant's *Esoteric Christianity*. This is followed by a capable summary of the mystical interpretation of the Gospel story, the life-record being explained as representing "the progress of the Initiate . . . from the grade of the neophyte to that of an Adept".

In considering the recorded teachings of the Christ, a long chapter is devoted to the 'Words and Acts,' giving "in parallel columns where parallels exist, and as isolated texts where this is not the case, such extracts from the four Gospels as would appear, not only from the internal evidence of their probability, but partly also from the results of recent Biblical research, to have been some, at least, of the real Words and Acts". The author then discusses the teachings that are merely hinted at in the Gospels, and the resulting chapter is entitled —'The Doctrine of Re-birth'—for he regards reincarnation as

occupying the most important place among such teachings; he not only claims to find traces of it in the Gospels, but proceeds to vindicate the doctrine by appeal to modern scholarship; he then points out its "necessary complement and corollary"—the doctrine of the immanence of God, which he considers the very kernel of Christ's teaching. The book concludes with a fine chapter on 'Union with God,' in which an endeavour is made to suggest the nature of the teachings delivered by Jesus to chosen disciples, between the times of the Resurrection and the Ascension—teachings which, though unrecorded, the author estimates as the most important of all. With the help of mystics of many different lands and different ages, he treats here of "the path of initiation which leads at first to temporary, and finally to absolute, union with God".

Very striking is the catholicity of the author's selection of quotations: they range, as regards date, from the Upanishats to Sir Oliver Lodge, and, as regards the temperament of their writers, from the Christian Fathers to the poet Swinburne. Theosophical literature is well represented.

The volume is unindexed. A book so full of information and containing so many valuable quotations is worthy of a copious index, and we hope that in a later edition the deficiency will be remedied.

It is especially to the thoughtful among the adherents of conventional Christianity, now in the midst of tumults which threaten to wreck the very bases of exoteric faith, that we commend *The Times and the Teaching of Jesus the Christ.* May many find in it a guide that shall conduct them, by paths not uncongenial to the modern mind, out of the strife of "things seen and temporal" into the peace of "things unseen and eternal"!

R. W. E.

Spiritism and Psychology, by Theodore Flournoy, translated, abridged and with an introduction by Hereward Carrington. (Harper Bros., London. Price 7*s.* 6*d.* net).

As a valuable contribution to modern psychological literature, we welcome the appearance of *Spiritism and Psychology*, and commend it to the attention of those of our readers who

hold, with the present writer, that no one is entitled to an opinion upon a disputed point until he has mastered all that can be said on the other side. Professor Flournoy, widely known not only as an author and public lecturer, but also as a psychic investigator, remains strongly of opinion that adequate explanations of all the phenomena of Spiritism—automatic writing, trance utterance, and even a materialisation, the bones of which could be handled by an investigator—do not necessarily involve the presence of the discarnate entity, but may be satisfactorily accounted for by the mysterious activities of the several subliminal consciousnesses of the sitters taking part in the sitting. Thus in Chapter VI on 'Spirits and Mediums,' we find him making the uncompromising statement:

> The facts of mediumship, either mental or physical, have not furnished me with any certain proof of the intervention of the discarnate, they have always appeared to me explicable by ordinary psychological processes within ourselves.

The author's position is however, not that of the materialist, for, as he is careful to explain, "while disputing the fact that any communication with a spirit world has been *yet established*," he believes that such a spiritual world does exist, and that "we live after the dissolution of the body, and apparent destruction of the human spirit at Death". This passage may be taken as indicating the general purport of *Spiritism and Psychology*, and, although we do not at all agree with the author's conclusions, we are ready to admit that by means of such working hypotheses as 'latent incubation,' 'cryptomnesia,' and 'telepathy a trois,' he has succeeded in making out a strong case. In an interesting passage in support of this view he points out that mediums are not in the habit of telling their sitters what occupies their minds at the moment, but rather that which lies hidden in the recesses of their sub-consciousness; hence it is not to the umbra but to "the penumbra of consciousness, that we must look for the power of radiation to other brains".

This has frequently been observed by the present writer with regard to attempted telepathic communications, the message received not being that consciously projected by the transmitter, but some stray fragment of thought from a lower stratum of his mental consciousness.

With regard to the objection of the author that spirit messages are often trivial and even absurdly foolish, there is

nothing in mere death to transform all the departed into saints and sages. It would indeed be rather remarkable if that species of shallow and talkative individual we characterise here as a 'bore' were never to be encountered in the Beyond.

In this connection too the appalling difficulties of communication should never be overlooked. The author himself admits this, and tells us: "Hodgson compared the communications that he held with the deceased (Myers), through the channel of the medium (Mrs. Piper), to the conversation that might take place in this world between two persons, widely separated from each other, who were compelled to exchange their messages by means of two messengers, both of them drunk."

