

# LUCIFER.

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## ON THE WATCH-TOWER.

TAKING up once more the editorial pen, after months of absence from England, I give greeting to the readers of LUCIFER, so many of whom are friends as well as readers. It is a curious but a real tie which binds together a writer and his readers, and this is especially the case where a writer conducts a magazine connected definitely with some deep and far-reaching movement. A common aim unites all whose interest in the movement is real, and the magazine represents it on the physical plane. It becomes a member of the family circle, and its regular contributors take on the aspect of personal friends, so that when the wheel of life brings writer and reader together they meet as old acquaintances instead of as strangers.

The karmic tie set up is one of much interest; what is the nature of the tie between an author and the vast and scattered congregation that he addresses from the pulpit of the press? He influences their minds, introduces to them fresh thoughts, perhaps changes the whole current of their lives. It seems that this contact on the mental plane does not of necessity set up an individual tie, but that nature contracts a kind of collective debt towards the author, which debt is duly repaid to him, but not necessarily by any particular person who may in the past have benefited from his teaching. If he has helped many he receives much help; if he has injured and obscured the thought of others the harm done reacts on his own mind in this or in some future life. The mills grind slowly but they grind exactly, and wholesome bread or poisoned comes back to the sower of the seed.

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Pasteurism is insidiously working its way in India, the Central Committee, according to the *Indian Mirror*, having in hand at Lahore Rs. 31,000, at Bombay Rs. 5,000, and in Bengal Rs. 30,000. Up to the present time the worst crime of modern science, vivisection, has not penetrated into India, but it is hoped that Pasteur Institutes will lead to the complete vivisectioner's laboratory. The culture of poison germs and their experimental injection into animals is a form of "research" which, identical in principle with vivisection, does not at first sight shock people to the same extent as the deliberate carving up, burning and tearing of living animals. The injecting syringe filled with venom causes no more pain, it is argued, than the prick of a needle, and the subsequent slow torture of the poisoned animals is left out of account. But Pasteurism is vivisection in a modified form, and though the sufferings caused by it are small compared with the horrors of the torture-trough, they are wrought under the sway of that evil principle that we may rightly seek to escape the penalty of our own misdoings by inflicting pain on others weaker than ourselves. The bond between man and his animal cousins has always been clearly recognized in India, and the presence of the One Life in the hearts of all beings—not of man only—has been a fundamental doctrine in Indian philosophy. Mineral, vegetable, animal, man, all pulsate by the same Life, and those to whom this truth is a reality can never carelessly destroy anything or deliberately torture a being that can feel pain. Hence the axiom, "Harmlessness is the highest law," and the ideal held up of being "the friend of every creature." Repeated conquests by rougher and harsher races have hardened the old tenderness, and the alienation of sympathy between men and the brutes which is so marked a feature in city life has led to street cruelties to horses and cattle such as disgrace the cities of Europe. But even yet the animals wander freely in friendly fashion in many of the towns and in the country districts, pushing enquiring noses into shops, no man making them afraid. Worn-out creatures pass their last days peacefully, and if a European suggests the idea of slaying a beast because it can no longer labour, he is regarded with shocked surprise. Yet in this land an attempt is being made, and threatens to be successful, to introduce vivisection under the shield of western science, and it has

actually been found necessary to form an Anti-vivisection Society in Calcutta. I had the pleasure of lecturing for this Society in the Calcutta Town Hall last January, but the very necessity for its existence shows how India has fallen from her old ideals. Rationalizing Societies like the Brahmō Samâj, with its flesh-eating and alcohol-drinking, have paved the way, by their disregard of the ancient rules of pure living, for the worse abuses that are now threatening to invade the land. The International Society for the Protection of Animals from Vivisection has given useful help to the Indian movement by its literature. It is an interesting and significant fact that in Paris, one of the chief centres of the vivisectionists, we see also the most dangerous forms of magic and the lowest depths of "Satanism." The selfishness which finds one of its most extreme expressions in vivisection, in the attempt to wrench open nature's secrets by reckless torture of others, is the essential characteristic of the black magician, and vivisection is but one kind of sorcery. Its practice is a graduation in the black art, and carries a man far along the terrible road whose end is death—not of the body alone.

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The following note on an important scientific lecture was sent to LUCIFER by Mr. Sinnett, but was unfortunately crowded out :

From the Theosophical point of view the utterances of modern scientific students are not always so impressive as they seem to the world at large, and yet they have their charms. If only the cultured world would study superphysical phenomena with the same painstaking care and attention to the significance of every observation made that is shown in the physical laboratory, what grand advances would be made towards a better comprehension of Nature than generally prevails at present. And that better comprehension is for large groups of our companions in evolution an essential preliminary to the development of spiritual aptitudes. There are temperaments, of course, that leap to them across an unfilled chasm of ignorance concerning the intervening territory of Nature that lies between the incarnate and the spiritual condition. But the tendency of modern intellectual progress has been to foster the other temperament which rises from exact knowledge of the physical plane to exact application of those beyond and thence upward—or which may so rise at any rate. That which is needed to bring great numbers

of this generation into the region of theosophic study and sympathy is exact knowledge of *something* beyond the physical plane. It is amazing how absolutely without the minutest fragment of such knowledge the scientific world stands at the present day, and how ludicrously the whole body of natural conjecture that ought to grow out of a belief in immortality and a spiritual government of the earth is ignored when learned men in scientific lecture rooms say what they really mean.

The utterances that have specially suggested these remarks were put forward some little time ago at the Royal Institution by Dr. Burdon Sanderson, who lectured there with "Ludwig and Vitalism" as his text. Ludwig was a great German physiologist, and Vitalism as defined by Dr. Sanderson is that doctrine according to which some German physiologists have been inclined to recognize that beyond the mechanical and chemical phenomena at work in the human body, there may be something else playing an obscure but influential part in the economy of the whole machine which they denominate vital force. As Dr. Sanderson represents the matter, this heretical belief was little more than the survival of a superstition, and has been dropping out of notice during the last fifty years, but there has recently been a recrudescence of the idea under the designation "neo-vitalism." The exponents of this doctrine bowed to the materialism of the age by recognizing that if the word force were used to mean something which manifested itself by measurable effects, there was no indication that any force excepting those recognized by the physicist was in operation in the organism. But they argued that some processes of life, at first regarded as entirely chemical or physical, did not conform so precisely as they were expected to do to chemical and physical laws. The process specially instanced is the formation of lymph, and to quote the *Times* report of the lecture the neo-vitalists answered the question how such a case as this was to be met "with the word 'cell' or 'protoplasm'—living individuals, which being placed at the inlets of the system of drainage let in less or more, in obedience not to physical laws but to vital ones, to internal laws which were special to themselves." The authors of this idea have certainly, from the theosophic point of view, got no great distance on their journey towards a comprehension of the human organism, but they are to

be congratulated on their progress for what it is worth. Dr. Burdon Sanderson on the other hand is *not* to be congratulated on the disposition which renders him stolidly opposed even to that minute concession in the direction of an enlarged wisdom. "I believe in corn and rice," says the old satirical verse, "not in virtue or in vice." I believe in chemistry and physics, Dr. Sanderson seems to say—not in man as anything better than a bundle of fibres and molecules played upon by external pressures. True progress was to be accomplished by faithful adherence to the principles that have governed physiology during the last fifty years, by patient attention to the machinery of the animal body. The practical purpose towards which physiology strove "would not be gained until by better knowledge the same sort of control had been acquired over the processes of the living animal body that the exact sciences had already given those who knew how to profit by their teaching over the forces of the inorganic world." How soon, one wonders, will this delicious phrase sound as grotesque in the hearing of men of science generally as it does already for those who have been able to profit by the teaching of Theosophy to the extent of getting control not merely over the bodily organism in question, but over a host of forces with which it is entangled, although they lie for the most part in realms of nature where the writs of chemistry and physics will never be enabled to run. The *élite* of the London scientific world was gathered as usual on Friday evenings at the Royal Institution to applaud the highly instructed, orthodox professor who addressed them. Very few, we may feel sure, will have been troubled with any suspicion that Dr. Burdon Sanderson was propounding views which could not fail to be fairly comic in their absurdity, not only to the graduates in occult science, but to the large number of students still in the "outer court" who know enough to know that knowledge is possible.

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Prof. R. L. Garner, an African explorer, in travelling up the Congo, made a stay at Matadi, the capital of the Congo Free State, and saw there a slave, stated to be a typical man of his tribe, whom he describes as "the most singular specimen of the human race that" he had ever seen. He was strikingly like a gorilla, says Mr. Garner, and certainly, according to the description given, he was

strikingly like an ancient Lemurian. His body was long in proportion to his limbs, the legs comparatively short, the arms long. "The forehead was low and receding, the frontal bone being prominent in the centre, and much depressed at the sides. His eyes were overhung with enormous ridges and heavy eyebrows, above which was a deep depression, and the low forehead was traversed by three or four deep lines or wrinkles almost resembling folds of the skin." The eyes were placed obliquely in the head, the jaws massive, the chin receding, the muzzle projecting, the legs much curved, the hands large, the feet "immensely large" and turned inwards. If the description be compared with that given of a Lemurian in *The Lunar Pitris*, pp. 19, 20, many noteworthy points of similarity will be observed, as the "roll of flesh" which represented a forehead, the long arms, the legs that could not be straightened, the "enormous" hands and feet, the projecting heels, the protruding jaws. The tribe to which Mr. Garner's man belonged lives in the far interior of Africa, and its members are said to be cannibals, and to be strong and fierce; this particular man showed a ferocious temper on the slightest provocation, and was exceedingly strong. It would be interesting to know if any Lemurian offshoot found refuge in Central Africa, and remained there comparatively unmixed to the present day, as a standing specimen of Third Race humanity, to appear in due time and justify the accuracy of occult descriptions.

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Now and then a piéce of belated bigotry comes limping along, like a theological Rip Van Winkle, and astonishes the modern world by mumbling some of the almost forgotten formulæ about orthodoxy. One of our members in Honolulu sends us an extract from the *Report of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts*, containing a letter from Bishop Alfred Willis, of Honolulu, dated February, 1895; the Bishop writes:

"A far more serious matter, which threatens to destroy the faith of some, is the stealthy inroad of Theosophy, the advances of which are all the more dangerous on account of the claim that is made, that it is not opposed to Christianity, and that one may remain a good Christian while espousing its teachings. A wealthy widow, of Hawaiian birth, is using her influence to make herself a

reputation as the patroness of this subtle form of atheism. At her expense, a lecturer on Theosophy from the United States was here for weeks, drawing large audiences from the classes that are always ready to hear some new thing. A Theosophical Society (in two Lodges) has been formed, prominent in which is a brother of the above-mentioned lady, who is a member and *office-holder* of the Anglican Church. I have endeavoured, both by letter and a personal interview, to convince him of the incompatibility of Theosophy—as expounded here—with the faith of Christianity, but without avail. He is spell-bound by *Isis Unveiled* (!), a work, I believe, of Madame Blavatsky. He undertook, however, to resign his offices, and I am now waiting to receive his resignation. His children no longer attend Sunday School, but are sent on Sunday mornings to a 'Lotus Class,' held by his sister, where they are taught the blankest atheism."

The Bishop's remark about atheism is not a deliberately false statement, we are glad to say, but arises from his unfortunately complete ignorance of Theosophical teachings, an ignorance very clearly shown in a bitter sermon preached against the Wisdom Religion, in which he stated that Theosophy was only copied from the *Kabalah*. In answer to an enquiry, however, he frankly admitted that he had not read the *Kabalah*, and further that he had not read any Theosophical publication. Our correspondent considers that the comparison of two unknown quantities and the formulation thereupon of a judgment is a process involving considerable difficulty, and we find ourselves compelled to agree with him; but there is this of hopefulness in the situation, that if the Bishop could be persuaded to consider what is really taught in Theosophy, he "might hear with his ears and understand with his heart and be converted" to a more charitable frame of mind. He would then discover that Theosophy unveils in his own religion depths profounder than he had imagined, and presents a view of God that at once satisfies devotion and reason, a view which does not antagonize the crude conceptions of the ignorant, but which explains them, puts them into their fitting places, and uses them as steps instead of barriers. Theosophy has given religion back to many a one who had surrendered it, driven to the sacrifice by outraged reason, for it shows that many dogmas, which revolt the intellect and the conscience

when presented in their exoteric forms, conceal truths at once profound and inspiring when they are rescued from the wrappings folded around them by ignorance and misconception. The Honolulu Branch will do good service if it can place in the hands of those who are groping in the "eclipse of faith" the torch of right knowledge of superphysical realities. Atheism will then become impossible, for as the spiritual side of the universe is unveiled, from the Supreme LOGOS to the lowliest ministrant life, God will become "all in all," and the worlds but words of His self-revealing.

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White Lotus Day has become quite an institution all over the Theosophical world, and its fifth celebration at the Blavatsky Lodge was held on the evening of May 8th. The platform was a bank of exquisite white flowers sent by friends, some coming from as far afield as Nice. The readings were from the *Light of Asia* and the *Voice of the Silence*, and brief speeches, marked by a happy tone of confidence in the permanence of H. P. B.'s work and in her continued interest in the Society, were delivered. At the close of the meeting a friendly conversation was held, largely made up of reminiscences of her last incarnation. The following expression of feeling, sent by a correspondent, will be shared by many:

"I never look at H. P. B. but I lose sight of the instrument in the thought of the hidden powers who guided her pen. For surely no unaided mind could have evolved that mountain of knowledge, *The Secret Doctrine*, which seems to me to be a marvellous cyclopædia of occult wisdom and philosophy relating to the cosmos and man, and at the same time to be only a small sample of the unknown, in fact just a veiled glimpse of the vast invisible reality, a mere outline of a grand picture to fill in the details of which will require eternity."



## THE LIVES OF THE LATER PLATONISTS.

### INTRODUCTION.

IF it is true that wisdom is gained by experience, and that the accumulated experience of the past is the heirloom of the present, then, perhaps, no period of the world's known history is a richer mine of experience for us to-day than the first six centuries of the present era, and no school of thinkers more useful for our present needs than the group of brilliant intellects which carried on the Platonic tradition from the third to the sixth century, A.D. In many respects they had the same problems in religion and philosophy to solve which again confront us in the closing years of the nineteenth century. True, the problems are more intensified and accentuated to-day, because life is more rapid, the world-area more widespread, and the inter-communication of peoples and nations easier by a thousandfold. Nevertheless, the problems are fundamentally the same, and, therefore, the views of the Later Platonists on philosophy, religion and psychology should be of first importance to the careful student of such subjects in our own day. And though it is true that their researches in experimental physics were as nothing compared to the brilliant discoveries of modern times, nevertheless, some of their physical theories, based on psychic research, may still prove of value as a contribution to general knowledge.

In these pages, however, I do not intend to deal with the teachings of the School in any but a cursory manner, and as incidental to the lives of the philosophers themselves; my effort will be rather to put before the reader a number of biographical studies which may induce him to enquire further into the matter. Let us first have before us a mind-picture of our Platonic sages, and realize

that they were men and women of like nature with ourselves, occupied in the same struggle, interested in the same problems, and then we shall be less prepared than is usually the case to dismiss antiquity and its most distinguished exponents with a scarce tolerant shrug of the shoulders.

My information will be drawn, for the most part, from biographies written by members of the School, but all references to original documents and more recent authorities will be excluded from the text for the sake of clearness, and given at the end in the form of a bibliography, which will be of service to the student who wishes to pursue the subject at greater length.

Though the lives of several of our philosophers have been dealt with as introductory to the exposition of their teachings by a number of writers, there is no book which attempts the biographical history of the whole School; and even the separate lives of the Later Platonists have not as yet been altogether intelligently treated in modern times because of the prevailing ignorance of the very elements of psychic science.

It will, therefore, be the writer's task and pleasure to elucidate, to some extent, the mystical side of the subject, for no one but at best a trained mystic, or at least one who has a sincere sympathy with the best in mysticism, can really understand the aspirations and efforts of the Later Platonists.

In order, also, to lead the reader gradually to a comprehension of the main factors which produced the maelstrom of thought and religious and philosophical controversy, out of which the Platonic revival arose, it will be necessary first of all to run briefly over the names of the Schools of Alexandria which for so many years was the centre of the intellectual activity of the Greek and Roman worlds. And as we are engaged upon the biographical side of the subject rather than upon the history of the evolution of thought, we will first present the reader with a rough sketch and mind-picture of the once great capital of the Ptolemies; for though most of our philosophers had their chairs elsewhere, they nearly all spent some time in the great city; and one or other of their number, though not always the most distinguished, carried on the work of the lecture room there, until with Proclus the main centre was transferred to Athens.

## ALEXANDRIA AND ITS SCHOOLS.

## A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE CITY.

LET us carry our minds back to the latter quarter of the fourth century of the present era, when Hypatia was a little girl, and the hopes of the Platonic School had received so rude a shock from the early death of Julian, the emperor-philosopher; just in time to see the Serapeum still standing unviolated by the iconoclastic hands of Christian fanaticism. Let us ascend the great lighthouse, 400 feet high, on the island off the mainland, the world-famous Pharos, and take a bird's-eye view of the intellectual centre of the ancient world.

The city lies out before us between the sea front and the great lake towards the south, Lake Mareotis, on a long neck of land or isthmus. Far away to the left is the most westerly mouth of the Nile, called Canopic, and a great canal winds out that way to Canopus, where is the sacred shrine of Serapis. Along it, if it were festival-time, you would see crowds of pilgrims hastening, on gaily decorated barges, to pay their homage to certain wise priests, one of whom about this time was a distinguished member of our School.

The great city and its teeming populace stretches out before us with a sea-frontage of some four or five miles; in shape it is oblong, for when Alexander the Great, hundreds of years ago, in 331 B.C., marked out its original walls with the flour his Macedonian veterans carried, he traced it in the form of a chlamys, a scarf twice as long as it was broad. Two great streets, or main arteries, in the form of a cross divide it into four quarters. These thoroughfares are far wider than any of our modern streets, and the longer one, parallel to the shore, and extending through the outlying suburbs, has a length of three leagues, so that the Alexandrians consider it quite a journey to traverse their city.

Where these streets cross is a great square surrounded with handsome buildings, and adorned with fountains, statues and trees. There are many other squares and forums also, but none so vast as the great square. Many pillars and obelisks adorn the city; the most conspicuous of them being a flat-topped pillar of red stone, on a hill near the shore, and two obelisks on the shore itself, one of which is the present Cleopatra's Needle,

The island on which we are standing is joined to the main land by a huge mole almost a mile long, with two water-ways cutting it, spanned with bridges, and defended with towers. This mole helps to form the great harbour on our right, and the smaller and less safe harbour on our left. There is also a third huge dock, or basin, in the north-west quarter of the city, closed also by a bridge.

These two main thoroughfares divide Alexandria into four quarters, which together with the first suburb of the city were originally called by the first five letters of the alphabet. The great quarter on our left is, however, more generally known as the Bruchion, perhaps from the palace Ptolemy Soter set aside to form the nucleus of the great library. It is the Greek quarter, the most fashionable, and architecturally very magnificent. There you see the vast mausoleum of Alexander the Great, containing the golden coffin in which the body of the world-conquering hero has been preserved for hundreds of years. There, too, are the splendid tombs of the Ptolemies, who ruled Egypt from the time of the division of Alexander's empire till the latter part of the first century B.C. when the Romans wrested the kingdom from Cleopatra. Observe next the great temple of Poseidon, god of the sea, a favourite deity of the sailor populace. There, too, is the Museum, the centre of the university, with all its lecture rooms and halls, not the original Museum of the Ptolemies, but a later building. Baths, too, you see everywhere, thousands of them, magnificent buildings where the luxurious Alexandrians spend so much of their time.

On the right is the Egyptian quarter, the north-western, called Rhacotis, a very old name dating back to a time when Alexandria did not exist, and an old Egyptian burg, called Raga-douah, occupied its site. The difference in the style of architecture at once strikes you, for it is for the most part in the more sombre Egyptian style; and that great building you see in the eastern part of the quarter is the far-famed Serapeum; it is not so much a single building as a group of buildings, the temple of course being the chief of them. It is a fort-like place, with plain heavy walls, older than the Greek buildings, gloomy and severe and suited to the Egyptian character; it is the centre of the "heathen" schools, that is to say, the barbarian or non-Greek lecture halls. You will

always remember the Serapeum by its vast flights of steps bordered with innumerable sphinxes, both inside and outside the great gate.

If you could see underneath the buildings, you would be struck with the net-work of vaults and crypts on which the whole city seems to have been built; these vaults are used mostly as underground cisterns for the storage of water—a most necessary provision in so poorly a rain-fed country as Egypt.

The south-eastern quarter, behind the Bruchion, is the centre of the Jewish colony, which dates back to the days of Alexander himself, and has never numbered less than 40,000 Hebrews.

The great open space to the left of the Bruchion is the Hippodrome or race-course, and further east still along the shore is the fashionable suburb of Nicopolis, where most probably some of our philosophers live. On the other side of the city, beyond Rhacotis, is a huge cemetery adorned with innumerable statues and columns, and known as Necropolis.

#### THE POPULACE.

But the various styles of architecture and distinct characteristics of the various quarters can give you but little idea of the mixed and heterogeneous populace assembled on the spot where Europe, Asia and Africa meet together. First you have the better class Egyptians and Greeks, mostly extremely refined, haughty and effeminate; of Romans but a few, the magistrates and military, the legionaries of the guard who patrolled the city and quelled the frequent riots of religious disputants; for all of whom, Jew or Christian, Gnostic or Heathen, they had a bluff and impartial contempt.

In the more menial offices you see the lower class mixed Egyptians, the descendants of the aboriginal populace, perchance, crowds of them. Thousands of Ethiopians and negroes also in the brightest possible colours.

There, too, you see bands of monks from the Thebaid, many from Mount Nitria, two or three days' journey south, into the desert, beyond the great lake; they are easily distinguishable, with their tangled unkempt locks, and foul and filthy skins for sole clothing—for the most part a violent, ignorant and ungovernable set of

dangerous fanatics. Mixed with them are people in black, ecclesiastics, deacons and officers of the Christian churches.

Down by the harbours, however, we shall come across many other types, difficult to distinguish for the most part because of the interblending and mixture. Thousands of them come and go on the small ships which crowd the harbours in fleets. Many are akin to the once great nation of the Hittites; Phœnician and Carthaginian sailor-folk in numbers, and traders from far more distant ports.

Jews everywhere and those akin to Jews, in all the trading parts; some resembling Afghans; ascetics, too, from Syria, Essenes, perchance, or Therapeutæ, paying great attention to cleanliness. Also a few tall golden-haired people, Goths and Teutons, extremely contemptuous of the rest, whom they regard as an effeminate crowd, big, tall, strong, rough fellows. A few Persians also and more distant Orientals.

Perhaps, however, you are more interested in the Christian populace, a most mixed crowd without and within. The city ecclesiastics are busied more with politics than with religion; the rest of the faithful can be divided into two classes offering widely different presentments of Christianity.

On the one hand the lowest classes and monks, bigoted and ignorant, contemptuous of all education, in religion the prototype of modern evangelical sects and "salvation armies," devoted to the cult of the martyrs, thirsting for the blood of the Jews, and wild to overthrow every statue and raze every temple to the ground; on the other hand, a set of refined disputants, philosophical theologians and Gnostics, arguing always, eager to enter the lists with the Pagan philosophers, spending their lives in public discussions, while the crowds who come to hear them are mostly indifferent to the right or wrong of the matter, and applaud every debating point with contemptuous impartiality, enjoying the wrangle from the point of view of a refined scepticism.

#### THE LIBRARY.

But we must hasten on with our task and complete our sketch of the city with a brief reference to two of its most famous institutions, the Library and Museum. Even if most of us have had no

previous acquaintance with the topography of Alexandria, and are perfectly ignorant of the history of its schools, we have at any rate all heard of its world-famed Library.

When the kingdom of Alexander was divided among his generals, the rich kingdom of Egypt fell to the lot of Ptolemy I., called Soter, the Saviour. Believing that Greek culture was the most civilizing factor in the known world, and Greek methods the most enlightened, Soter determined not only to make a small Greece in Egypt, but also to make his court at Alexandria the asylum of all the learning of the Grecian world. Fired with this noble ambition he founded a Museum or University, dedicated to the arts and sciences, and a Library. Had not Aristotle, the philosopher, taught his great leader, Alexander, the art of government; and should not the chief of his generals therefore gather together all the works that dealt with so useful a science? Fortunately, however, the original plan of a mere political library was speedily abandoned and more universal views prevailed. It is, however, not unlikely that Ptolemy, as an Egyptian ruler, did but found a new library for his capital in emulation of the many libraries already existing in that ancient land. We have only to recall the vast collection of Osymandyas at Thebes, the "Remedy of the Soul," to be persuaded of the fact. Therefore, though the Alexandrian Library was the first great public Grecian library, it was by no means the first in Egypt. Nor was it even the first library in Greece, for Polycrates of Samos, Pisistratus and Eucleides of Athens, Nicocrates of Cyprus, Euripides, the poet, and Aristotle himself, had all large collections of books.

To be brief, the first collection was placed in the part of the royal palaces, near the Canopic Gate, the chief of these palaces being called the Bruchion, close to the Museum. A librarian and a staff were appointed—an army of copyists and calligraphists. There were also scholars to revise and correct the texts, and chorizontes (*χωρίζοντες*) to select the authentic and best editions; also makers of catalogues, categories and analytics.

Under the first Ptolemies the collecting of books became quite a mania. Ptolemy Soter had letters sent to all the reigning sovereigns begging for copies of every work their country possessed, whether of poets, logographers, or writers of sacred aphor-

isms, orators, sophists, doctors, medical philosophers, historians, etc. Ptolemy II. (Philadelphus) commissioned every captain of a vessel to bring him MSS., for which he paid so royally that many forgeries were speedily put on the market. Attalus and Eumenes, kings of Pergamus, in north-west Asia Minor, established a rival library in their capital, and prosecuted the search for books with such ardour that the library of Aristotle, bequeathed to Theophrastus and handed on to Neleus of Scepsis, had to be buried to escape the hands of their rapacious collectors, only to find its way, however, to Alexandria at last. Philadelphus accordingly issued an order against the exportation of papyrus from Egypt, and thus the rival collectors of Pergamus had to be content with vellum; hence some say, pergamene, parchemin, parchment. The commerce of MSS. was carried on throughout all Greece, Rhodes and Athens being the chief marts.

Thus Alexandria became possessed of the most ancient MSS. of Homer and Hesiod and the cyclic poets; of Plato and Aristotle, of Æschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, and many other treasures.

Moreover, large numbers of translators were employed to turn the books of other nations into Greek. Some of the sacred books of the Ethiopians, Indians, Persians, Elamites, Babylonians, Chaldeans, Romans, Phœnicians, and Syrians were translated, and the septuagint version of the Hebrew bible was added to the number, not without miracle, if we are to believe the legend recounted by Josephus.

Even by the time of Ptolemy III. (Energetes) the Bruchion could not contain all the books, and a fresh nucleus was established in the buildings of the Serapeum, on the other side of the city, but not in the temple itself with its four hundred pillars, of all of which Pompey's Pillar alone remains to us.

What a wealth of books in so short a time! Even in the times of the first three Ptolemies, we read of 400,000 rolls or volumes. What then must have been the number in later years? Some say they exceeded a million rolls and papyri. Let us, however, remember that a "book" or "roll" was generally not a volume as with us, but rather the chapter of a work. We read of men writing "six thousand books"! The rolls had to be comparatively small, for the sake of convenience, and a work usually had as many rolls as it



contained chapters. We must, therefore, bearing this in mind, be on our guard against exaggerating the size of the great Library.

The Serapeum, however, soon contained as many books as the Bruchion, and all went well till 47 B.C., when the great fire which destroyed Cæsar's fleet, burnt the Bruchion to the ground. An imaginative chronicler, Lucian, asserts that the glow of the conflagration could be seen as far as Rome!

So they had to rebuild the Bruchion, and put into the new building the famous library of Pergamus, which the city had bequeathed to the Senate, and which the infatuated Mark Antony handed over to Cleopatra, last of the Ptolemies.

When the glory of Alexandria began to depart, its library began to share its fate. Julian, the emperor (360-363) took many volumes to enrich his own library; when the Christian fanatics in 387 stormed the Serapeum, they razed the temple to its foundation, and nothing of the library was left but the empty shelves. Finally in 641 Amru, general of Omar, second in succession to the Prophet, fed the furnaces of the 4,000 baths of Alexandria for full six months with the Bruchion's priceless treasures. If what the rolls contained were in the Korân, they were useless, if what they taught were not in the Korân, they were pernicious; in either case burn them! Some Mohammedan apologists have lately tried to whitewash Omar; but he is as little to be excused as the Christian barbarians who devastated the shelves of the Serapeum.

#### THE MUSEUM.

Such was the written material on which the scholars, scientists and philosophers of Alexandria had to work. And not only was there a library, but also a kind of university, called the Museum, dedicated to the arts and sciences, and embracing among other things an observatory, an amphitheatre of anatomy, a vast botanical garden, an immense menagerie, and many other collections of things useful for physical research.

It was an institution conceived on a most liberal plan, an assembly of savants, lodged in a palace, richly endowed with the liberality of princes, exempt from public charges. Without distinction of race or creed, with no imposed regulations, no set plan of study or lecture lists, the members of this distinguished

assembly were left free to prosecute their researches and studies untrammelled and unhampered. In their ranks were innumerable poets, historians, geometricians, mathematicians, astronomers, translators, critics, commentators, physicians, professors of natural science, philologists, grammarians, archæologists, in brief, savants of all sorts laying the first foundations of those researches which have once more in our own time, after the lapse of centuries, claimed the attention of the world. True, the Museum of Alexandria made but faltering steps where we to-day stride on with such assurance; but the spirit and method was the same, feeble compared on our strength, but the same spirit now made strong by palinogenesis.

Very like was the temper then, in the last three centuries before the modern era, to the temper that has marked the last three centuries of our own time. Religion had lost its hold on the educated; scepticism and "science" and misunderstood Aristotelian philosophy were alone worthy of a man of genius. There were "emancipated women" too, "dialectical daughters," common enough in those latter days of Greece.

Had not, thought these schoolmen, their great founder, Alexander, conquered the political world by following the advice of his master Aristotle? They, also, would follow the teaching of the famous Stagirite, who had mapped out heaven and earth and all things therein, and soon they too would conquer what else of the world there was to be conquered, both natural and intellectual. It seemed so probable then, so simple and logical. It seems to be probable even now to some minds!

So they set to work with their commenting, and criticizing, their philologizing, their grammar, and accentuation, their categorizing and cataloguing. They set to work to measure things; being pupils of Euclid, they attempted to measure the distance of the sun from the earth, and Eratosthenes, by copper armillæ, or circles for determining the equinox, calculated the obliquity of the ecliptic, and by further researches calculated the circumference of the earth; he also mapped out the world from all the books of travel and earth-knowledge in the great Library. In mechanics, Archimedes solved the mysteries of the lever and hydrostatic pressure which are the basis of our modern hydrostatics and statics.

Hipparchus too thought out a theory of the heavens, upside down in fact, but correct enough to calculate eclipses and the rest, and this three hundred years later, under the Antonines, was revamped by a certain Ptolemy, a commentator merely and not an inventor, the patent now standing in his name. Hipparchus was also the father of plane and spherical trigonometry.

But enough has already been said to give us an idea of the temper of the times, and it would be too long to dwell on the long list of famous names in other departments, encyclopædists and grammarians like Callimachus and Aristophanes; poets such as Theocritus.

Thus with the destruction of the building in the fire of Cæsar's fleet and with the Roman conquest the first Museum came to an end. It is true that a new Museum was established in the reign of Claudius (41-50 A.D.), but it was a mere shadow of its former self, no true home of the muses, but the official auditorium of the wearisome writings of an emperor-scribbler. Claudius had written in Greek, *magis inepte quam incleganter*, as Suetonius remarks, eight books of a history of Carthage, and twenty books of a history of Etruria. He would, therefore, establish a Museum and have his precious writings read to sycophant professorship once a year at least. Thus passed away the glory of that incarnation of scholarship and science; it was a soulless thing at best, marking a period of unbelief and scepticism, and destined to pass away when once man woke again to the fact that he was a soul.

#### THE SCHOOLS OF THE SOPHISTS.

And what of the schools of so-called philosophy during this period? They, too, were barren enough. The old sages of Greece were no more. Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle had passed from the sight of mortals. The men who followed them were for the most part word-splitters and phrase-weavers. Dialectic arguers of the Megaran school, Eristics or wranglers, Pyrrhonists or doubters, Cyrenaics who believed in the senses alone as the only avenues of knowledge, pessimists and annihilationists, a host of later Sceptics, Cynics, Epicureans, Academics, Peripatetics, and Stoics. Epicureans who sought to live comfortably, Stoics who, in

opposition to Plato's doctrine of social virtues, asserted the solitary dignity of human individualism.

After the three great reigns of the first Ptolemies, Alexandria fell morally together with its rulers; for one hundred and eighty years "sophists wrangled, pedants fought over accents and readings with the true *odium grammaticum*," till Cleopatra, like Helen, betrayed her country to the Romans, and Egypt became a tributary province. So far there had been no philosophy in the proper sense of the word; that did not enter into the curriculum of the Museum.

#### THE DAWN-LAND.

Hitherto Alexandria had had no philosophy of her own, but now she is destined to be the crucible in which philosophic thought of every kind will be fused together, and not only philosophy, but more important still religio-philosophy and theosophy of every kind will be poured into the melting pot, and many strange systems and a few things admirably good and true will be moulded out of the matter cast into this seething crucible. So far the Grecian genius has only thought of airing its own methods and views before the east. Into Egypt, Syria, Persia, into India even, it has flitted and sunned itself. It has taken many a year to convince Greek complacency that the period of world-genius is not bounded on one hand by Homer and on the other by Aristotle. Slowly but remorselessly it is borne in upon Hellenic ingenuity that there is an antiquity in the world beside which it is a mere *parvenu*. The Greek may despise the Orientals and call them mere "barbar" or Barbarians, because they are strangers to the Attic tongue, but the Barbarian is to laugh last and laugh best after all, for he has a carefully guarded heirloom of wisdom, which he has not yet quite forgotten. The Greeks have had the tradition, too, but have now forgotten it; they have replaced Orpheus by Homer, and Pythagoras and the real Plato by Aristotle. Their mysteries are now masonic and no longer real, except for the very very few.

And if the Greek despised the Barbarian, the Barbarian, in his turn, thought but little of the Greek. "You Greeks are but children, O Solon," said the wise priest of Sais to the Attic law-giver. "You Greeks misunderstand and change the sacred myths

you have adopted; fickle and careless, and superficial in things religious"—such was the criticism of the ancient Barbarian on the young and innovating Greek.

Slowly but surely the wisdom of the Egyptians, of the Babylonians and Chaldæans, and its reflection in some of the Jewish doctors, of Persia, too, and even of India, begins to react on the centre of Grecian thought, and religion and all the great problems of the human soul begin to oust mere scholasticism, *beaux arts* and *belles lettres*, from the schools; Alexandria is no longer to be a mere literary city, but a city of philosophy in the old sense of the term; it is to be wisdom-loving; not that it will eventually succeed even in this, but it will try to succeed.

There is to be a new method too. The concealed and hidden for so many centuries will be discussed and analyzed: there will be eclecticism, or a choosing out and synthesizing; there will be syncretism and a mingling of the most heterogeneous elements into some sorry patchwork; there will be analogeticism or comparison and correspondencing; efforts to discover a world-religion; to reconcile the irreconcilable; to synthesize as well science, philosophy and religion; to create a theosophy. It will fail, for the race is nearing its end; it is the searching for truth at the end of a long life with an old brain, with too many old tendencies and prejudices to eradicate. The race will die and the souls that ensouled it will go out of incarnation, to reappear in due time when the wheel has turned. The old race is to be replaced with new blood and new physical vigour; but the mind of the new race is incapable of grasping the problems of its predecessors; Goths, Teutons, Vandals, Huns, Celts, Britons, and Arabs are bodies for a far less developed batch of souls; true the new race will also grow and develop and in its turn reach to manhood and old age, and far transcend its predecessor in every way; but when a child it will think as a child, when a man as a man, and when aged as the aged. What could the barbarian Huns and Goths and Arabs make of the great problems that confronted the highly civilized Alexandrians?

#### THE NEW RELIGION.

For the new race a new religion therefore, suited to its needs, suited perchance to its genius, suited to its age. What its origins

were are so far shrouded in impenetrable obscurity; what the real history of its founder was is confessedly unknown to all but—the uneducated.

This much, however, is certain, that a new key-note was struck for the tuning up of the new instrument. It is always a dangerous thing to generalize too freely, and paint the past in too glaring splashes of colour, for in human affairs we find nothing unixed; good was mixed with evil in the old method, and evil with good in the new. The new method was to throw open to all men a small portion of the sacred mysteries and secret teachings of the few. The new religion itself professed to throw open "everything"; and many believed that it had revealed all that was revealable. That was because they were as yet children. So bright was the light to them that they perforce believed it came directly from the God of all gods, or rather from God alone, for they would have no more of gods; the gods were straightway transmuted into devils. The "many" had begun to play with psychic and spiritual forces, let loose from the mysteries, and the "many" went mad for a time, and has not yet regained its sanity.

Let us dwell on this intensely interesting phenomenon for a few moments.

It is true that in the Roman Empire, which had just reduced the "world" to its sway, and thus politically united so many streams of ancient civilization and barbarism into one ocean, things were in a very parlous state, morally and socially. The ancient order was beginning to draw to an end. Political freedom and independence were of the past, but intellectual and religious tolerance were still guaranteed, for so far the ancient world knew not the meaning of intolerance.

States were politically subordinated to the control of the Cæsars, but the religious institutions of such states, on which their very lives and polities depended, were left in absolute freedom. Nevertheless the spirit of reality had long left the ancient institutions, they were still maintained as part and parcel of statecraft, and as necessary for the people, who must have a cult, and festivals, and religious shows, then as now; but few took the matter really seriously. For the educated there was philosophy, and the shadow of the ancient mysteries,

But these things were not for the people, not for the uneducated ; the priestly orders had forgotten their duties, and using their knowledge for self-aggrandizement, had now almost entirely forgotten what they once had known. It is an old, old story. The ancient church was corrupt, the ancient state enslaved. There must be a protest ; partly right, partly wrong, as usual good and evil protesting against evil and good.