The translator in a note explains the drunken persons in this analogy to be the medium on this side and the intermediary on the other—both presumably in a trance-like condition. But if this be so, comments our Author, "in the case of the most powerful medium of our generation and of a deceased person, who had given his life to the solution of this problem, and had resolved to do everything after his death to manifest himself to us, what must be the difficulties in the ordinary case?"

Most of our readers will be familiar with that interesting development of modern Spiritism the cross-correspondences.

"On April 8, 1907, in London Mrs. Piper pronounced in trance the words 'Light in the West', the same day three hours later, Mrs. Verrall at Cambridge, wrote automatically a message containing these words: 'Rosy is the East, and so on. You will find that you have written a message for Mr. Piddington, which you did not understand but he did.' The same day, a little later Mrs. Holland then in Calcutta, received through her pencil a communication: 'Do you remember that exquisite sky, when the afterglow made the East as beautiful and as richly coloured as the West—Martha became as Mary, Leah as Rachel?'"

No thoughtful person can deny that these cross-correspondences constitute an important factor in the problem that remains to be solved. But whether this unknown factor be indeed the activities of the late F. W. Myers, or whether

according to Professor Flournoy it be the collective product of the sub-consciousnesses of all the mediums or the special creation of one of them cannot yet be clearly demonstrated, however much it may be affirmed.

It must therefore be left to the individual reader to determine whether the canopy of Professor Flournoy's theory is sufficiently extensive to cover the frame-work of his well authenticated facts, or whether indeed as the present writer cannot help suspecting, there are more things in Heaven and Earth, than are dreamed of in his philosophy.

K. F. S.

The Troubadours, by Rev. H. J. Chaytor, M. A. (Cambridge University Press, London. Price 1s. net.)

This is one of the series of handbooks of literature and science issued by the Cambridge University Press. The author scrupulously avoids all the fascinating by-paths of romance and mysticism which the mere name of troubadour suggests, and confines himself within the strict boundaries of historical facts and literary criticism. From its origin in Provence he follows the history of this poetic impulse as it spreads over the whole of France, over Spain, Italy, Germany and England, and finds its inspiration lasting in our own times. Short biographical sketches are given of the more distinguished of these lyric poets, and differences of style are commented upon. Due attention is given to their position as recorders of the customs and manners of their times, as well as to the influence they exerted as social critics and religious reformers.

Bibliography and notes complete this small volume which will prove a useful addition to the library of those who are especially interested in this subject.

A. E. A.

Omens and Superstitions of Southern India, by Edgar Thurston, C. I. E. (T. Fisher Unwin, London. Price 12s. 6d. net.)

Very few, if any, are better fitted than Edgar Thurston to write on the customs, omens, etc., of Southern India, and his most recent work is a valuable addition to his *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, showing, as it does, the similarity in many instances between the practices of the people of Southern India

and those of Voodooism, etc., as formerly carried out in America and the islands of the Pacific Ocean. Undoubtedly many of the rites and practices described by Mr. Thurston are extinct: one, however, as shown in the illustration facing p. 119, is frequently to be seen in the villages of the Madras Presidency and Ceylon, while the cruder figures of elephants, pigs, etc., shown on p. 162, are to be found, beautifully reproduced in gold, in the jewellers' shops of Regent Street and the Avenue de l'Opera, the society women who wear them as 'lucky' little dreaming that they are copying an ancient custom of the 'poor ignorant heathen'. The student of Occultism will find much of interest in the symbols on p. 124; in fact the whole work is well worth perusing, filling in, as it does, many of the missing links in the study of symbolism, omens and superstitions.

H. R. M. M.

The Jewel of Seven Stars, by Bram Stoker. (William Rider and Son, London. Price 1s. net.)

This is rather a disappointing story, when read by one who has made previous acquaintance with the same author's *Dracula*. Starting, in thrilling fashion, with an attack on an elderly collector of antiquities by an Egyptian mummy—or by its Familiar, the book gradually loses in interest, and at the close the reader is left in a pleasing state of uncertainty as to whether Queen Tera has succeeded in her attempt at resurrection, or if not—as to what fate has overtaken her! After indulging in several expeditions in her 'astral body' she attempts to unlock a safe, so that she may see and remove, an article that is inside it. There is a suggestion of an effort to obsess the heroine of the tale, a Miss Trelawny, who goes about in a 'dazed and dreamy' condition for some days; but nothing apparently comes of it, and at the end, a little heap of ashes is left for one to speculate upon—and nothing else. Nevertheless, to one reading in uncritical fashion, and who enjoys what is popularly known as 'having one's flesh creep,' the book may be recommended for passing quite pleasantly a couple of hours, for it is exciting, and written with a considerable sense of the uncanny.

K.

A Layman's Philosophy, by Alexander Davis. (Kegan, Paul Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd. Price 3*s.* 6*d.* net.)