It is true that the mysteries are free and open to all—who are worthy.

It is true that morals and virtues are absolutely essential prerequisites—but not these alone.

It is true that there is One God—not Jehovah.

It is true that there are many gods—not to be worshipped.

It is true that philosophy alone cannot solve the problem—but it must not be neglected.

It is true that all men may be saved—but not rather the poor than the rich, the ignorant than the learned.

There is no middle ground in protestantism in things religious ; it flies to the opposite pole. Therefore, we are to have for the new order, a wild intolerance, a glorification of ignorance, a wholesale condemnation. A social upheaval, followed by a political triumph. One thing, however, is acquired definitely, a new lease of life for belief.

It was good to believe with all one's heart after so much disbelief ; it was good to make virtue paramount as the first all-necessary step to a knowledge of God. It was good to set aside the things of the body and love the things of the soul ; it was good to bring reality of life once more into the heart of men.

What might have been if more temperate counsels had prevailed, who can say ?

The main fact is that one race was dying and another being born. The memories of the past crowded into the old brain, but the new brain was unable to remember. As one decayed the other grew and replaced it, and the phenomena presented during the centuries of the change are of the most intricate and amazing nature. One memory alone succeeded in impressing itself on the new brain, suited perhaps to the vigorous and warlike races that were to replace the old races of the Roman Empire, and that was

the Jewish tradition in its crudest form. It would, however, be too long to go further into the matter and show why the Jews themselves, with the exception of a very few, did not accept the new religion, and why the Christians based themselves on the Jewish tradition.

It is enough to remark, that the Jewish populace looked for a leader to restore their political fortunes and physical well-being, while the first Christians, being all Jews, so interwove their tradition with Judaism, that it subsequently could not be disentangled without entire destruction.

And though the beliefs of the Jewish and Christian populace were wide apart, and both the antipodes of those of the Pagan populace, nevertheless the learned among the Rabbis and the best of the Christian theologians show many points of similarity, and both the latter, in some things, are in close contact with the views of our philosophers. The most famous schools of the Rabbis and of the Christian theologians, moreover, are at Alexandria, and so we will conclude our introductory chapter with a few remarks on these Jewish and Christian Schools.

G. R. S. MEAD.

*(To be continued.)*



## EARLY CHRISTIANITY AND ITS TEACHINGS.

*(Concluded from p. 44.)*

### VI. THE CHRIST.

AROUND the dogma of the incarnation have been gathered many heresies, especially in the early stages of Christianity, before it could be truly said that there was any well-defined doctrine. Many of the heresies, indeed, are such only according to later renderings of the faith, which may or may not be more in accord with the original teachings, if original teachings there were.

One of the earliest heresies related to the body of Christ. The Docetists held that it was an illusion, a mere appearance, not consisting of matter, and taken on by Jesus for the purpose of manifesting himself. This view was probably due to the idea that matter itself was evil—that peculiar eastern conception of the duality of things, good and evil, spirit and matter, and so on, which tainted so many of the Gnostic teachings. According to a modified view the body of Jesus was not a mere illusion, but was substantial, only of celestial or ethereal substance, and not of ordinary matter.

The orthodox church rebelled against any such conception, which in its opinion would have destroyed the whole plan of salvation, for to save the race the divine mediator must become as a man, and enter an entirely human body. Matter was in itself not regarded as an evil, the evil belonging to the soul within the body.

The Judaic side of Christianity culminated in a sect which, according to later dogmas, also held heretical views of Christ. This aspect of the faith was zealously opposed by Paul, as may be seen from various passages in the New Testament, but it is a doubtful point as to whether the Jewish view, somewhat similar to the Ebionite heresy, was not the earlier Christian teaching, seeing that the religion had its origin in Judaism. According to the Ebionites,

Jesus was a man, brought into being at birth, and not previously existing; according to some born in the ordinary manner; and to others born by a special action of the Holy Spirit. Hippolytus tells us (*Contra Hæreses*, Book VII., chap. xxii.) that they held that all who fulfilled the law could become Christs.

These will serve as examples of the heretical ideas prevalent in those times, but other views differing in various ways from those described may be found in the records that are left to us. A common conception, especially in those schools generally included among the Gnostics, was that Jesus was born as a man, but that the Christ descended upon him at baptism, and remained until the crucifixion. According to one tradition, the cry of Jesus when on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" was a cry of despair on the departure of the spiritual principle, or the Christos.

The orthodox doctrine is briefly as follows. Christ the eternal Logos, one in essence with the supreme God, but distinguishable in person, incarnated in the form of a man. As such he was not only God, but also had a truly human soul, that is, a soul which did not exist before birth as a man, but which was made as other souls were made, was capable of suffering, and was to be clearly distinguished from his divine nature. It would thus be a heresy to assert, as some did, that Jesus had not a human soul, but was wholly divine, thus cutting him off from humanity, or on the other hand to say that he was a man merely overshadowed by the Logos, for according to the scheme it was necessary that a perfect mediator should appear, both God and man at one and the same time.

Origen was one of the exponents of Christian doctrine who had most influence in settling the orthodox conception of the incarnation, though he also on one point, that of the pre-existence of the human soul of Jesus, stepped outside of the orthodox limits made at a later date. In his writings the relation between the man Christ and the God is most elaborately discussed, and some views are put forward which would now appear to be very advanced, but which at that time were not generally thought to be unorthodox.

In *De Principiis*, Book II., chap. vi., "On the Incarnation of Christ," occurs the following passage:

"But since, agreeably to the faculty of freewill, variety and

diversity characterized the individual souls, so that one was attached with a warmer love to the Author of its being, and another with a feebler and weaker regard, that soul (*anima*) regarding which Jesus said, 'No one shall take my life (*animam*) from me,' inhering, from the beginning of the creation, and afterwards, inseparably and indissolubly in Him, as being the Wisdom and Word of God, and the Truth and the true Light, and receiving Him wholly and passing into His light and splendour, was made with Him in a pre-eminent degree one spirit, according to the promise of the apostle to those who ought to imitate it, that 'he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.' This substance of a soul, then, being intermediate between God and the flesh—it being impossible for the nature of God to intermingle with a body without an intermediate instrument—the God-man is born, as we have said, that substance being the intermediary to whose nature it was not contrary to assume a body. But neither, on the other hand, was it opposed to the nature of that soul, as a rational existence, to receive God, into whom, as stated above, as into the Word, and the Wisdom, and the Truth, it had already wholly entered. And therefore deservedly is it also called, along with the flesh which it had assumed, the Son of God, and the Power of God, the Christ, and the Wisdom of God, either because it was wholly in the Son of God, or because it received the Son of God wholly into itself."

In this passage is to be found the supposed heretical view of the pre-existence of the human or rational soul of Jesus, but the distinction made between the Logos and the man is quite within the bounds of orthodoxy.

In *Contra Celsum*, Book II., chap. ix., he defends the Christian idea of Christ against the attack of Celsus, who asks how it is possible that a God could be delivered up to punishment.

"To which we reply, that even we do not suppose the body of Jesus, which was then an object of sight and perception, to have been God. And why do I say His body? Nay, not even His soul, of which it is related, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.' But as, according to the Jewish manner of speaking, 'I am the Lord, the God of all flesh,' and 'Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me,' God is believed to be He

who employs the soul and body of the prophet as an instrument; and as, according to the Greeks, he who says:

“‘I know both the number of the sand and the measures of the sea,

“‘And I understand a dumb man, and hear him who does not speak,’

is considered to be a god when speaking, and making himself heard through the Pythian priestess; so, according to our view, it was the Logos God, and Son of the God of all things, who spake in Jesus these words, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life’; and these, ‘I am the door’; and these, ‘I am the living bread that came down from heaven’; and other expressions similar to these. . . . And that the Gospels do not consider Him who in Jesus said these words, ‘I am the way, and the truth and the life,’ to have been of so circumscribed a nature as to have an existence nowhere out of the soul and body of Jesus, is evident both from many considerations, and from a few instances of the following kind, which we shall quote.” Origen then quotes *John* i. 26; *Matthew* xviii. 20; xxviii. 20. “And we quote these passages, making no distinction between the Son of God and Jesus. For the soul and body of Jesus formed, after the economy (*οικονομία*), one being with the Logos of God. Now if, according to Paul’s teaching, ‘he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit,’ everyone who understands what being joined to the Lord is, and who has been actually joined to Him, is one spirit with the Lord; how should not that being be one in a far greater and more divine degree, which was once united with the Logos of God?”

On the same general lines is the following passage from Book VI., chap. xlvii.

“Nor is it at all wonderful if we maintain that the soul of Jesus is made one with so great a Son of God through the highest union with Him, being no longer in a state of separation from Him. For the sacred language of Holy Scripture knows of other things also, which, although ‘dual’ in their own nature, are considered to be, and really are, ‘one’ in respect to one another. It is said of husband and wife, ‘they are no longer twain, but one flesh’; and of the perfect man, and of him who is joined to the true Lord, Word, and Wisdom and Truth, that ‘he who is joined to the Lord

is one spirit.' And if he who is 'joined to the Lord is one spirit,' who has been joined to the Lord, the Very Word, and Wisdom and Truth, and Righteousness, in a more intimate union, or even in a manner at all approaching to it, than the soul of Jesus? And if this be so, then the soul of Jesus and God the Word—the first-born of every creature—are no longer two [but one]."

In chap. xvii. of the next book, Origen condemns the idea that it was Christ the Son of God who died on the cross.

"And Jesus Himself, who knew perfectly that one who was to die must be a man, said to His accusers, 'But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath spoken unto you the truth which I heard of God,' and if in that man as He appeared among men there was something divine, namely, the only begotten Son of God, the first-born of all creation, one who said of Himself, 'I am the truth,' 'I am the life,' 'I am the door,' 'I am the way,' 'I am the living bread which came down from heaven,' of this Being and His nature we must judge and reason in a way quite different from that in which we judge of the man who was seen in Jesus Christ. Accordingly, you will find no Christian, however simple he may be, and however little versed in critical studies, who would say that He who died was 'the truth,' 'the life,' 'the way,' 'the living bread which came down from heaven,' 'the resurrection,' for it was He who appeared to us in the form of the man Jesus, who taught us, saying, 'I am the resurrection.' There is no one amongst us, I say, so extravagant as to affirm 'the Life died,' 'the Resurrection died.'"

In the following chapter he continues thus :

"That which is predicted by the prophets is worthy of God, that He who is the brightness and express image of the divine nature, should come into the world with the wholly human soul which was to animate the body of Jesus, to sow the seed of His word. . . . He was to be in it indeed, but not in such a way as to confine therein all the rays of His glory ; and we are not to suppose that the light of Him who is God the Word is shed forth in no other way than in this."

There are still other senses in which Christ was regarded among the early believers, and may still be regarded.

From one point of view he is the type of the perfect man, the ideal to which the ordinary man is to reach. It was the aim of the

"gnostic," according to Clement of Alexandria, to reach that height through the continued progress of ages, in this life and in the stages of existence to follow. This is what Paul speaks of when he writes in *Ephesians* iv. 11-13 :

"And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

In earlier chapters, evidence has been given of the symbolical manner in which, among other tales, the story of Jesus was treated. It is a very old idea that Christ may not only be a God and a man, but also a power that is within every man, and even that the life of Jesus may be a symbol of the way in which that power works, and not simply a story of one man's actions. There is much in the New Testament itself which supports this view, especially in the writings of Paul. For example in *Colossians*, i. 26, 27, he speaks of "the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints, to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory ; whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

Again in 2 *Corinthians*, xiii. 5, he says :

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobate ?"

But perhaps the most striking passage is in *Galatians*, iv. 19, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you."

Origen in *Contra Celsum*, Book VI., chap. ix., uses a peculiar expression with regard to this internal Christ. He compares the Platonic division of "name," "word," "image," and "knowledge," quoted by Celsus, with the Christian system.

"Now, according to this division, John is introduced before Jesus as the voice of one crying in the wilderness, so as to correspond with the 'name' of Plato ; and the second after John, who is

pointed out by him, is Jesus, with whom agrees the statement, 'the Word became flesh,' and that corresponds to the 'word' of Plato. Plato terms the third 'image,' but we, who apply the term 'image' to something different, would say with greater precision that the mark of the wounds which is made in the soul by the word is the Christ, which is each one of us, and this mark is impressed by Christ the Word, and whether Christ the wisdom which is in those of us who are perfect correspond to the 'fourth' element—knowledge—will become known to him who has the capacity to ascertain it."

This passage unmistakably points to a definitely mystical interpretation of the Christ idea. There is a Christ which is in each one, the mark in fact of humanity, and there is also the full reception of the Christ, as "the wisdom which is in those of us who are perfect."

In the classification at present used in Theosophical literature, the Christ, from this and from other passages, would seem to be the *Âtmâ* or divine spirit which has not descended into the lower planes, but remains, so to speak, overshadowing the individual, being at the same time the real source of his being. Not individualized in the ordinary man, it enters fully only into those who are "perfect." It is possible that Origen in the use of this term indicated a much less lofty stage of development, but at the same time his use of the term "perfect" denoted a very high level, as we can see from other passages, and not the mere entering into the body of the Church and becoming one of the faithful, according to its employment by many other writers.

In concluding this series of articles it may be as well to refer briefly to the points that have been brought forward. In the first place it is clear that in the early Church the idea of a secret teaching, not made known to the ordinary believer and not written in any accessible scripture, but given by Jesus to his nearest disciples, was widely held. In connection with this we have also some hints of a school within the ordinary Church containing only a chosen few, to whom the private teachings of Jesus were transmitted. The Church itself was not a mere aggregate of people, but was in its ideal form an organic whole, and its divisions and hierarchies were not simply for the sake of government, but were symbols of

things belonging to higher worlds. The Bible, again, was regarded by the more instructed among the early Christians not as a fetish to be worshipped, but as a book which required interpretation. It was a book which contained, in the form of stories or of history, much instruction which had to be extracted from it by study and knowledge, and not merely by faith, and it was not to be believed literally, as its surface meaning was often absurd and evidently false.

The evidence to be obtained from the earlier writings, that is, the writings dating before the Nicene Council, respecting the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul and reincarnation is somewhat scanty. What references there are, however, show clearly that any broad statement as to reincarnation having been a doctrine widely held in the Church is inaccurate, to say the least. There are distinct indications of a belief in the existence of the human soul before bodily birth, which belief may possibly have been held by a considerable section of the Church at one time, but further than this we cannot go; and that reincarnation may have existed in the primitive group of believers, and have been taught by Jesus is not, I think, impossible, judging from some few verses in the New Testament, but if this be the case, the teaching was soon forgotten.

While it is impossible for any religion to go back to the past for its strength, or to model itself upon some form long discarded, it cannot be denied that there were many points in the Christianity of those early times which were more "advanced" and more "modern" than the orthodox Church of recent times. There was a freedom, which, until a few years ago, had been stifled, century after century loading its accumulation of dogma upon the back of the ancient faith, till the refuse of the centuries has hidden the original foundation. The future will certainly clear away the accumulations, and it remains still to be seen whether anything will be saved on which to build a modified faith. Meanwhile, some, at least, of the ideas of the early Christian writers may point the way to a conception of the national religion, which will be more in accordance with reason and with spiritual insight than the dogmas with which we have been so long familiar.

A. M. GLASS.



## ANIMAL REINCARNATION.

As Theosophical teaching upon the subject of animal reincarnation is, so far as I can gather, not only vague and incomplete but is also in some instances apparently inconsistent, I wish to place certain aspects of it before the readers of LUCIFER for their consideration. In so doing I would have it understood that this article is put forth in order to elicit the opinions of more enlightened students rather than to promulgate my own, and is, therefore, written in a tentative, and by no means in a didactic spirit.

I think it well here to insert the definition of reincarnation given by Mrs. Besant in her manual entitled *Reincarnation*. On p. 11 she says: "Reincarnation . . . and metempsychosis are words which denote a theory of existence, according to which a form of visible matter is inhabited by a more ethereal principle which outlives its physical encasement and, on the death of the latter, passes on immediately, or after an interval, to dwell in some other frame."

The subject is not only interesting but instructive. It involves the question—is there any persistent principle that reincarnates as the "individual" (if I may use the term) of the animal, or is the development in the kingdom *en bloc*, and not in the individual entities composing that kingdom? Now the great teaching on this, as on most other questions, is to be sought in *The Secret Doctrine*, but *The Secret Doctrine* is mainly confined to cosmogony and to human development—cyclic, racial and individual—in this the fourth round; the pre-human and animal progression is but little dealt with. I must confess that what little is said on this subject is in the main against individual reincarnation in the animal world generally, although it is apparently admitted *quoad* the domesticated animals; even this admission, partial though it be, is important for my purpose, as it establishes the existence of a principle in the animal bearing a close analogy to the "germ soul" in man (so lucidly explained by Mrs. Besant) at the time of

the advent of the Mânasaputra. It will be remembered that "man" at that period was of an animal nature save as to his physical form, Manas being then only a latent potentiality in him—as it was also in the animal.

We are further told in *The Secret Doctrine* that all the principles exist as latent potentialities in all the kingdoms of nature, and are successively and gradually developed. It is only fair to state here that in some passages of *The Secret Doctrine* it is said that the development of Manas *could not* have taken place without the intervention of the Mânasaputra, and that that intervention could not take place until suitable bodies were evolved.

This teaching, is, however, qualified by H. P. B. in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II. p. 99 (N.E.), where she says: "They [the Mânasaputra] sacrificed themselves for the good and salvation of the Monads . . . which otherwise would have had to linger for countless ages in irresponsible animal-like, though in appearance human forms."

Now this latter teaching establishes the position that Manas *would have been developed without the intervention of the Mânasaputra*: certainly only after ages of time; still this would have taken place. Now it is important to remember this, as it bears upon the position I wish to place before students, *viz.*, that reincarnation would have taken place for the entity or monad inhabiting these senseless shells, even had the Mânasaputra not assisted in the development. Unless this be so individual progress and individual consciousness or soul-building could not have gone on. If this position be conceded (and I do not apprehend it will be controverted) with regard to these "senseless men," who are described as animal except as to their forms, then I urge that the same principle of individual reincarnation should be conceded as to the animal kingdom in general, and not alone as to those members of it which are more or less domesticated. Now I contend in support of this position, that it is more consonant with the great philosophical doctrine of progressive evolution, and is also more in accord with the beautiful and all-pervading doctrine of Karma, than the teaching which would leave a gap or hiatus in evolution, and a glaring inconsistency in the universal application of Karma, a law which we are told applies *mutatis mutandis* to all the kingdoms and not to man alone. Why should the theory of reincarnation be made only to apply when certain forms had been

evolved, although the entities inhabiting those forms differed in nothing from the animal entities of lower physical types? May it not be that this restriction is due mainly to man's arrogant assumption of his own superiority, rather than to his willingness to concede to his lower brethren a position so near his own?

I am aware that this view appears quite inconsistent with the majority of Theosophical teachings, and I quite see the many difficulties that are involved in trying to reconcile the few isolated readings which support my position with this majority. But if there be not in the animal a persistent individuality or entity that reincarnates for its own teaching, then why should the animal suffer torture and misery, often, for the greater part of its life? This suffering is not in the atoms or molecules, but, as in man, in the body of sensation. We are taught that out of suffering we obtain experience and build character; is this not to obtain with the animal, and to inure to its future benefit? As it is the animal and not the atoms that suffer, Karma would give the animal and not the atoms the benefit. Many writers rather avoid the question of animals suffering, or minimize it by saying that they do not suffer so much as man. Mrs. Besant, for instance, says that an animal with a broken leg will lie down and eat the grass around it, but so will a man with a broken limb eat his food, if he be hungry and the food palatable! I do not hold this to be a satisfactory statement, or rather excuse. Surely unless the animal has in a previous life earned this Karma, or unless it is to benefit by it in the future, it is difficult to comprehend the law of Karma!

I have known both wild and domesticated animals exhibit most beautiful and unselfish affection, almost amounting to devotion, to their progeny; is this all to be lost to the entity, or is it simply to advance the atoms for "man's" use?

The question might be narrowed down to this: Is progressive development in the animal kingdom a development of the kingdom only, or of the individuals of that kingdom? If the latter be true, then must it not be done by the reincarnation of the animal entity?

I next wish to point out a few passages from prominent Theosophical writers which seem to support the position I advocate.

In LUCIFER, vol. vi., p. 336, in reply to a question on cruelty to animals, the following statement is made, presumably by H. P. B.,

as she was then one of the editors: "Animals do not suffer so keenly as human beings, and do not remember suffering, unless reminded, etc. . . . Animals again are almost immediately reincarnated in higher animal organisms. Suffering, moreover, is the cause of knowledge, so that the incarnating entity gains experience, although the organism is tortured to death."

Now here it will be noted that the words are "animals [not their atoms] are almost immediately reincarnated"; again, she speaks of an "incarnating entity." These passages seem to me to indicate that H. P. B. herself accepted the doctrine of animal reincarnation, and that she does not confine the quality to domesticated animals only.

In *Theosophical Siftings*, vol. iii., No. 7, in an article entitled "Have Animals Souls?" p. 5, *et. seq.*, H. P. B. says: "The *soul* of an animal is also called *nephesh*. It is by development that the *soul* becomes *spirit*, both being the lower and the higher rungs of one and the same ladder whose basis is the universal soul or spirit."

The following statement will startle some: "'The irrational soul of a dog or a frog divine and *immortal* as our own souls are!' they are sure to exclaim; *but so they are.*"

On p. 7 she says: "Christians . . . limit it to man, to the exclusion of animals. The students of the Secret Doctrine explain it by the successive renovation and perfection of forms on the scale of objective and subjective being, and in a long series of evolutionary transformations from animal to man and upward."

On p. 8 she adds: "Either both [the brute and the man] are endowed by nature with . . . *soul*, or neither the one nor the other is so endowed."

Much more, did space permit, might be quoted from this article, but I will rather commend it to my readers, adding only the following: "The animal is endowed with intelligence, and once this is settled, we have but to repeat Thomas Aquinas' definition of intelligence—'the prerogative of man's immortal *soul*'—to see that the same is due to the animal" (p. 15). "The two 'souls' are identical in man and beast" (p. 17). "Animals are creatures as eternal as we ourselves" (p. 23).

*The Vâhan* of September, 1895, p. 6 (I think the author is Mr.

Mead), *The Vâhan* of February 1st, 1896, *The Prashnottara*, Vol. V., No. 56, in an article entitled "The Pilgrimage of the Soul," are all more or less vague and undefined on this subject, but apparently indicate that the writers are open to conviction from either side.

That what is called the "germ" of Manas is enfolded in Kâma is admitted. Mrs. Besant uses this germ theory with great force as an illustration, and 'as such it is most apt and admirable, but it must not be forced farther than an illustration or turned into an identity, as if so it seems to me it would be faulty when taken in connection with the statement that Manas *would have been evolved* after ages of time without the intervention of the Mânasaputra. Then Mrs. Besant in *The Self and its Sheaths*, p. 56, says: "There is no possibility of growth unless from outside some new force shall arise."\*

In *The Birth and Evolution of the Soul* she says: "But you do not get in the wild animal much of what you may call ideal creation . . . that is, you have not here present much of what we know as mind. . . the qualities which technically are called perception and recollection." Now when the words "not much" are used, I contend that the word "some" is implied or admitted—*i.e.*, that some amount of "mind," and not only the germ of mind, is by her admitted to be existent in the wild animal.

In LUCIFER for December, 1895, pp. 310, 311, Mrs. Besant accepts the position I have taken from *The Secret Doctrine* that after immense periods of time Manas would have evolved in the senseless shells of humanity without the advent of the Mânasaputra; if so, these senseless shells must have had "reincarnation," and if so why should not the animals also undergo it as they are of like nature save as to their forms?

Mrs. Besant says: "The great majority of the human race . . . were not left to evolve by the mere force of the lower nature . . . which in the course of unnumbered years would have evolved intelligence, and would have brought about intellectual development even had They not come."

Then on pp. 317 and 318: "Still more strongly do these principles apply to the evolution of the animal kingdom, and

\* [This is said of a plant *after* sex has arisen; but there are many plants in which a new individual arises from a spore.—A. B.]

especially of the higher animals, for here there are some that come within measurable touch of the higher cycle of evolution in which the persisting individual begins to be." "When the I is developed in an animal . . . then that animal is lifted out of the course of animal evolution, and will be ready, etc. . . . there are always leading types in each great division who are ready for individualization."

I also wish readers to refer to Mrs. Besant's *Theosophy and its Teachings*, pp. 15 and 16, where she again admits that Manas would have evolved without the intervention of the Mānasaputra.

May it not be that in the most advanced stage of Kāma, when it is verging on Manas, it becomes in the animal a reincarnating aura or principle, aṣ being the best it has and the most worthy to be carried on in its individual progress?

Having gone so far, I am quite aware that it may be asked: If this persistent principle be conceded to the animal, why should it not be applied to the vegetable and mineral kingdoms? I am not concerned to answer that question, as it is not within the scope of this article, but I may in return propound the question, why not? Why should not the highest evolved principles of each individual of each kingdom be preserved to it? As I said at the beginning, the question is—are we to confine the theory of progressive evolution to each kingdom *en bloc*, or to include each individual in that scheme?

I am a very great lover of all animals, and I confess I should like it established that the animal has in it a principle which entitles it to say:

"Non omnis moriar, multaque pars mei  
Vitabit Libitinam."

N. A. KNOX.

## MAN AND HIS BODIES.

### III.—THE MIND BODIES—(*continued*).

(*Continued from p. 130.*)

(*b*) *The Causal Body.*—Let us now pass on to the second mind-body, known by its own distinctive name of causal body. The name is due to the fact that all the causes reside in this body which manifest themselves as effects on the lower planes. This body is the "body of Manas," the form-aspect of the individual, of the true man. It is the receptacle, the storehouse, in which all the man's treasures are stored for eternity, and it grows as the lower nature hands up more and more that is worthy to be built into its structure. The causal body is that into which everything is woven which can endure, and in which are stored the germs of every quality, to be carried over to the next incarnation; thus the lower manifestations depend wholly on the growth and development of this man for "whom the hour never strikes."

The causal body, it is said above, is the form aspect of the individual. Until that comes into existence there is no *man*; there may be the physical and etheric tabernacles prepared for his habitation; passions, emotions and appetites may gradually be gathered to form the kâmic nature in the astral body; but there is not man until the growth through the physical and astral planes has been accomplished, and until the matter of the mind-plane is beginning to show itself within the evolved lower bodies. When, by the power of the Self preparing its own habitation, the matter of the mind-plane begins slowly to evolve, then there is a downpouring from the great ocean of Âtmâ-Buddhi which is ever brooding over the evolution of man—and this, as it were, meets the upward-growing, unfolding mind-stuff, comes into union with it, fertilizes it, and at that point of union the causal body, the individual, is formed. Those who are able to see in those lofty regions say that this form-aspect of the true man is like a delicate film of subtlest matter, just visible, marking where the individual begins his separate life; that

delicate, colourless film of subtle matter is the body that lasts through the whole of the human evolution, the thread on which all the lives are strung, the re-incarnating Sûtrâtma, the "thread-self." It is the receptacle of all which is in accordance with the Law, of every attribute which is noble and harmonious, and therefore enduring. It is that which marks the growth of man, the stage of evolution to which he has attained. Every great and noble thought, every pure and lofty emotion, is carried up and worked into his substance.

Let us take the life of an ordinary man and try to see how much of that life will pass upwards for the building of the causal body, and let us imagine it pictorially as a delicate film; it is to be strengthened, to be made beautiful with colour, made active with life, made radiant and glorious, increasing in size as the man grows and developes. At a low stage of evolution he is not showing much mental quality, but rather he is manifesting much passion, much appetite. He feels sensations and seeks them; they are the things to which he turns. It is as though this inner life of the man put forth a little of the delicate matter of which it is composed, and round that the mind-body gathers; and the mind-body puts forth into the astral world, and there comes into contact with the astral body, and becomes connected with it, so that a bridge is formed along which anything capable of passing can pass. The man sends his thoughts downwards by this bridge into the world of sensations, of passions, of animal life, and the thoughts intermingle with all these animal passions and emotions; thus the mind-body becomes entangled with the astral body, and they adhere to each other and are difficult to separate when the time of death comes. But if the man, during the life which he is spending in these lower regions, has an unselfish thought, a thought of service to someone he loves, and makes some sacrifice in order to do service to his friend, he has then set up something that is able to endure, something that is able to live, something that has in it the nature of the higher world; that can pass upwards to the causal body and be worked into its substance, making it more beautiful, giving it, perhaps, its first touch of intensity of colour; perhaps all through the man's life there will only be a few of these things that are able to endure, to serve as food for the growth of the real man. So the growth is very slow, for all the rest of his life does not aid it; all his evil tendencies, born



of ignorance and fed by exercise, have their germs drawn inward and thrown into latency as the astral body which gave them home and form is dissipated in the astral world; they are drawn inward into the mind-body and lie latent there, lacking material for expression in the devachanic world; when the mind-body in its turn perishes, they are drawn into the causal body, and there still lie latent, as in suspended animation. They are thrown outwards as the Ego, returning to earth-life, reaches the astral world, reappearing there as evil tendencies brought over from the past. Thus the causal body might be spoken of as the storehouse of evil as well as good, being all that remains of the man after the lower vehicles are dissipated, but the good is worked into its texture and aids its growth, while the evil, with the exception noted below, remains as germ.

But the evil which a man works in life, when he puts into its execution his thought, does more injury to the causal body than merely to lie latent in it, as the germ of future sin and sorrow. It is not only that the evil does not help the growth of the true man, but where it is subtle and persistent it drags away, if the expression may be permitted, something of the individual himself. If vice be persistent, if evil be continually followed, the mind-body becomes so entangled with the astral that after death it cannot free itself entirely, and some of its very substance is torn away from it, and when the astral dissipates this goes back to the mind-stuff of the mind-world and is lost to the individual; in this way, if we think again of our image of a film, or bubble, it may be to some extent thinned by vicious living—not only delayed in its progress, but something wrought upon it which makes it more difficult to build into. It is as though the film were in some way affected as to capacity of growth, sterilised or atrophied to some extent. Beyond this, in ordinary cases, the harm wrought to the causal body does not go.

But where the Ego has become strong both in intellect and will without at the same time increasing in unselfishness and love, where it contracts itself round its own separated centre instead of expanding as it grows, building a wall of selfishness around it and using its developing powers for the "I" instead of for the all; in such cases arises the possibility alluded to in so many of the world-scriptures, of more dangerous and ingrained evil, of the Ego setting

itself consciously against the law, of fighting deliberately against evolution. Then the causal body itself, wrought on by vibrations on the mental plane of intellect and will, but both turned to selfish ends, shows the dark hues which result from contraction, and loses the dazzling radiance which is its characteristic property. Such harm cannot be worked by a poorly developed Ego nor by ordinary passion or mental faults; to effect injury so far-reaching the Ego must be highly evolved, and must have its energies potent on the mânasic plane. Therefore is it that ambition, pride, and the powers of the intellect used for selfish aims are so far more dangerous, so far more deadly in their effects, than the more palpable faults of the lower nature, and the "Pharisee" is often further from the "kingdom of God" than "the publican and the sinner." Along this line is developed the "black magician," the man who conquers passion and desire, develops will and the higher powers of the mind, not to gladly offer them as forces to help forward the evolution of the whole, but in order to grasp all he can for himself as unit, to hold and not to share. These set themselves to maintain separation as against unity, they strive to retard instead of to quicken evolution; therefore they vibrate in discord with the whole instead of in harmony, and are in danger of that rending of the Ego which means the loss of all the fruits of evolution.

All of us who are beginning to understand something of this causal body can make its evolution a definite object in our life; we can strive to think unselfishly and so contribute to its growth and activity. Life after life, century after century, millennium after millennium, this evolution of the individual proceeds, and in aiding its growth by conscious effort we are working in harmony with the divine will, and carrying out the purpose for which we are here. Nothing good that is once woven into the texture of this causal body is ever lost, nothing is dissipated; for this is the man that lives for ever.

Thus we see that by the law of evolution everything that is evil, however strong for the time it may seem, has within itself the germ of its own destruction, while everything that is good has in it the seed of immortality; the secret of this lies in the fact that everything evil is inharmonious, that it sets itself against the kosmic law; it is therefore sooner or later broken up by that law, dashed into pieces

against it, crushed into dust. Everything that is good, on the other hand, being in harmony with the law, is taken on by it, carried forward; it becomes part of the stream of evolution, of that "not ourselves which makes for righteousness," and therefore it can never perish, can never be destroyed. Here lies not only the hope of man but the certainty of his final triumph; however slow the growth, it is there; however long the way, it has its ending. The individual which is our Self is evolving, and cannot now be utterly destroyed; even though by our folly we may make the growth slower than it need be, none the less everything we contribute to it, however little, lasts in it for ever, and is our possession for all the ages that lie in front.

(c) *The Spiritual Body.*—We may rise one step further, but in doing so we enter a region so lofty that it is well-nigh beyond our treading, even in imagination. For the causal body itself is not the highest, and the "Spiritual Ego" is not Manas, but Manas united to, merged in Buddhi. This is the culmination of the human evolution, the end of the revolution on the wheel of births and deaths. Above the plane with which we have been dealing lies a yet higher, sometimes called that of Turiya, the plane of Buddhi.\* Here the vehicle of consciousness is the spiritual body, the *Ānandamayakosha*, or body of bliss, and into this Yogis can pass, and in it taste the eternal bliss of that glorious world, and realize in their own consciousness the underlying unity, which then becomes to them a fact of experience and no longer only an intellectual belief. We may read of a time that comes to the man when he has grown in love, wisdom and power, and when he passes through a great gateway, marking a distinct stage in his evolution. It is the gateway of Initiation, and the man led through it by his Master rises for the first time into the spiritual body, and experiences in it the unity which underlies all the diversity of the physical world and all its separateness, which underlies the separateness of the astral plane and even of the devachanic region. When these are left behind and the man, clothed in the spiritual body, rises beyond them, he then finds for the first time in his experience that separateness belongs only to the three lower worlds; that he is

\* This plane has also been called that of Sushupti. See Manuals iv. and v.

one with all others, and that, without losing self-consciousness, his consciousness can expand to embrace the consciousness of others, can become verily and indeed one with them. There is the unity after which man is always yearning, the unity he has *felt* as true and has vainly tried to realize on lower planes; there it is realized beyond his loftiest dreamings, and all humanity is found to be one with his innermost Self.

(d) *Temporary Bodies*.—We cannot leave out of our review of man's bodies certain other vehicles that are temporary, and may be called artificial, in their character. When a man begins to pass out of the physical body he may use the astral, but so long as he is functioning in that he is limited to the astral world. It is possible, however, for him to use the mind-body—that of the Lower Manas—in order to pass into the devachanic region, and in this he can also range the astral and physical planes without let or hindrance. The body thus used is often called the *Mâyâvi Rûpa*, or body of illusion, and it is the mind-body re-arranged, so to speak, for separate activity. The man fashions his mind-body into the likeness of himself, shapes it into his own image and likeness, and is then in this temporary and artificial body free to traverse the three planes at will and rise superior to the ordinary limitations of man. It is this artificial body that is often spoken of in Theosophical books, in which a person can travel from land to land, passing also into the world of mind, learning there new truths, gathering new experience, and bringing back to the waking consciousness the treasures thus collected. The advantage of using this higher body is that it is not subject to deception and glamour on the astral plane as is the astral body. The untrained astral senses often mislead, and much experience is needed ere their reports can be trusted, but this temporarily formed mind-body is not subject to such deceptions; it sees with a true vision, it hears with a true hearing; no astral glamour can overpower, no astral illusion can deceive; therefore this body is preferably used by those trained for such journeyings, made when it is wanted, let go again when the purpose for which it was made is served. Thus it is that the student often learns lessons that otherwise could not reach him, and receives instructions from which he would otherwise be entirely shut off.

Other temporary bodies have been called by the name of

Mâyâvi Rûpa, but it seems better to restrict the term to the one just described. A man may appear at a distance in a body which is really a thought-form more than a vehicle of consciousness, thought clothed in the elemental essence of the astral plane. These bodies are, as a rule, merely vehicles of some particular thought, some special volition, and outside this show no consciousness. They need only be mentioned in passing.

(c) *The Human Aura*.—We are now in a position to understand what the human aura, in its fullest sense, really is. It is the man himself, manifest at once on the four planes of consciousness, and according to its development is his power of functioning on each; it is the aggregate of his bodies, of his vehicles of consciousness; in a phrase, it is the form-aspect of the man. It is thus that we should regard it, and not as a mere ring or cloud surrounding him. Most glorious of all is the spiritual body, visible in Initiates, through which plays the living âtmic fire; this is the manifestation of the man on the buddhic plane. Then comes the causal body, his manifestation in the highest devachanic world, on the arûpa levels of the plane of mind, where the individual has his home. Next the mind-body, belonging to the lower devachanic planes, and the astral, etheric and dense bodies in succession, each formed of the matter of its own region, and expressing the man as he is in each. When the student looks at the human being, he sees all these bodies making up the man, showing themselves separately by virtue of their different grades of matter, and thus marking the stage of development at which the man has arrived. As the higher vision is developed, the student sees each of these bodies in its full activity. The physical body is visible as a kind of dense crystallization in the centre of the other bodies, the others permeating it and extending beyond its periphery, the physical being the smallest. The astral comes next, showing the state of the kâmic nature that forms so great a part of the ordinary man, full of his passions, lower appetites and emotions, differing in fineness, in colour, as the man is more or less pure—very dense in the grosser types, finer in the more refined, finest of all if the man be far advanced in his evolution. Then the mind-body, poorly developed in the majority but beautiful in many, very various in colouring according to the mental and moral type. Then the causal, scarcely visible in most, visible only

if careful scrutiny be brought to bear on the man, so slightly is it developed, so comparatively thin is its colouring, so feeble is its activity. But when we come to look at an advanced soul, it is this and the one above it that at once strike the eye as being emphatically the presentation of the man; radiant in light, most glorious and delicate in colouring, showing hues that no language can describe, because they have no place in earth's spectrum—hues not only most pure and beautiful, but entirely different from the colours known on the lower planes, additional ones which show the growth of the man in those higher regions in the loftier qualities and powers that there exist. If the eye be fortunate enough to be blessed with the sight of one of the Great Ones, he appears as this mighty living form of life and colour, radiant and glorious, showing forth his nature by his very appearance to the view; beautiful beyond description, resplendent beyond imagination. Yet what he is all shall one day become; that which he is in accomplishment dwells in every son of man as possibility.