This work is claimed to be "one of practical and philosophic communings on the two forces, Religion and Ethics, as they affect or manifest themselves in the ego". The standpoint proves a decidedly materialistic one, the ground taken being that "religion, as it is presented to us in outward form, dogma or creed, merely seems to veil the importance and value of Ethics, and that Ethics might be preached and practised in all purity without a spiritual framing or by medium of priestcraft". Granted, theoretically; but unfortunately theory and practice have a habit of not squaring. Experience shows that for the average man, and still more for the great mass of mankind below the average, "a spiritual framing and the mediumship of priestcraft"—which generally means the introduction of the personal element—are necessary adjuncts to enforce Ethics and to give moral considerations any inspiring power. A Layman forgets that mankind stands on many different moral and spiritual levels, and also varies in temperament, and that to many a 'spiritual framing' for their souls' nourishment is an imperative necessity.

His philosophy seems to be neither original nor profound nor in accordance with the facts of nature, of life, and of man, as viewed from the idealistic standpoint. He seems almost ignorant of the vast literature of Spiritualism, Theosophy and Psychical Research, which throws light on the subjects of the immortality of the soul, and the after-death life which, he says, are unknowable. All philosophers are not of A Layman's mind, for in ancient India, in Greece and in the more recent days of Eucken, James and Bergson, many of them have, as a dry matter of fact, thought it profitable to discuss the subjects of man's immortality and the conditions of his life after death. All religions have also their philosophical presentment, and all religions teach the immortality of the soul, and give some information as to its future after death, and the teachers and vast masses of believers in these religions are not all fools. But it is only fair to say that if the author had come across the theory of reincarnation and some of the other Theosophical teachings some of his difficulties, with regard to the equality of soul, for example, might have been removed. One can only hope that a more extended scope of study and deeper thought

will in time bring to our author a philosophy of a more helpful and therefore truer nature. E. S.

Personal Power, by Keith J. Thomas. (Cassell & Co., Ltd. London. Price 6s.)

This is a decidely interesting book, written in a pleasantly simple and concise style, full of pithy sayings and of most practical hints and suggestions. It represents the author's own philosophy of life, so is not written in the interests of any particular school of thought, with the welcome result that we are spared the repetition of certain catchwords, usually employed on this and kindred subjects. The mental power, the result of concentration and determination, of which the book treats, is mainly, not entirely, to be employed on success in the affairs of life. "The force which drives a man to any goal he has before him is personal power. It is the Divine part of man that gives him dominion over the earth and over himself." The doctrine in brief is: "I believe in myself"; and it is dealt with in three parts: Power in the Making; Power in Use; and Pleasures of Power. It may be objected that the result, mental merely, of gaining and using this power may make the selfish man more selfish, and better able to exploit his neighbour; and that it would develop individualism to a dangerous extent. But "if you live for the perfecting of yourself you live for all others," and the weak are almost helpless to aid the world, whereas the strong man is an asset of enormous importance to any righteous cause. The Theosophist who believes that in time all men will weary of self-seeking, will welcome the teaching that develops self-reliance, strength, ability. This book has, underlying its practical insistence on the necessity of self-culture for success in occupation, a strongly moral tone, and its spirit of optimistic sturdy commonsense is a valuable agent in promoting that human evolution in which Mr. Thomas is an ardent believer. Most people would probably gain if they acted on the author's sane and sensible credo: "I claim the right to think for myself and act for myself, in accordance with those laws which I feel to be true. If I misuse my gifts, if I fail in my duty, if I make mistakes, I will accept the consequences; but being here and alive, I will be thankful that I am alive, and I will enjoy my life within the limits which my mind prescribes." E. S.

CHRISTMAS AMONG OUR PARIAH CHILDREN

By HENRY HOTCHNER

HOW bright were their upturned faces, and how joy and hope, too, gleamed out as our beloved President went with food and toys to each one of them—these four hundred children, outcastes in India. All students of the Panchama Schools, one of Colonel Olcott's many benefactions, which, under the guidance of Mrs. Besant, has continued and enlarged its usefulness, the children were gathered under the great banyan-tree where, only a few days before, thousands of people had listened to the President's inspiring Convention lectures.

It was quite dark when the children came and sat in several long rows to await the gifts which were to come. The great tree was brilliantly illumined by hundreds of tiny carbide jets, cleverly arranged by Mr. G. Soobhiah Chetty, and here and there the letters "T. S." also shone out.

The President then went among the children and gave to each of them three kinds of food and three toys, which they took with the utmost glee. Each had previously received a cloth, and each seemed overflowing with happiness. All of these gifts had been provided by our ever-generous donor, Mr. C. R. Harvey.

What a curious study in contrasts this scene—these several hundred outcastes, learning the rudiments of life, and the surrounding Theosophical delegates from all over the world, representing the highest hopes and ideals of the new race to come!

When the work of distribution was over, the children gave three rousing cheers for the King, then for the Viceroy, then for Mr. Harvey, then for the President, then for Mr. Leadbeater, then for Mr. G. Soobhiah Chetty, and finally for Miss Kofel, the Superintendent of their Schools.