There is one point about the aura that I may mention, as it is one of practical utility. We can to a great extent protect ourselves against the incursion of thoughts from outside by making a spherical wall round us from the auric substance. The aura responds very readily to the impulse of thought, and if by an effort of the imagination we picture its outer edge as densified into a shell, we really make such a protective wall around us. This shell will prevent the incoming of the drifting thoughts that fill the astral atmosphere, and thus will prevent the disturbing influence they exercise over the untrained mind. The drain on our vitality that we sometimes feel, especially when we come into contact with people who unconsciously vampirize their neighbours, may also be guarded against by the formation of a shell, and anyone who is sensitive and who finds himself very exhausted by such a drain will do wisely thus to protect himself. Such is the power of human thought on subtle matter that to think of yourself as within such a shell is to have it formed around you.

Looking at human beings around us on every side, we may see them in every stage of development, showing themselves forth by their bodies according to the point in evolution which they have reached, living on plane after plane of the universe, functioning in

region after region, as they develop the corresponding vehicles of consciousness. Our aura shows just what we are; we add to it as we grow in the true life, we purify it as we live noble and cleanly lives, we weave into it higher and higher qualities.

Is it possible that any philosophy of life should be more full of hope, more full of strength, more full of joy than this? Looking over the world of men with the physical eye only, we see it degraded, miserable, apparently hopeless, as in truth it is to the eye of flesh. But that same world of men appears to us in quite another aspect when seen by the higher vision. We see indeed the sorrow and the misery, we see indeed the degradation and the shame; but we know that they are transient, that they are temporary, that they belong to the childhood of the race and that the race will outgrow them. Looking at the lowest and vilest, at the most degraded and most brutal, we can yet see their divine possibilities, we can yet realize what they shall be in the years to come. That is the message of hope brought by Theosophy to the western world, the message of universal redemption from ignorance, and therefore of universal emancipation from misery—not in dream but in reality, not in hope but in certainty. Everyone who in his own life is showing the growth, is, as it were, a fresh realization and enforcement of the message; everywhere the first-fruits are appearing, and the whole world shall one day be ripe for the harvest, and shall accomplish the purpose for which the LOGOS gave it birth.

#### IV.—THE MAN.

We have now to turn to the consideration of the man himself, no longer studying the vehicles of consciousness but the action of the consciousness on them, no longer looking at the bodies but at the entity who functions in them. By "the man" I mean that continuing individual who passes from life to life, who comes into bodies and again leaves them, over and over again, who develops slowly in the course of ages, who grows by the gathering and by the assimilation of experience, and who exists on that higher mânasic or devachanic plane referred to in the last chapter. This man is to be the subject of our study, functioning on the three planes with which we are now familiar—the physical, the astral and the mental.

Man begins his experiences by developing self-consciousness on the physical plane; it is here that appears what we call the "waking consciousness," the consciousness with which we are all familiar, which works through the brain and nervous system, by which we reason in the ordinary way, carrying on all logical processes, by which we remember past events of the current incarnation, and exercise judgment in the affairs of life. All that we recognize as our mental faculties is the outcome of the man's work through the preceding stages of his pilgrimage, and his self-consciousness here becomes more and more vivid, more and more active, more and more alive, we may say, as the individual develops, as the man progresses life after life.

If we study a very undeveloped man, we find his self-conscious mental activity to be poor in quality and limited in quantity. He is working in the physical body through the gross and etheric brains; action is continually going on, so far as the whole nervous system is concerned, visible and invisible, but the action is of a very clumsy kind. There is in it very little discrimination, very little delicacy of mental touch. There is some mental activity, but it is of a very infantile or childish kind. It is occupied with very small things; it is amused by very trivial occurrences; the things that attract its attention are things of a petty character; it is interested in passing objects: it likes to sit at a window and look out at a busy street, watching people and vehicles go by, making remarks on them, overwhelmed with amusement if a well-dressed person tumbles into a puddle or is badly splashed by a passing cab. It has not much in itself to occupy its attention, and therefore it is always rushing outwards in order to feel that it is alive; it is one of the chief characteristics of this low stage of mental evolution that the man working at the physical and etheric bodies and bringing them into order as vehicles of consciousness, is always seeing violent sensations; he needs to make sure that he is feeling and to learn to distinguish things by receiving from them strong and vivid sensations; it is a quite necessary stage of progress, though an elementary one, and without this he would continually be becoming confused, confused between the processes within his vehicle and without it; he must learn the alphabet of the self and the not-self, by distinguishing between the objects causing impacts and the sensations



caused by impacts, between the stimulus and the feeling. The lowest types of this stage may be seen gathered at street-corners, lounging idly against a wall, and indulging occasionally in a few ejaculatory remarks and in cackling outbursts of empty laughter. Any one able to look into their brains finds that they are receiving somewhat blurred impressions from passing objects, and that the links between these impressions and others like them are very slight. The impressions are more like a heap of pebbles than a well-arranged mosaic.

In studying the way in which the physical and etheric brains become vehicles of consciousness, we have to run back to the early development of the *Ahamkāra*, or "I-ness," a stage that may be seen in the lower animals around us. Vibrations caused by the impact of external objects are set up in the brain, transmitted by it to the astral body, and felt by the consciousness as sensations, before there is any linking of these sensations to the objects that caused them, this linking being a definite mental action—a perception. When perception begins the consciousness is using the physical and etheric brains as a vehicle for itself, by means of which it knowingly gathers knowledge of the external world. This stage is long past in our humanity, of course, but its fleeting repetition may be seen when the consciousness takes up a new brain in coming to rebirth; the child begins to "take notice," as the nurses say, that is, to relate a sensation arising in its own consciousness to an impression made upon its new sheath, or vehicle, by an external object, and thus to "notice" the object, to perceive it.

After a time the perception of an object is not necessary in order that the picture of that object may be present to the consciousness, and it finds itself able to recall the appearance of an object when it is not contacted by any sense; such a memoried perception is an idea, a concept, a mental image, and these make up the store which the consciousness gathers from the outside world. On these it begins to work, and the first stage of this activity is the arrangement of the ideas, the preliminary to "reasoning" upon them. Reasoning begins by comparing the ideas with each other, and then by inferring relations between them from the simultaneous or sequential happening of two or more of them, time after time. In

this process the consciousness has withdrawn within itself, carrying with it the ideas it has made out of perceptions, and it goes on to add to them something of its own, as when it infers a sequence, relates one thing to another as cause and effect. It begins to draw conclusions, even to forecast future happenings when it has established a sequence, so that when the perception regarded as "cause" appears the perception regarded as "effect" is expected to follow. Again, it notices in comparing its ideas that many of them have one or more elements in common, while their remaining constituents are different, and it proceeds to draw these common characteristics away from the rest and to put them together as the characteristics of a class, and then it groups together the objects that possess these, and when it sees a new object which possesses them it throws it into that class; in this way it gradually arranges into a cosmos the chaos of perceptions with which it began its mental career, and infers law from the orderly succession of phenomena and the types it finds in nature. All this is the work of the consciousness in and through the physical brain, but even in this working we trace the presence of that which the brain does not supply. The brain merely receives vibrations; the consciousness working in the astral body changes the vibrations into sensations, and in the mental body changes the sensations into perceptions, and then carries on all the processes which, as just said, transform the chaos into cosmos. And the consciousness thus working is, further, illuminated from above with ideas that are not fabricated from materials supplied by the physical world, but are reflected into it directly from the Universal Mind. The great "laws of thought" regulate all thinking, and the very act of thinking reveals their pre-existence, as it is done by them and under them, and is impossible without them.

It is unnecessary almost to remark that all these earlier efforts of consciousness to work in the physical vehicle are subject to much error, both from imperfect perception and from mistaken inferences. Hasty inferences, generalizations from limited experience, vitiate many of the conclusions arrived at, and the rules of logic are formulated in order to discipline the thinking faculty, and to enable it to avoid the fallacies into which it constantly falls while untrained. But none the less the attempt to reason, however imperfectly, from

one thing to another is a distinct mark of growth in the man himself, for it shews that he is adding something of his own to the information contributed from outside. This working on the collected materials has an effect on the physical vehicle itself. When the mind links two perceptions together, it also sets up—as it is causing corresponding vibrations in the brain—a link between the sets of vibrations from which the perceptions arose. For as the mind-body is thrown into activity, it acts on the astral body and this again on the etheric and dense bodies, and the nervous matter of the latter vibrates under the impulses sent through; this action shews itself as electrical discharges, and magnetic currents play between molecules and groups of molecules, causing intricate inter-relations. These leave what we may call a nervous track, a track along which another current will run more easily than it can run, say, athwart it, and if a group of molecules that were concerned in a vibration should be again made active by the consciousness repeating the idea that was impressed upon them, the disturbance there set up readily runs along the track formed between it and another group by a previous linking, and calls that other group into activity, and it sends up to the mind a vibration which, after the regular transformations, presents itself as an associated idea. Hence the great importance of association, this action of the brain being sometimes exceedingly troublesome, as when some foolish or ludicrous idea has been linked with a serious or a sacred one. The consciousness calls up the sacred idea in order to dwell upon it, and suddenly, quite without its consent, the grinning face of the intruding idea, sent up by the mechanical action of the brain, thrusts itself through the doorway of the sanctuary and defiles it. Wise men pay attention to association, and are careful how they speak of the most sacred things, lest some foolish and ignorant person should make a connecting link between the holy and the silly or the coarse, a link which afterwards would be likely to repeat itself in the consciousness. Useful is the precept of the great Jewish Teacher: "Give not that which is holy to the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine."

Another mark of progress appears when a man begins to regulate his conduct by conclusions arrived at within, instead of by impulses received from without. He is then acting from his own store of accumulated experiences, remembering past happenings,

comparing results obtained by different lines of action in the past, and deciding by these as to the line of action he will adopt in the present. He is beginning to forecast, to foresee, to judge of the future by the past, to reason ahead by remembering what has already occurred, and as a man does this there is a distinct growth of him as *man*. He may still be confined to functioning in his physical brains, he may still be inactive outside them, but he is becoming a developing consciousness which is beginning to behave as an individual, to choose its own road instead of drifting with circumstances, or being forced along a particular line of action by some pressure from without. The growth of the man shews itself in this definite way, and he develops more and more of what is called character, more and more of will-power.

Strong-willed and weak-willed persons are distinguished by their difference in this respect. The weak-willed man is moved from outside, by outer attractions and repulsions, while the strong-willed man is moved from inside, and continually masters circumstances by bringing to bear upon them appropriate forces, guided by his store of accumulated experiences. This store, which the man has in many lives gathered and accumulated, becomes more and more available as the physical brains become more trained and refined, and therefore more receptive: the store is in the man, but he can only use as much of it as he can impress on the physical consciousness. The man himself has the memory and does the reasoning; the man himself judges, chooses, decides; but he has to do all this through his physical and etheric brains; he must work and act by way of the physical body, of the nervous mechanism, and of the etheric organism therewith connected. As the brain becomes more impressible, as he improves its material and brings it more under his control, he is able to use it for better expression of himself.

How then shall we, the living men, try to train our vehicles of consciousness, in order that they may serve as better instruments? We are not now studying the physical development of the vehicle, but its training by the consciousness that uses it as an instrument of thought. The man decides that in order to make more useful this vehicle of his, to the improvement of which physically he has already directed his attention, he must train it to answer promptly and consecutively to the impulses he transmits to it; in

order that the brain may respond consecutively, he will himself think consecutively, and so sending to the brain sequential impulses he will accustom it to work sequentially by linked groups of molecules, instead of by haphazard and unrelated vibrations. The man initiates, the brain only imitates, and unconnected careless thinking sets up the habit in the brain of forming unconnected vibratory groups. The training has two stages: the man, determining that he will think consecutively, trains his mental body to link thought to thought and not to alight anywhere in a casual way; and then, by thinking thus, he trains the brain which vibrates in answer to his thought. In this way the physical organism—the nervous and the etheric systems—get into the habit of working in a systematic way, and when their owner wants them they respond promptly and in an orderly fashion, when he requires them they are ready to his hand. Between such a trained vehicle of consciousness and one that is untrained, there is the kind of difference that there is between the tools of a careless workman, who leaves them dirty and blunt, unfit for use, and those of the man who makes his tools ready, sharpens them and cleans them, so that when they are wanted they are ready to his hand and he can at once use them for the work demanding his attention. Thus should the physical vehicle be ready always to answer to the call of the mind.

ANNIE BESANT.

*(To be concluded.)*

## SÛFÎSM.

IF we study any of the great religions we perceive one characteristic which seems to be common to them all, namely, that in every case their followers appear to be divided into two very distinct groups. Firstly, there are those, naturally by far the larger number, who are content to accept their teachings and scriptures in a literal, external sense, and secondly, as distinguished from these, there is another class, which, on the contrary, attach but little importance to the external and obvious meaning, and hold it as subordinate to the inner or more veiled interpretation. They consequently pay but little attention to the forms and ceremonies, which are regarded as all-important by the others. Those who belong to the mystical and unorthodox class are sometimes known by one name and sometimes by another, but the similarity of their views, whatever may be the form of the outer religion they profess, is very striking. One such class among Christians has been given the name of Quietists: among Mahommedans we find the corresponding class called by the name of Sûfis.

The name "Sûfî" has been variously derived, the most generally accepted derivation being from the Arabic word Sûf, or wool, this being an allusion to the material composing the dress of the ascetic. The other derivations mentioned are from the Arabic word Safâ, which means sincere and pure, and from the Greek σοφός, meaning wise. Again, as to the date at which the name first came into use, there seems to be some doubt, but it is usually supposed that the name was first adopted by Abu Hashem, an ascetic and a native of Kufa, who died A.H. 150 (A.D. 767). It is possible however, that the name was adopted even so early as the first year of the Hegira, A.D. 622, when forty-five citizens of Mecca associated with forty-five inhabitants of Medina and formed a sort of confraternity. A woman named Râbiah was one of the earliest of the Sûfis, and by some is considered the originator of Sûfism, but whoever really originated

the name, one thing seems tolerably clear, namely, that though the name was Mahommedan, the thing itself was not of Mahommedan growth at all, and if we would trace its beginnings, we must look far back, ages before the birth of the great prophet of Arabia.

There has been much difference of opinion among students of Sūfism in the West as to whence were drawn their philosophy and their metaphysical conceptions, some holding that Sūfism was more indebted to the Greek than to any other source, and that it was really an outgrowth of the Platonic and Neoplatonic schools; some that Christian Gnostic influence is mainly recognizable, and others again, as for example, Palmer, from whose admirable little book treating of the Sūfistic Theosophy of the Persians I shall have to quote, rather incline to the belief that it is in reality a development of the primæval religion of the Āryan race.

It does not seem to me possible to decide the exact channel of influence which is responsible for Sūfī thought; as a matter of fact the various Sūfī writers appear to differ very widely in many of their conceptions, and while one seems to reflect the Christian Gnostic influence, another seems to lean more directly towards the Neoplatonic school, and a third to be more indebted to the metaphysical and philosophic systems of Indian thought. In any case I think we shall not be far wrong if we adopt Palmer's view, and recognize that the underlying spirit of Sūfism received its impulse from the "primeval religion of the Āryan race," as it will then be brought into close relationship also with Gnosticism and Neoplatonism, both of which seem to be closely related to the same parent stem. From the conditions of the times, geographically and otherwise, there is every reason to suppose that mystical thought and mystical philosophies, both from Europe and from India, came into touch with Sūfism, and in all probability exercised some influence and left some mark upon it.

Persia may be regarded as the home of the system, as it is in Persian soil that it seems to have flourished most vigorously, and it is to Persian writers we must turn if we wish to gain any insight into Sūfī thought. Now Sūfī is a name which, although possibly originally used in a more limited sense, has now come to be used to cover all the sects which, within the limit of the Mahommedan faith, profess to follow the mystical interpretation of the scriptures, and

which, in so far as they do so, are opposed to the more popular and consequently orthodox view of things. As we can very easily imagine, these sects differ very widely in the details of the views they profess, and in the present day in Persia the term is very loosely used, so that those who profess freethought in matters religious, or hold views at variance with orthodoxy, are thus described.

In all parts of the Mahommedan world are to be found orders of fakirs and dervishes, many of which are the debased remnants of movements which seem to have had their origin in the purer forms of this mysticism, and Sûfism in one form or another has been a very considerable factor in Mahommedanism, from its rise in the seventh century of our era to the present day. It will therefore be readily understood that the subject is one which covers a very wide field, and which embraces many different types of mysticism.

Of what was understood by Sûfism in its earliest days there is very little record, but it would seem that the main teachings of the earliest of its expositors were, first, the reality of the inner life and the comparative unimportance of outward observances; second, the necessity of an exclusive love of God; and, third, the desirability of ascetic practices, with the view of dominating the lower nature and of procuring what were called the states of ecstasy, during which the soul contemplated the Supreme Being face to face. In other words, Sûfism in its origin would seem to have been more a rule of life than a philosophical system. But as time went on, philosophic and metaphysical ideas gathered around it until the system gained its fullest development about the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It is in this period that the greater number of the more elaborate treatises on Sûfism were composed, those which may be regarded as touching the high-water mark of the system, and which have ever since served as authorities for its followers.

One of the most noted of these is the Persian poem entitled *Gulshan-i-raz*, which means "The Mystic Rose Garden," written by Sa'd un dîn Mahmud Shabistan, in the year 1317 A.D.—or 717 years after the flight of the prophet to Medina. Another very celebrated work is the *Masnavi*, which deals with the mysticism of the Sûfis, and was composed by Jalâl ud dîn Muhammed



nearly a century earlier—it has been described as the Bible of Persia. Another very interesting source of information respecting the Sūfism of a later period is the *Dabistan*, a treatise on the various religions prevailing in the seventeenth century which the author had an opportunity of investigating. There is some doubt as to the identity of the author, but it seems fairly certain that he was one Moshan Fani by name, who seems himself to have belonged to the sect. These are the sources on which I shall principally draw in endeavouring to present some idea of what was understood by Sūfism at a time when it was in its prime.

There is one thing that is almost certain to create considerable prejudice at first sight in the minds of Western students of mysticism who turn to these writers, namely, the constant recurrence of such terms as wine, taverns, drunkenness, lips, tresses, kisses, and much more in the same strain throughout the works of the Sūfī mystics. There have been those indeed who have maintained that these writers when speaking of such things used them in their obvious and ordinary meaning, and that so far from being guides to the spiritual life, these poems are nothing more than the erotic and bacchanalian effusions of materialistic and sensuous Orientals; nay, even among their own countrymen there have been those who have taken them literally, but it seems almost incredible that such a view can be seriously entertained against all the Sūfī writers, for all, or nearly all, make use of these terms. Again we have authors like Mahmud in the *Gulshan-i-raz* explicitly denying the outer meaning and setting forth the inner, as in the following, where the question is asked: "What means the mystic by these expressions of his? What does he indicate by 'eye' and 'lip'? What seeks he by 'cheek,' 'curl,' 'down,' 'mole'?" The poet goes on to explain that "When these words are heard by the sensual ear, at first they denote objects of sense. . . . How can the mysteries beheld in ecstatic vision be interpreted by spoken words? When mystics treat of these mysteries they interpret them by types." (*Gulshan-i-raz*, Whinfield's Translation, p. 71.)

Again, Jalāl ud dīn Rumi says, "They [the Sūfis] profess eager desire, but with no carnal affection, and circulate the cup, but no material goblet, since all things are spiritual, all is mystery within mystery."

Nizami writes as follows :

Think not that when I praise wine I mean the juice of the grape,  
I mean the wine which raiseth me above self.  
" My Cupbearer " is to perform my vow to God ;  
" My morning draught from the tavern " is the wine of self-oblivion.

By heaven, as long as I have enjoyed existence  
Never hath the tip of my lip been stained with wine !

But while it is tolerably evident that these terms are intended to be understood in a mystical manner, it is by no means easy to fathom the precise sense in which they are employed by different writers, nay, even by the same authors in different places. There have been vocabularies compiled showing the technical meanings attached to these terms, and one such is to be found at the end of Palmer's work.

The terms that are perhaps in most constant use are : Wine, with some such meaning as Divine Love ; Tavern, meaning the heart as the place where this wine is to be found ; Intoxication, meaning ecstasy ; the Beloved, meaning God ; Sleep, meaning meditation, and so on, through numberless similar terms ; but there seems no definite fixed system on which these symbols were used, and so in studying any particular writer it is only possible to approximate to the intended meaning by a careful study of the context.

This symbology, which sounds somewhat strangely to Western ears, is not peculiar to Sūfism, but would seem to have been adopted very generally by mystical writers in those lands in far earlier days. We have a sufficiently familiar instance of this in the book called the *Song of Songs*, which forms part of the canonical books of the Old Testament, as witness the following (ch. i. 9, and ch. iv. 1) :

I have compared thee, O my love,  
To a steed in Pharaoh's chariots ;  
Thy cheeks are comely with plaits of hair,  
Thy neck with strings of jewels.

Behold thou art fair, my love, behold thou art fair,  
Thine eyes as doves behind thy veil,  
Thy hair is as a flock of goats,  
Which lie along the side of Mount Gilead.

All of which very distinctly recalls passages from our mystics,

Whether the employment of so sensual a symbology, however suggestive, to typify spiritual verities is wise, is a very open question, as it seems by no means unlikely to lead to grave abuses, and result very possibly in a debased form of mysticism. The question, in any case, opens up a very wide field for discussion on which, at present, I do not propose to enter.

The *Dabistan* thus treats of the nature of Deity: "The Universal Being [in the conception of the Sūfī], is distinct from any intellectual and exterior existence, inasmuch as every individual from among the intellectual and exterior beings belongs to some class of beings; but the Universal Being is not subordinate to the condition of anything; He is absolute and sovereign, and not general, not partial, not special, not common—for It is by itself One and not a multiple." Attributes and names belong to the manifested Deity, but behind this degree lies "the Real Being, under condition of no substance whatever; this degree is called the 'degree of unity' and all names and attributes are (as it were) consumed by this degree which is expressed as the 'reality of realities.' This Real Being manifests in all existences, and under the condition of 'a thing and no thing' is the form of the Universe." That is to say, that immediately on the unmanifest One becoming manifested, this element of duality appears, the formless assumes form, limited by "the pairs of opposites" here described as entity and non-entity.

"The first attribute of this Supreme which emerged into manifestation from within was Intelligence, and in this degree all the 'fixed realities' were under intellectual forms." Here the "fixed realities" seem to mean the "eternal ideals or prototypes," the archetypal universe, recalling the Neoplatonic and Gnostic systems.

The names of God are, they say, of three kinds. First, the name of the unmanifested; such as the absolute, the pure holy root or essence of substance. Second, the name of the manifested; such as excelling in attributes, living, acting, creator, the merciful. But the third and last name is the greatest, namely, "the concealed—the mysterious."

This seems fairly to correspond to the ideas which are associated with the conceptions of the Deity in the threefold manifestation as the first, second, and third Logos.

Turning to the *Gulshan-i-raz* the following passage is of

interest and worthy of remembrance, as it lays special stress on the fact that, far as the mind and reason can take us in following our speculations as to the nature of the Deity, there are limits beyond which they cannot pass, and beyond which it is vain to attempt to speak in terms of the intellect.

To think on the *mercies* is the condition of your path,  
 But to think on the *essence* of "the Truth" is grievous sin,  
 Thinking on the essence of "the Truth" is vain,  
 Know it is impossible to demonstrate the manifest. (p. 12.)

As Lahiji in his commentary explains, knowledge of God is gained by illumination and intuition, and demonstration of ultimate facts of consciousness is impossible.

The *Gulshan-i-raz* thus continues :

"Since his works are manifested from his essence, his essence is not manifested from his work."

Though the Angels stand hard by the throne  
 They reach not the station, "I am with God."  
 Like as his light utterly burns up the Angels,  
 So it burns up reason from head to foot.  
 Reason's light applied to the very Light of lights  
 Is as the eye of the head applied to the sun ;  
 The eye is darkened so that it cannot see it.  
 This blackness, if you knew it, is the light of very Being,  
 In the land of darkness is the well-spring of life.

If you desire to behold the eye of the sun  
 You must make use of another body.

You may look on the brilliant sun in the water,  
 Since its brightness shows less brightly therein.

Not-being is the mirror of Absolute Being

Therein is reflected the shining of "the Truth."

The Unity is exposed to view in this plurality,  
 Like as when you count one to become many.

With regard to the purpose of creation, as giving a hint as to the "why" which lies at the back of all manifestation, we find constant reference being made by these Sûfis to the tradition current among Mahommedans, which runs as follows :

"David inquired, saying, O Lord, why hast thou created man-

kind? God said, I was a hidden treasure, and I desired to become known, and I created the world in order to be known."

The conception, therefore, is that the purpose of creation is the evolution, or the building up, of self-conscious centres or beings, and that in man lies the germ and the full potentiality, though latent, of becoming a knower of the Self.

With regard to man himself, the correspondence between man and the universe, or, as it is sometimes called, between man, the microcosm, and the universe, the macrocosm, is much insisted on.

"Not-being is the mirror, the world the reflection, and man is as the reflected eye of the Unseen Person. You are that reflected eye, and He the light of the eye. In that eye His eye sees his own eye. The world is a man, and man is a world. There is no clearer explanation than this. When you look well into the root of the matter He is at once seer, seeing eye, and thing seen" (p. 15).

In the *Masnawi* (p. 226) we find the following prayer addressed to the Deity:

"Write on, O skilful fair-writer! imprinting every moment in Not-being the fair forms of the world of ideas, to confound all thought!"

Of the universe itself it is said (*Gulshan-i-raz*, p. 17):

If you take one atom link from its place  
The entire universe falls to ruin.  
The whole in a dizzy whirl, and yet no single part  
Placing foot beyond the limit of contingency,  
The nominal being holding each one in bondage,  
Each is in despair at its particularization from the whole.  
You may say each is ever travelling and yet restrained,  
Each is ever being unclothed and clothed upon,  
Each is always in motion, yet ever at rest,  
Never beginning and never ending,  
Each ever cognizant of his own essence, and for that cause  
Ever pressing his way towards the throne on high.  
Beneath the veil of each atom is hidden  
The heart-ravishing beauty of the Beloved's face.

The beauty and truth of this description will, I think, be appreciated by students of Theosophy.

The indestructibility of substance is referred to in the *Dabistan*, as follows:

"The substance of anything cannot be caused to vanish into

non-existence; thus, if thou consumest a stick in the fire, its substance is not annihilated although its form changes, and becomes manifest in the form of ashes. The self-existent Being is an essence which is stable in all conditions, and in all accidents of existence . . . the divine . . . is manifested under the shape of divers combinations which thou beholdest."

That attribute of the Deity which the Sûfis most constantly dwell on, that quality which they regard as the fundamental law of existence, and by means of which alone the eventual end of evolution, the reunion with the Deity, could be accomplished, was "Love" and "Devotion," and hence their constant imagery of Lover and Beloved, precisely the same term being made use of by the Christian mystics, but this Divine Love with the Sûfis was constantly referred to as wine, hence we find the following (*Gulshan-i-raz*, p. 80):

The whole universe is as His wine-house  
The heart of every atom as His wine-cup.

The heavens giddy with this wine are reeling to and fro.

The Angels drinking its wine from pure vessels  
Pour the dregs of their draught upon this world.

From the scent of its dregs which fell on the earth,  
Man ascends up till he reaches heaven—  
From its reflection the withered body becomes a living soul,  
From its heat the frozen soul is warmed to life and motion.

O. S. CUFFE.

(*To be concluded.*)

## LETTER TO THE AMERICAN SECTION.

27, LEINSTER GARDENS,  
LONDON, W.

DEAR MR. FULLERTON,—If I had been able to take part in the proceedings of the Chicago Convention of the American Section of the Theosophical Society I should have been chiefly anxious to call the attention of your friends to certain broad principles of Theosophical thinking with which, as I am to my great regret unable to visit you this year, I now propose to deal in writing.

Theosophy, differing in this respect from other systems of ethical, philosophical, or theological teaching, aims at an exact comprehension of the laws which actually as a matter of fact regulate the spiritual evolution of Man. Anyone whose mind is attuned to the methods of Nature will feel sure that, however subtle and obscure those laws may be, the growth of the interior faculties of Man must proceed on some systematic plan. We may assume that before anyone touches the confines of Theosophical thinking he has arrived at the conviction that the soul is an entity of which the physical personality is an expression for the time being. Such entities, around us in great number, are obviously at very different stages of growth. It would be childish to imagine the ultimate possibilities of progress to have been already reached in any given case. Every aspiring thinker must yearn to grasp the principles according to which further progress is possible. The ardour of his own aspiration persuades him that somehow there must be a way of stimulating the evolutionary tendencies which have brought him to the point at which he stands. He is on the alert to seize any clue that may promise to lead him to the light of knowledge. Without a clue, even, he may dimly feel that a good life of doing to others as he would be done by must be conducive to the divine plan, whatever it is, which provides for spiritual exaltation; but he thirsts for a more

exact appreciation of the methods by which that result is to be accomplished, for a clear view of the road to be travelled, of the goals to be attained, of the tasks he is required to perform, if such there may be, in order that he may have the satisfaction of becoming a helpful, useful member of the vast family of humanity to which he belongs.

Theosophical teaching, indeed, in some of its aspects may be prodigiously helpful to people who have by no means reached the state of mind just described, for to those who are sadly wandering in the darkest uncertainty concerning the first fundamental notion that the human soul is an entity at all, apart from its physical manifestation, our system of mental culture may afford the first secure footing from which further progress may be possible; but for the moment I want to dwell on what seem to me the important principles of Theosophical teaching as it affects those who are already possessed with a lofty conception of human nature and destinies, but are outside the area of exact knowledge concerning the laws and conditions that determine its further expansion.

To them, it seems to me in the first instance, the great message of Theosophy may be thought of as addressed. We must not allow the scrupulously non-dogmatic character of the message to blind us to the idea that, if it is anything at all, it is in its first broad outlines a message from those who know to those who as yet do not know, how matters stand as regards the veritable science of spiritual Nature. It is a statement put forward on no authority that the person to whom it is addressed can possibly recognize in the first instance, and to begin with, claims attention on its own intrinsic merits alone. Has it a *primâ facie* aspect of credibility? If so, it is worth examining in detail.

What are the main features of the statement?

That the evolution of the soul (that soul itself having been evolved by such and such processes in the past) is carried on by means of successive physical manifestations on such and such a plan.

That the law of the conservation of energy holds good on the moral as well as on the physical plane, and that Karma, the working of cause and effect on higher planes, determines the conditions of these successive manifestations.

That back to the God-like level of consciousness and being out



of which the system to which we belong emerged, the progress of the new individualities that have been evolved by the working of spirit in matter during the life of that system need suffer no check. That there are no limits to the degree of exaltation each such individuality, each such imperishable Ego, may eventually attain.

That far beyond us on the pathway leading to those immeasurable heights stand the Elder Brethren of humanity, those who have earliest fathomed and conformed themselves to the divine purpose of the system; that some of those amongst ordinary humanity have conscious touch with them; that the laws which regulate advance along the path they have travelled are not disguised or secret but are—so and so—intelligible for all who feel impelled to study them, a feeling which has been suffocated of late centuries in the Western world to a great extent by the concentration of effort on material civilization.

Each of these great heads of the Theosophical message has been undergoing enormous expansion during the last dozen or fifteen years, and so many willing and well-meaning workers have thrown themselves during that period into the task of expanding the message that some of its details have been entangled; but such entanglements are of little moment as regards people who hold on to fundamental principles. For them, as regards details, intellectual vigour will be stimulated by the necessity at every turn of checking specific items of esoteric doctrine by the criteria of reason; by weighing the value of testimony if the matter relates to some question that can only be determined by the exercise of transcendental faculties; by comparing each new bit of teaching they may receive with the whole structure built up in their minds and observing how it will fit; by keeping their spiritual emotions, if the expression may be tolerated, on their guard against vague sonorous phrases that convey no definite meaning. They can scarcely be prejudiced to any serious extent by conflicts of statement among Theosophic writers on subjects that easily await exact determination at a later stage of progress, if they keep in touch with the well-understood laws which actually govern that progress.

My own attempt to present those laws in a simple, lucid and intelligible shape, is embodied in the *Transaction of the London Lodge* called "The Path of Initiation." In more glowing or

exalted language the same ideas are diffused through well-known Theosophical books, *Light on the Path*, *The Voice of the Silence*, *In the Outer Court*; but though some of these essays include an attempt to sketch the moral progress of the Adept through the higher grades of initiation, there is no ambiguity in any Theosophic teaching that I am acquainted with as regards the character of the interior development which must be worked out by anyone who having found the great message of Theosophy take firm root in his mind, resolves from that time forth to make it the rule of life, and conscious relationship with those who are already identified in Nature with the divine purpose represented by our own system of worlds, the first means of putting himself on the higher levels of spiritual existence where service is identified with love and perfect freedom.

In the beginning mischievous lookers-on—for the intermediate planes of Nature's activity are by no means free from the intrusion of influences that are out of tune with lofty aspirations—may set little traps and snares for the feet of those who are looking out for the path. This is a peril which especially affects people rendered accessible to such influences by the possession of psychic faculties rather prematurely awakened; but no one is in any real danger from such embarrassments who has a perfectly high-minded motive for his efforts in the direction of spiritual progress. If he can already say to himself with a perfect assurance that he is in no way touched by a selfish thought, that he is solely inspired in his desire to rise in the scale of Nature by the love of his fellow-creatures and an altruistic longing to do them good, then, indeed, he is beyond the reach of evil meddling on the astral plane. But those who may more humbly imagine that moral perfection of that sort which we reverence in a Buddha or a Christ is an attribute they can hardly be sure of having attained in absolute purity quite yet, need fear malevolent agencies hostile to their spiritual progress—a very busy set of agencies, be it remembered, at all times—as little, under circumstances it is easy to define. If they recognize unreservedly that such exalted moral perfection as that described is realized in the nature of those Elder Brethren—the White Adepts, the Masters of Wisdom—towards whom they aspire; if it is towards companionship with them that the aspirant presses forward, towards the culti-

vation in himself of an interior condition that may make him not unworthy of such companionship, towards whatever work in the service of the divine scheme at large he shall find ready for him to take up when those levels are reached, then he will be shielded throughout his course by a motive which will be quite sufficiently exalted to ensure the security of his advance. If lower motives play any part in the feelings which animate a student of Occultism, if he relates the objects of his pursuit in any way to the worldly life, there is grave peril in his way, danger lest even the good element in his complex motive should itself be played upon by inimical powers, and, supposing him to be psychically endowed, lest false beacons should be held out to him.

With these reservations the course of the Theosophical student seems to me simple enough, even in America where unhappily there has been a greater degree of internal disturbance within the Society than has been witnessed elsewhere. I need hardly say that for myself, my estimate of the extent to which different lodges, sections, organizations within the Theosophical movement reflect accurately the ideas of our Elder Brethren is not determined by my estimate of any personalities associated at different times and places with the leadership of the movement. It ought to be realized by everyone seriously engaged in the movement, that if our fundamental position is a true one, there must be many persons among us by this time who have made sufficient progress along the path to be trustworthy witnesses of the truth. Any one person may be entangled in misleading relationships on the astral plane; several persons concurrently in a position to exercise consciousness on that and higher planes, and bearing harmonious testimony from different points of view, may be relied upon, when confirming teaching itself in harmony with reason. As time goes on the Theosophical body will be strengthened by the healthy and natural development of the higher faculties of other disciples in turn. Having meanwhile abundant reason to be quite sure that the sympathetic regard of the great Master from whom my own teaching has been derived is continuously directed towards the organization of which my own Lodge is a part, I am more than content to do my best for the spread of Theosophical ideas with the machinery of that organization without stopping to enquire what may be the merits or shortcomings of any

other organization, in whatever external forms other workers endeavour to express their anxiety to promote true spiritual progress—which can only have one goal if it is true. I have no doubt they will conduce to the common purpose in so far as their motives are simple, unworldly, and devoted to beautiful ideals; but at all events, in addressing our friends and fellow-theosophists at Chicago, I may be entitled to give them the assurance that in my unhesitating conviction they have made no mistake in remaining attached to the old organization, not because this or that name is associated with it but because it is the organization through which to all intents and purposes, the whole Theosophic message in its breadth and amplitude has been poured forth for the benefit of our generation, and because it has become and is becoming through the development of some among its members a better and better channel for the transmission of more detailed knowledge. The work that has been done during the last twelve months for the expansion and amplification of that knowledge, in the London Lodge and by means of the publications issued by the Theosophical Publishing Society in connection with the European Section, affords abundant evidence to this effect. We are in possession now of such floods of teaching and information, tending in every direction to strengthen and fortify our first broad conceptions of spiritual Nature, that no one who has kept abreast of our progress can any more relapse from Theosophical enlightenment than the modern scientist could relapse from the views of physical Nature he has reached, back into those which prevailed in the dark ages of ignorance and superstition. Theosophical study has thus become for all who take proper advantage of its opportunities so immeasurably more interesting than personal questions affecting the Society's organization, that we may surely hope to see these fall more and more out of notice as time goes on.

As is involved in what I have said, it seems to me a pity that Theosophical students in any part of the world should feel it necessary to pursue their study under different flags, but the important thing is that they should pursue their study. Just as certainly as one sun illuminates the system, those who make real interior progress on the lines I have indicated above must come ultimately into relationship with the one great advance guard of humanity led by those I call our Elder Brethren. But meanwhile the only way each

person in turn can decide intelligently how to direct his earlier footsteps is by making himself fairly master of the teachings emanating from the various fountains of Theosophic literature, some of them flowing just now with such remarkable activity. None of these, any more than any one fountain of inspiration in the past, should be thought of as exclusively entitled to respect. Any claim on the part of any one writer to monopolize the wisdom of the Adepts is intrinsically absurd. This must always flow to the world through many channels, and any given student must be indeed sure of the absolute purity of any one such channel before he can afford to disregard all others. So, if I may venture to offer any direct counsels to friends and fellow-students in America, my concluding suggestion must point to the propriety of making each considerable group of Theosophical students a vortex of all current expositions of spiritual science which seem to have any *primâ facie* claim to authentic inspiration, in order that the members of such group may be enabled to examine and compare the various expositions without favour or prejudice, holding fast resolutely to that which is good, from whatever source it emanates, and so building up in their own minds a conception of spiritual Nature which shall be in all respects logical and coherent, which shall never be regarded as beyond the reach of readjustment and extension, but which shall as regards its general structure be trustworthy enough to live by and to die by, and to climb by towards loftier spiritual knowledge and development through successive lives to come.

In cordial friendship and sympathy, yours sincerely,

A. P. SINNETT.

## LETTERS TO A CATHOLIC PRIEST. NO. II.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am glad that you do me the justice to recognize that I am not, in the ordinary sense of the words, writing *against* Christianity. You are in no danger of hearing from me such phrases as "the stupid and irrational accretions of uneducated Protestantism," or "the unfounded assertions of the Roman Church" and the like. To me Christianity remains still worthy of all respect as an attempt to express, though it be "but by the stammering lips of childhood," the deepest verities of *all* religion. It is but the shallowest self-conceit which can throw aside lightly, as mere "absurdities", the forms through which the Eternal Light has shown itself to the noblest souls of the West for eighteen centuries back. Hopelessly materialized as they now are, they yet amply suffice for the spiritual needs of the vast majority of a world which has not even yet fully outgrown its childhood.

But, on the other hand, this same world is already so far advanced as to furnish an ever-increasing number of souls in a stage of development, such that they are forced by their very nature to break through these forms into a higher and purer region; though it is just these very nobler souls who will never under any circumstances, speak contemptuously of the religions, which have, like Virgil with Dante, "by care and skill" brought them to the point whence they are to continue their growth under still higher guidance. What I desire to do in these letters is to attempt to justify their position by showing that, even if we give to Christianity all the credit it claims for the past, it still fails to furnish to us of the end of the nineteenth century a view of God, the world, and of our relation to both, which can satisfy our reason, and still less our intuition. My point is that the mind of the nineteenth century is not the mind of the fifth or the thirteenth;

that the God they made and worshipped, with whatever good result for themselves, is not (hard though the saying may be) one which *we*, at our present stage of moral feeling, can fall down before, without doing violence to the deepest aspirations and the noblest feelings of our hearts. It needs only to go through the articles of your creed with unprejudiced eyes, to see that He is not good enough, just enough, noble enough, to satisfy souls to whom the centuries which have passed have already given glimpses of something beyond the highest ideal of earlier times. It might have been different had not the good and holy souls who framed that creed been hampered by the supposed necessity of bringing into their scheme of divine love and wisdom, all the jealousy and cruelty of the Jehovah of the Jewish scriptures. Had they not fallen into that one fatal error my present task might never have been needed. As it is, one must speak, however reluctantly.

From this point of view it will be seen that the *personal* matters of your reply, such as that I am too sensitive, too imaginative, that I have not taken a fair case, that the world is not so bad after all, and so forth, may be set aside, as things for whose discussion life is not long enough. I willingly grant you that in looking at such a gutter-child as I pictured to you, it is hard *not* to imagine that, for some reason or other, God must have been angry with him, even before his birth; but let us, for a moment, examine the explanation you offer. You say that six thousand years ago the first man and woman ate an apple from a tree which God Almighty had forbidden them, and that for this reason God hates all their posterity and will continue to do so as long as the world lasts! Now, even if this *were* so, it would not in any way clear up my difficulty—the enormous *inequalities* of birth. If we have all “sinned in Adam,” we surely should all be equally punished for it. But putting this aside, only stop to ask yourself this one question: Is this a God or a Devil which I am setting up for worship? You say we were made in the image of God but have lost it. May we not fairly congratulate ourselves that, our very worst, our most implacable and cruel hatred does not in any way approach *such* an ideal? And if we ask, as we well may, where is the *justice* of this continual creation, generation after generation, of new souls to bear this burden of God’s hatred for the sin of Adam, so that, as your own theologians say, the eating of

that apple has been a greater misfortune for mankind than all the evil which has afflicted it ever since, you answer that God is infinite, and therefore, any disobedience to Him is an infinite crime, deserving all possible punishment *to* infinity! Good heavens! Such a doctrine might be professed by the trembling courtiers of a cruel but omnipotent lunatic like Nero or Heliogabalus; it might be possible to a Louis the Fourteenth, brought up from infancy to feel himself a god amongst worshipping courtiers; but to say such a thing of an all-wise, all-good Deity! The habit of perpetual repetition of a form of words blunts our perceptions; millions of good, holy, well-meaning people do say this of their God and think no harm; but only let us open our minds to perceive what it really is we are saying, and can you—dare you—assert that anyone out of a lunatic asylum could believe this of his God, or that any one could be mad enough to be able to *love* a God of such inconceivable cruelty? No, if this be Revelation, let us go back to Idolatry; the lowest savage never imagined a fetish so utterly unworthy of our reverence. If “the gods of the nations are but idols,” at least they are not Jehovah!

Do you improve matters by telling me how easy it is to lift off this terrible burden of God's wrath—that all that is needful is that some one should pour water on the child's head and mutter some dozen words, and all is set right? Not so; all you do is to add to the inconceivable cruelty a still less conceivable lightness of mind (no other word will express it); the very last quality we could think of attributing to a God. For your fundamental position is that God has *reason* to be angry with the child (no matter that your best attempts cannot discover any reason you can explain to us), and can it be imagined that words said and water poured over an unconscious child can alter that unknown *reason* for His anger? And if you say that it is a symbolical action, invented by a loving God as, so to speak, an excuse for the forgiveness He is longing to grant, like the sprinkling of blood on the Jewish door-posts in Egypt when the Angel of Death was to pass by, I must regretfully remind you that on your own view four thousand years passed without it, and that the vast majority of mankind have never yet known of it, and never will. If this be indeed love, it can only be that of a Being limited in power, ruled by something like the old fate above and beyond



Him; did an Almighty, all-wise God *wish* that all men should be saved, saved they must have been—all "freewill" notwithstanding.

So self-evident is all this that Protestants have practically thrown over belief in original sin and in baptism also; treating the latter as a mere form of admission to the external Christian community and candidly confessing that they do not understand what good it actually does. But to do this involves a freedom in treating the unmistakable words of the Bible which takes such persons out of the category of Bible Christians (to use a favourite phrase) altogether; and in what I am saying, I am only dealing with those who, like yourself, honestly profess and desire to find truth in every word of the Bible, as it stands. And when, in my next letter, I come to speak of the Atonement, I think it will appear that it is hard to treat these more "enlightened" Protestants (to use their favourite expression), as Christians, in any reasonable sense of the word at all.

The mere fact, however, that so many who set great value on their profession of Christianity (whatever its actual worth may be), have found it practically impossible to accept the doctrines I have been discussing, notwithstanding the plain words in which the Christian Revelation teaches them, is, it seems to me, of itself sufficient justification for the query with which I ended my last letter, whether *any* Revelation, however supported by evidence or authority, could be enough to establish such a doctrine; and I may pass on to the main purport of your reply—your counter question, what have I to offer instead? You judge rightly that I should never dream of destroying, unless I had something to take the place of the ruin. As long as I had nothing, I kept silence. I should have regarded myself as the murderer of a soul had I said a word which might have broken the illusion of a fellow being still able to find happiness in what was to me a boundless waste, dark and empty. But now things are changed, I *have* something to say, though it is entirely outside my present purpose to enter into any argument or to set forth evidence in support of it; that has been abundantly done by others. I only wish here to set the two views side by side, and to ask which of the two is the one which most satisfies your own sense of what is reasonable, what is desirable; which is the one you would honestly and truly wish to believe, if you had your choice?

Well then, put it if you like as a mere suggestion—a working hypothesis (and after all, spite of your “evidences” Christianity itself is no more)—that all this nightmare of a God who hates His creatures before they are born, whose mere caprice makes them happy or miserable from their birth onwards, who—for every transgression of laws which are at bottom the same caprice, has but one penalty, everlasting torment, *is* a nightmare only; suppose that there is really no such thing in existence as this Christian God, who makes beings He desires to save, but in actual, disastrous fact, only succeeds in damning the large majority of them for ever and ever; only suppose this, I say, and is not the main part of that *horror* which the East End impresses upon the Christian missionary—who can see there nothing but souls continually sinning against God, ripening day by day to an unrepentant death-bed and to eternal fire—at once lifted away? In other words, does not Christianity actually *make* the greater part of the sorrow it deploras? Can you honestly deny that it would be far happier for you to go about the streets, believing that for these poor creatures there was no God, no heaven, but at least no hell; that coming by some blind chance into the world they enjoyed or suffered what blind chance had for them there, and then an end?

But we have more, far more than this mere negation to offer. What would you, clear-sighted and sympathetic, a true lover of souls, as you are, give to be able to see in these dark and troublous lives around you, not the trifling span of a few short years upon whose blind, helpless struggles is to hang an eternity of bliss or woe, the one as the other equally undeserved; but only a single step of a vast evolution which must lead *all*, sooner or later, to a height of spiritual bliss in comparison with which all that saints have said of the Beatific Vision is as nothing? How would it be if you could take one of these souls and look back (there are those who can) over the long chain of the successive earth lives which by slow degrees have brought it to where it stands now; could mark how at every step it has reaped precisely what it has sown, for good as for evil, and trace the error here, the selfishness there, which have kept it back in its progress, and have incurred penalties, by reason of which it has become inevitable, that at this stage, it should be re-born in the shame and pain of this East End gutter-child's life,

since nothing short of this hard experience could break the evil habits which have by slow degrees drawn it aside from the straight road and darkened its light, its share of that "Light that lightens every man that cometh into the world"? And with this intelligible view of its past and present comes the true hope for the future. It is a very old and true remark that no human being, however low he may have fallen, is utterly without *some* good feeling; and far higher up the scale, we each of us know many a soul whose frequent falls through human weakness are continually accompanied by heartfelt, though vain desires to obtain strength to stand. Are all these longings to end simply in adding bitterness to their eternal condemnation, as is the Christian view? Ah, not so; for us, in the golden words of Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, "No soul which holds *one* right desire, goeth the road of loss." Not one such longing is there which will not manifest itself in the next earthly life as new power—power to do better; and to hearten us in the struggle, life after life, to rise above our foes, we have the precious consolation of the *Voice of the Silence*: "And if he falls, e'en then he does not fall in vain; the enemies he slew in the last battle will not return to life in the next birth that will be his."

I think it can hardly be denied that (setting aside all question of authority) such a view of the way we come into existence in this incarnation is more agreeable to our intelligence and to our moral sense than the one which Christianity gives, and that it furnishes a fair answer to your question, "What have you with which to replace the Christian doctrine?" And from this follows a conclusion, in practice more important than it looks at first sight, that this being so, the burden of proof, as a lawyer would say, lies on *your* side, not on ours. I mean this: that it is not enough for you to put the first objection which comes into your head, and pass on your way; it is your business to prove to us that your view, which *seems* so immoral and improbable, is in fact right and reasonable, and failing strict proof of this we go on *our* way, taking no further notice of you. It is, as things *now* stand, Christianity which is on its trial, not what you would call heresy.

In my next letter I will consider the answer which must have been on your lips all the time you have been reading this. "God so *loved* the world that He gave His only begotten Son. . . ."

It is impossible to avoid this; gladly as I would have spared myself the pain of saying, and you that of hearing, things which (express them as delicately and tenderly as I can) must hurt not only your feelings, but those of almost everyone for whose feelings I have any care or respect at all. But the doctrine of the Atonement—the Precious Blood—the Sacrifice of the Son of God for man's sin, is indeed the "article whereby the Church stands or falls"—the citadel, the last entrenchment of its defenders. You yourself know well enough, and can bear witness for me, that for years back it has been my own refuge. In the midst of all my religious difficulties I have firmly held and faithfully preached this, which seemed to me to be the only certainty in the world, the one rock left to cling to in the general shipwreck, that Jesus Christ came into the world, and suffered and died, purely to manifest the love His Father had for us. It is a lovely dream; inspiring, comforting, entirely sufficient for the holy souls who fill the solitude of the cloister, or for the spiritual guidance of the good, innocent, simple creatures who form the mass of those who weekly cluster round the pastor's confessional, "their consciences full of harmless little nothings, like their pockets or their workbags," to quote an apt saying of N. Hawthorne's. Is it likely that I, of all men, would wantonly say a word, breathe a sound which could wake up a soul which enjoys it still?—I, who tremble, even to this day, at the remembrance of the agony of terror of blank darkness which fell on my own soul as I found it vanishing, spite of my most desperate struggles to hold it to my heart still, and felt myself stretching longing empty arms into the vast desolation all around, "without God and without hope in the world."

But, in truth, there is no fear of disturbing the faith of these good, simple souls. There is no fear that the hearts which the thought of the love of God *can* fill completely will ever think of anything else. My duty lies with those hungry, unsatisfied souls, *my* fellows, whose wider culture and deeper intuition have carried them through all this into the darkness beyond; my message to them, the old one that the darkness must be endured and may be conquered; that before us, the "forlorn hope" of the advancing tide of humanity, already begins to rise the dawn of a new and glorious day. It is with this feeling that I shall take courage in

my next to try to make it clear that the worst mode of showing reverence to the august figure of Christ crucified is to attempt to stay the tide at His feet, and that if we indeed succeed in doing so then in truth "is Christ crucified in vain."

Believe me, yours very sincerely,  
ARTHUR A. WELLS.

## THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITIES.

### INDIAN SECTION.

Immediately before her departure from India, Mrs. Besant spent several days at Bombay and Surat. At the latter place she gave two public lectures to large and enthusiastic audiences, distributed the prizes at the girls' school, which is maintained and managed by our local Branch under the energetic and devoted guidance of Babu Nowtamram U. Trivedi, and spent many hours in conversation with the members, answering their questions and removing their difficulties. Besides these, meetings of the Branch were held, at which Mrs. Besant addressed the members on points of special importance in connection with their work and studies. The admirable spirit of harmony and mutual affection which characterizes the Surat Branch rendered Mrs. Besant's visit there an especially pleasant one, in spite of the heavy demands upon her time and strength.

At Bombay three public lectures were given, in which the subjects of "Education," the "Justification of Occult Teaching by Western Science," and "Spiritual Life in the World" were dealt with. Mrs. Besant also delivered four lectures at 8.30 each morning to the Bombay Branch, in which she gave a systematic exposition of the "Law of Sacrifice." These morning lectures were followed by a couple of hours' conversation, in which she replied to any questions put before her. In addition to the above, she received visitors during the afternoons, and several other small meetings were also held. Thus our Bombay members had an exceedingly useful and helpful few days, the effects of which ought to show ere long in the progress of the Branch.

Some changes have proved necessary in the office staff of the Section at Headquarters, the carrying out of which will, it is hoped, considerably add to both the efficiency and the smoothness of the work of the Section. The Joint General Secretary, Babu Upendra Nath Basu, has laboured unwearingly to get matters into order, and his

efforts have met with gratifying success, as the general progress of our movement and its growth in coherence and solidity abundantly show. In all his efforts he has been devotedly and ably seconded by the Assistant Secretary, Babu Kirti Chandra Roy, who has proved a most valuable addition to our staff of workers.

A somewhat curious illustration of the way in which the work and influence of the Theosophical movement stimulate and strengthen existing religious aspirations, is afforded by the first annual report of the Poona Association for the study of the Jewish religion. This organization owes its inception to a suggestion made by the President of our Poona Branch, Khan Bahadur N. D. Khandalavala, when presiding at a meeting of the local Jewish Benevolent Association. Further vitality was imparted to the idea by Mrs. Besant's eloquent lecture to the Hindu students, in which she urged them to study their own scriptures. The ultimate outcome was the formation of this Association in 1894, and this report of its first year's working shows how useful it has proved. We wish it steady growth and success in the future, for Theosophy, as it is the mother, must of necessity be the best friend and helper of every religion.

For some time past an old and devoted member, Babu Mahâdeva Shâstri, has been steadily working along Theosophical lines at Mysore, and last March an invitation from some influential people was sent to Colonel Olcott to visit that city and found a Branch. The President-Founder was fortunately able to go, and after delivering two public lectures, a strong and exceedingly promising Branch was formed on March 21st under the presidency of the former Treasurer of the Mysore Palace. A considerable sum was raised on the spot to procure the nucleus of a library for the Branch. The sister of one of the Branch officers has provided a meeting hall for the use of members, and there is every hope that when Mrs. Besant is able to visit Mysore she will find an earnest and well-read nucleus awaiting her. Colonel Olcott also formed a large Hindu Boys' Association, raising some Rs. 400 towards a library, and obtaining a room rent free, and donations of furniture for the boys' use.

On his way back to Adyar, the President-Founder lectured at Bangalore, where he was presented with an address of gratitude by the members of the Anna Bai Hindu Boys' Association, which was founded on the occasion of Mrs. Besant's first visit to that place in 1893. He also visited and lectured at Seringapatam, and reports that his trip was an exceedingly pleasant and successful one. He was especially pleased at the thoroughly efficient and workmanlike activity of the Bangalore

Branch, and its flourishing condition shows how much one or two earnest and devoted members like N. P. Subramania Iyer and the late A. Krishnaswamy Iyer can do for the cause of Theosophy by their example and guidance.

B. K.

#### EUROPEAN SECTION.

The tenth quarterly conference of the North of England Federation of the Theosophical Society was held on Saturday, April 25th, at Harrogate, Mrs. Besant presiding, and Mr. Leadbeater, the Assistant Secretary of the Section, being present. The reports from the various towns showed growing activity and some increase of interest on the part of the general public. In the evening Mrs. Besant spoke on "The Work of the T. S.," and on Sunday she delivered two lectures, which were well attended. On the following Sunday Mr. Leadbeater lectured to a good audience, and he also lectured to the Lodge on May 1st and 8th.

Mrs. Besant arrived in London early on Sunday morning, April 19th, having had a good passage from India. The first lecture of the series of thirteen, to be delivered in the small Queen's Hall on Sunday evenings, was given on May 3rd to a good audience. Mrs. Besant also delivered two lectures at the Blavatsky Lodge on April 30th and May 7th, on "Liberation by Action," the hall being, as usual on such occasions, quite full. On April 9th Mr. Mead lectured on the Upanishads, while the question of Mind occupied the Lodge on April 16th and 23rd, Mr. Leadbeater on the 16th describing the "Development of Consciousness," and Mr. Keightley on the 23rd tracing the "Growth of Mind." We go to press too soon to record the delivery on May 15th of a lecture by Mr. Sinnett that promises to be full of interest, on "Alchemy and the Alchemists." The last Thursday in May will be devoted to a study of "The Platonic Discipline" by Mr. Mead. The Lodge kept White Lotus Day for the fifth time, and the anniversary readings and address were delivered in an atmosphere heavy with the fragrance of the blossoms that told of the love and gratitude in which the memory of H. P. B. is kept.

Mrs. Besant visits Paris on June 2nd, and will deliver two public lectures as well as hold other meetings. She will go to Amsterdam and the Hague a little later.

#### AMERICAN SECTION.

The following brief notes on the Report of the General Secretary of the American Section T. S. will be of interest to our readers :

In eloquent words Mr. Fullerton first depicts the darker side of the present Theosophical situation in America. He neither conceals nor

attempts to weaken its shadows ; they are dark enough as we all know. But over against this dark and saddening background some more cheering facts stand out the brighter for the contrast. First, and above all, comes the strengthening in moral fibre and fearless honesty, which is already perceptible throughout the Society. And then even in the history of the past year in America not a little may be found that is both cheering in the present and encouraging for the future.

The American Section now consists of fifteen Branches, several of those existing in the same neighbourhood having consolidated. The number of newly admitted members is as great as we could expect, though naturally sorely shrunken as compared with the years which preceded our late troubles.

The Section owes its literary organ, *Mercury*, to the generosity of Mr. W. J. Walters, of San Francisco, who also acts as its editor ; it has maintained a high level of interest and ability throughout the year. It had been intended to continue the issue of *The Theosophical Forum*, but that was found impossible, owing both to want of means and even more to the inability of Mr. Fullerton, who from the very outset had been the most regular and reliable of its contributors, to do much writing. This gap was in part filled by the General Secretary of the European Section, who generously contributed a sufficient number of *Vâhans* to furnish one copy to each member at large and one copy to each Branch.

The report concludes with some earnest and eloquent words, from which we extract the following :

"What is to be the future of the American Section ? Exactly what our strength and our energy combine to make it. Every reason for work exists just as vitally as it did in 1894, and even our number of Branches is larger than in 1886, nine years before the schism. Theosophic truth remains as heretofore, Theosophic motive is as potent, Theosophic duty has not changed, Theosophic help is as assured."

#### AUSTRALASIAN SECTION.

The topics of chief interest at headquarters are the approaching Convention, which will be held in Melbourne on the 3rd and 4th of April, and the rumoured establishment of a new territorial Section of the Theosophical Society in New Zealand. The latter development is due almost wholly to the energy of the Countess Wachtmeister, and will have been much favoured by the large measure of success which has attended her on her tour through the South and North Islands. In consequence of her lectures and her personal influence the membership in New Zealand has increased, and interest in Theosophical



teachings has been augmented. Exceptionally large audiences have listened to her exposition of the theories and practical applications of Theosophy in some of the towns.

Many inconveniences attended the administration of the New Zealand Branches, from a distance which, reckoned by time, is almost as great as that separating London from New York, and the step contemplated will probably meet with unqualified approval in all directions—at any rate, throughout Australasia. It is thought that the arrangements may be so far hastened that the Melbourne Convention may have an opportunity of congratulating the new Section on its formation, and of wishing it an honourable and successful career.

Of business to be brought before the Convention, that relating to the "Report of the Committee of Revision of the Constitution of the Theosophical Society" ranks first. Without venturing to forecast the result of the deliberations of the delegates, it may be remarked that there is a feeling, in some quarters, against any alteration in the wording of the Objects of the Society.

The General Secretary has returned to Headquarters, after a month's visit to Melbourne. On Sunday, March 16th, in spite of a heavy thunderstorm and an oppressive damp heat, a large audience of members and strangers attended and accorded him a hearty welcome. His address was listened to with close attention, and evidently created a deep impression. In Melbourne Mr. Staples delivered a number of addresses, the most successful series being, perhaps, that given on four successive Saturday evenings at Mrs. Parker's drawing-room in South Yarra.

The Northern Branches, with the exception of Brisbane, which is flourishing, are a little languid, probably in consequence of the summer heats. The General Secretary proposes to visit them, and also, if possible, some new districts as soon as the cooler season sets in. In South Australia the work goes on steadily. At Adelaide, the place of Mrs. Pickett, the late secretary, has been supplied by Miss K. Castle, who has long been a member taking active and practical interest in the movement.

In Sydney we are looking for the return of Mr. H. A. Wilson, who has been accompanying the Countess in her New Zealand tour, during which he has made many firm friends and done much excellent service. His aid at Headquarters will set the General Secretary free for new and wider work among the Branches and Centres.

On the whole the prospects of the movement in these colonies has never looked brighter or more promising.

S.

## REVIEWS.

### PSYCHIC PHILOSOPHY.

By V. C. Desertis. [London: George Redway. 1896. 5s.]

THIS is an interesting and well written book, worthy of a better title.

The author has, with one or two exceptions, collected his facts carefully and marshalled them in good order, drawing his conclusions in a cautious manner.

Dr. A. R. Wallace contributes a short introductory note, approving the purpose and general tone of the work, but avoiding the danger of dealing with anything in particular. The writer states in his preface that, not finding in ordinary religion complete satisfaction, he turned his attention to psychic phenomena and found that they threw much light on his difficulties. "The need of the day," he says, "is a belief that shall rest neither on dogma nor on instinct, but on insight which justifies religion in history, and so far from leading us to condemn the old forms or abjure any creed, leaves us in harmony with the past stages of evolution, gives a logical standing ground for morality in the present, and some clue to both the practical problems and the intellectual needs of modern life."

The first two chapters deal with the phenomena of spiritualism, the physical or objective and the inner or subjective. Nothing very fresh is introduced, the author writing from a spiritualistic standpoint, but without prejudice.

After reviewing the evidence in this direction, the scientific side is discussed in a chapter entitled "Matter and Ether." This is also carefully dealt with, but a scientific man might take exception to two or three points, such as the statement that the section of a light ray is like a cross, the vibrations being in two directions, at right angles to each other, instead of, as in the ordinary view, consisting of transverse vibrations in all directions. The statement as to the different kinds of energy due to etheric waves is also misleading. It is claimed that the admission of ether by scientists as the origin of matter, is an admission of the soul of matter—a somewhat erratic idea.

In the same chapter the phenomena of hypnotism are examined, and are attributed to the action of the ether, the man being compared to a magnet in the old familiar fashion. The evidence of "the spirits" as to the nature of their bodies is given—going, according to the author, to uphold the view that they live in the ether as we do in the world of "matter."

Elaborating his theory as he proceeds, the writer discusses the nature of man, and arrives at the division into body, soul and spirit. The following titles of chapters summarize his views: "Body, the Means of Action;" "Soul—the forming Power;" "Spirit—the directing Will." The soul is the force which organizes the body; to the spirit are due all morality and ethics. The book concludes with a chapter on social questions, which seems a little out of place.

Though some of the views may not be particularly fresh, and others not very correct, the book is well worth reading, and the style of writing is very much superior to that found in most books of like nature.

A. M. G.

#### RECENT BUDDHISM.

THE last number of *The Journal of the Buddhist Text Society of India* contains little of real interest. We notice, however, that the education of the second son of the Mahârâjah of Sikkim has been entrusted to Mr. Sharat Chandra Dâs, the learned secretary of the Society. This is the first Tibetan prince to learn English and Hindustani, and perchance the innovation augurs a breaking down of barriers. The secretary, in exhibiting a picture of the planes of existence according to Tibetan Buddhism, described the presiding Lord in words which strikingly remind us of the "Silent Watcher" referred to in perhaps the most beautiful passage in H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*. Mr. Sharat Chandra Dâs says:

"At the top of the ring stands the great Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, also called Mahâ Kârūṇika, the merciful—one who, having acquired all kinds of moral perfection, can enter into the supreme state of beatitude, *i.e.*, of Nirvâṇa, at any time he likes; but out of pity for the misery of all living beings in this world, he has taken the solemn vow of not entering into Nirvâṇa till he has safely conducted the last unhappy being to it.

"He holds in his right hand the pot of nectar symbolical of a blessed immortal life, and in his left hand the 'forbidden fruit' typifying celestial enjoyment."

A Jâtaka tale is given from one of the books of the *Kahgyur*, which starts soberly enough but ends in hopeless bathos or worse. The question is what distinct causes lead to the distinct karma of creatures; why is one poor, another rich; one handsome, another ugly; one strong, another weak, etc. The fifty-three answers are for the most part manifestly absurd and throw in occasionally such insanities as: "Those who cut the bristles of hogs in the previous birth have got yellow hair in this." The whole thing is the invention of monkish ignorance and superstition, its main characteristic being that of silliness. The Buddhism of Tibet is very mixed indeed, and among the materials we so far possess, it takes long searching before anything of value can be discovered.

In the last number of the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Professor Rhys Davids, working at the other pole of the subject, remarks (p. 378): "The expression, 'entering into Nirvâṇa' is only a very old Anglo-Indian blunder, dating from the time when the first writers on Buddhism, saturated with modern Western ideas, took for granted that Nirvâṇa must be some state beyond the grave. But universal Indian usage of the time, whether in Pâli books by Buddhist authors or in Sanskrit books by both Buddhists and Hindus, confines the connotation of the word exclusively to the state of mind of a living Jivanmukta or Arahât." Quite so; but what is a "state of mind"? Phrase for phrase; we are no better off than before. For we can "enter into" a state of mind; and not only enter into but come out of it. Further, if the state of Nirvâṇa is attainable while still in body, it cannot be annihilation. And lastly, if Nirvâṇa is a state of mind, the presence or absence of the physical body, that is to say "life" or "death" as ordinarily understood, can make no difference to the obtainer of that state, and it is, therefore, as much beyond the grave as on this side of it, unless, of course, we are to believe that the learned Professor holds the view that the Nirvâṇi's "mind" on the dissolution of the physical body, goes also into the void, so that the whole of Buddhism is a huge joke and only philologically serious.

G. R. S. M.

#### THE SYSTEM TO WHICH WE BELONG.

[By A. P. Sinnett. [Transactions of the London Lodge T. S., No. 30. Theosophical Publishing Society, 7, Duke Street, W.C. 1s.]

THIS study of our solar system as a whole in the light of Theosophy forms Mr. Sinnett's latest contribution to our store of knowledge.

Hitherto, while we have had much definite information with regard to the planetary chain to which our earth belongs, we have had nothing more than a few rather indefinite hints as to its relation to the solar system as a whole, and even less in regard to the way in which that system itself is constituted. The present essay fills this gap in a fairly complete and very satisfactory manner, and contains a quite unusual wealth of entirely new information, which will be full of the deepest interest for all close students of Theosophy. The reader must be referred to the pamphlet itself for details; but I cannot resist calling special attention to the very suggestive light thrown upon the problem of the inter-relation of the numbers seven and ten in our system by the facts here made public for the first time; and also to the magnificent description with which the essay closes, depicting the final consummation, the ultimate outcome of this tremendous undertaking.

B. K.

THEOSOPHICAL  
AND  
MYSTIC PUBLICATIONS.

THE THEOSOPHIST (*Adyar*).

Vol. XVII, No. 7:—In "Old Diary Leaves" for this month Col. Olcott gives an account of a meeting between himself as the President of the Society and some of the chief pandits of India, the result was the establishment of friendly co-operation between the Society and the pandits' Samāj. An Indian chemist and alchemist is also introduced, and performs some chemical experiments on Indian lines. Miss Edger contributes an article on "The Planetary Chain" carefully worked out from *The Secret Doctrine*. A "spirit" communication received by the Countess of Caithness follows this, accompanied by an editorial note showing a judicious lack of appreciation. In "The Ethical System of Zoroaster" an attempt is made to sum up the chief moral teachings of the Zoroastrian scriptures. Other papers on Ānanda Laharī "The Number Seven in Nature," "Universal Brotherhood," "Jugglers and Sorcerers" and a report of one of Mr. Mead's lectures on "The Lives and Teachings of the Later Platonists" complete the issue.

A.

THE VĀHAN (*London*).

Vol. V, No. 10:—The "Literary Notes" form a large and interesting section of the May *Vāhan*. In the "Enquirer," C. W. L. answers a question as to the connection, by a "cord," of the astral and physical bodies, when separated. The real link, it is said, is one rather of sympathetic vibration than of any definite

connection. A question on "indifference to the results of our actions," receives several answers, all on much the same lines. One of the most interesting replies is one giving the ethical system of the Platonists, and their divisions of the "virtues."

A.

LE LOTUS BLEU (*Paris*).

Vol. VII, No. 2:—Opens with a translation of Mrs. Besant's *Karma*, which has however, been taken from the articles in LUCIFER, and not from the manual. This is followed by a continuation of the introduction to *The Secret Doctrine* and a somewhat peculiar article, entitled "Under the Bodhi Tree." The translation of Mr. Leadbeater's *Astral Plane* continues, the number also including a short article on "Yoga," the account of "A Modern Demoniac" from *Borderland*, answers to questions, and reviews.

A.

THEOSOPHY (*New York*).

Vol. XI, No. 1:—This is the first appearance of *The Path* under its new title, but excepting for the disappearance of the illustration and the change in style of the cover it has not undergone any material alteration. E. T. Hargrove writes on "The Metaphysical Character of the Universe," and is followed by Jasper Niemand on "The Vow of Poverty." Dr. Buck in "Historical Epochs in Theosophy" sketches some of the alleged theosophical movements in

the sixteenth century, and compares the present one with them. The concluding article is on "Richard Wagner's Music Dramas," by Basil Crump, who tells us that the composer was a "conscious occultist."

A.

#### LOTUS BLÜTHEN (*Leipzig*).

No. 43:—The first paper is a continuation of a series, entitled "Karma" and the remainder are also continuations of the more or less free paraphrases of the ancient Egyptian doctrines and mysteries commenced by the Editor in the last number. The conclusion is an appeal to the readers to give their assistance, before the catastrophe which "reliable, astrological calculations" promise us for April 11th, 1898, and which is to furnish "not only great geological convulsions, but a Revolution compared with which the horrors of the French Revolution were but child's play."

W. B.

#### THEOSOPHIA (*Amsterdam*).

Vol. IV, No. 48:—Opens with an article by "Afra" on capital punishment. The translations are all continued.

#### SOPHIA (*Madrid*).

Vol. IV, No. 4:—The first three articles are translations of *The Astral Plane*, *Karma*, and "Dreams," all of which are continued. Following these is "Astrology" by "Helios," who divides the study according to *The Theosophical Glossary*. The present chapter gives a description of the "houses," and the properties and qualities attributed to them.

A.

#### ANTAHKARANA (*Barcelona*).

Vol. III, No. 28:—Opens with the continuation of the translation of "The Elixir of Life," which is followed by the conclusion of the eleventh and beginning of the twelfth chapters of the *Bhagavad Gītā*, and Snowden Ward's *Karma and*

*Reincarnation*. Maxims taken from Epicurus conclude the number.

A.

#### TEOSOFISK TIDSKRIFT.

March, 1896:—Contains the anniversary speech by the Gen. Sec., Dr. Zander, preceded by Count Wachtmeister's paper on "Meditation and Thought," and followed by Dr. Wells' "Mahátmás and Saints" in Swedish garb. There is also an article by M. F. N., "Do Theosophists disapprove of Prayer?" and one by Ellen Bergman "On Intuition." The number concludes with Berghend's poem "The Mother to her Child."

FR.

#### THEOSOPHY IN AUSTRALIA

(*Sydney*).

Vol. I, No. 12:—The editor's notes deal with some of the experiments in the "new photography," and with "Satanism." The chief article, "What is Theosophy?" is a brief sketch of a historical nature, concluding with an outline of one or two Theosophical ideas, and containing some doubtful statements. The questions and answers deal with the loss of the soul, Manas, and the weight which should be given to the objections of parents and friends regarding the study of Theosophy.

A.

#### THE THEOSOPHICAL THINKER

(*Madras*).

Vol. IV, Nos. 10-13:—These numbers contain an interesting sketch of the modern Hindu drama, an article on "Pleasure and Pain," treated from the modern scientific standpoint, and "Is Flesh-Eating by Christians morally Defensible?" Besides these continued articles some smaller papers on Brahmá, "The Path of Fire," and Krishna are published.

A.

#### JOURNAL OF THE MÁHA-BODHI SOCIETY (*Calcutta*).

Vol. IV, No. 12:—This issue is largely

occupied by the struggles of the Buddhists for their rights in Bengal, the only paper not dealing with this subject being a short extract from the *U'dāna l'arga*.

A.

Among the reprinted articles are "The Secret of Count St. Germain," translated from *Le Lotus Bleu*, "The Law of Sacrifice," by Mrs. Besant, and "Some Notes on Kundalini" from *The Theosophist*.

A.

#### THE BUDDHIST (*Colombo*).

Vol. VII, Nos. 5-8:—An article on "Buddhism in its Contrast with Christianity, as viewed by Sir Monier Williams," is extracted from *The Open Court*, criticising the orientalist's opinions. "Traces of Buddhism in Norway," is a paper based upon a book of that name, endeavouring to prove that Buddhist ideas penetrated into the Scandinavian legends. "The Story of the Great Pauper," an incident in the life of Buddha, "Karma" and other short articles complete the numbers.

A.

#### THE ĀRYA BĀLA BODHINĪ (*Madras*).

Vol. II, No. 3:—Contains a number of short stories. "The Curse of Parikshit" is an old Indian story of a King who insulted a Brāhmana; "Two Brothers" consists of a highly improbable dialogue between two schoolboys, in one of whom we recognize the familiar good boy of Sunday school days. The articles include one on "The Caste System," a reprint from *The Vegetarian*, "Hindu Religious Ideas in the West," and "The Transmigration of Soul."

A.

#### THE THEOSOPHIC GLEANER (*Bombay*).

Vol. V, No. 8:—The Röntgen rays are penetrating everywhere and have now reached *The Theosophic Gleaner*, which opens with a short paper upon them.

#### OTHER PUBLICATIONS.

*Light; The Agnostic Journal; Notes and Queries*, crammed, as usual, with odd tit-bits of information; *Food, Home and Garden*, an American vegetarian journal, just opening a new series; *Rays of Light*, the little Sinhalese paper recently started, containing articles on cremation and hygiene; *Diabolisme et Occultisme*, by M. Ernest Bosc, a pamphlet consisting chiefly of a reply to an article in a provincial journal attacking occultism and identifying it with "Satanism"; *The Metaphysical Magazine*, a somewhat heavy number, with articles on spiritual forces, psycho-therapeutics, and involution and evolution, and some stories of psychic experiences; *The Sanmārga Bodhini; The Hansei Zasshi*, the Japanese monthly Buddhist journal; *The Theosophical Forum; The Seen and the Unseen*, with numerous short papers on spiritualistic and mystic subjects; *Book Notes; The Lamp*, consisting entirely of notes on news, Sunday School lessons and magazines; The First Annual Report of the Association for the Study of the Jewish Religion, an Association founded in March, 1894, at Poona; The Fifth Annual Report of the Humanitarian League; *So-Called Sport*, a publication of the Humanitarian League, containing essays on hunting, shooting and coursing, and *Spurious Sports Bill*, a letter from the Committee of the League; *The Astrological Magazine*, with most of the articles continued; *This World and the Next*, an Australian spiritualistic journal; *The Prashnottara; Ourselves*.