VOL. XVII. FEBRUARY 15, 1896. No. 102.

LUCIFER.

ON THE WATCH-TOWER.

IF IT WERE ONLY POSSIBLE!

IF it were only possible! If reincarnation, or metempsychosis, or metasomatosis, or metensomatosis, or palingenesis, or by whatever name one chooses to call it, were only a generally proven fact! If the records of the past were only recoverable, how speedily might much wisdom be added unto mortals!

Long ago LUCIFER referred his readers to Mr. Rudyard Kipling's graphically written sketch, *The Finest Story in the World*, in which he describes his unsuccessful efforts to chronicle the fitful reminiscences of a bank clerk—the experiences of that bank clerk's soul in past lives.

"If I came to full knowledge of anything at all," writes Mr. Kipling, "it would not be one life of the soul in Charlie Mears's body, but half a dozen—half a dozen several and separate existences spent on blue water in the morning of the world!"

Mr. Kipling, who is, perchance, gifted with a greater store of creative imagination than any of his craft to-day, then proceeds to review the situation; if he could but chronicle this one life-series! Ye gods! what a stupendous achievement! As the thought is borne in upon his imagination, his heart leaps within him in the following outburst:

"Great Powers above—I looked up at them through the fog-smoke—did the Lords of Life and Death know what this meant to me? Nothing less than eternal fame of the best kind, that comes from One, and is shared by one alone. I would be content—remem-

bering Clive, I stood astounded at my own moderation—with the mere right to tell one story, to work out one little contribution to the light literature of the day. If Charlie were permitted full recollection for one hour—for sixty short minutes—of existences that had extended over a thousand years—I would forego all profit and honour from all that I would make of his speech. I would take no share in the commotion that would follow throughout the particular corner of the earth that calls itself 'the world.' The thing should be put forth anonymously. Nay, I would make other men believe that they had written it. They would hire bull-hided, self-advertising Englishmen to bellow it abroad. Preachers would found a fresh conduct of life upon it, swearing that it was new, and that they had lifted the fear of death from all mankind. Every Orientalist in Europe would patronize it discursively in Sanskrit and Pali texts. Terrible women would invent unclean variants of men's belief for the elevation of their sisters. Churches and religions would war over it. Between the hailing and re-starting of an omnibus I foresaw the scuffles that would arise among half a dozen denominations all professing 'the doctrine of the True Metempsychosis as applied to the world and the New Era'; and saw, too, the respectable English newspapers shying, like frightened kine, over the beautiful simplicity of the tale. The mind leaped forward a hundred—two hundred—a thousand years. I saw with sorrow that men would mutilate and garble the story; that rival creeds would turn it upside down, till, at last, the western world which clings to the dread of death more closely than the hope of life, would set it aside as an interesting superstition, and stampede after some faith so long forgotten that it seemed altogether new."

In all of which there is much wisdom and some error. One thing at least it shows, that the stupendous what-may-be of some of the possibilities of reincarnation has moved Mr. Kipling to enthusiasm. If the story of the past existences of a cockney bank clerk, who had erstwhile mimicked on the world-stage as galley rower on a Greek trireme and as Viking pirate, could accomplish so much, what, then, cannot be accomplished by the recital of the life story not of bank clerk, slave and pirate people, but of great kings and generals and philosophers; and not only of these but of great nations, great movements, great events?

And this is the future that Theosophy offers. Such stories will be written ere long, I doubt not, for the material is ready. And among all such stories none will be of greater interest than the past existences of our own movement. There has been much wild speculation on the subject; and misdirected enthusiasm, based on misunderstood hearsay, has tried to dwarf its dignity and exaggerate a doubtful detail into overwhelming prominence. I refer to the Cagliostro speculation. "A single swallow does not make a summer," much less some other bird. If the Theosophical movement is to be anything worthy of account, then it must be a spiritual awakening and have to do with spiritual truths, high endeavour and nobility of life. Where it has appeared, there it must have left record of noble life beyond gainsaying, no matter what misrepresentation may have obscured the authentic narration of that record. Deal as tenderly as possible with the history of Balsamo, defend as warmly as lover his lady the genuineness of phenomena, and what remains but a somewhat tawdry spectacle of politics, magic and mystery? There is no ideal there for those who look to the Buddha and the Christ as Masters.

Movements differ from individuals in that it is easier to trace in history the dispersion and reaggregation of some of the objective atoms that compose their phenomenal expression. But the movement itself must be looked for where there is a body which is a fit vehicle for its soul; and surely that was not the case at the latter end of the eighteenth century. We shall, therefore, have to look for the last embodiment of the Theosophical movement elsewhere. We shall have to look for a time when men and women, with aspirations identical with our own, with trials and difficulties similar to ours, lived and laboured for Theosophy, openly in the face of the world, and left their mark upon its record.

It goes without saying that that record will be mixed, good and evil blended together, for it is a record of men and women and not of heaven-sent saints; but there will be something in that mixed record that shall stir the heart to quicker beating, deeds and lives that it is good to remember, something to which we can point and say, "There, there are those who went before us; those of our kin, degenerate though we are as yet. Our ancestors were noble, and pure and good. Let us remember our forebears and try to be worthy

of them. We are still young as yet, children, scarce born: we will try to equal them in our manhood; if not, it were better for us to die."

As the eye of the mind gazes backward over the world-record, the first distinct traces of such a time and such an association upon which it lights, is the so-called School of Later Platonists. Plotinus the Saint, Porphyry the Philosopher, Jamblichus the Divine, Hypatia the Orator, and Proclus the Priest—such were the Theosophists of antiquity, and more technically so than any others of whom we have open record.

We have had enough self-induced reminiscencing of the guillotine and the French Revolution, and if such pastime is necessary for those who exaggerate a word into a sentence, and spin out a sentence into a story, less harm will come from a little practice at calling to mind the lives of the pure-thinking and pure-living Neoplatonists.

There is much to be learned from this, and I propose to start the "reminiscencing" from authentic texts. When the notes on Orpheus now running in LUCIFER are finished, I propose to make the Theosophists of Alexandria live again; to make the reader realize that they were once men and women like to ourselves, only nobler for the most part, for we are still learning to read the sacred language as yet. Perchance their successes and failures may give us heart on the one part and help on the other.

I do not mean to say that all the present Theosophical movement is all the past Neoplatonic School; far from it. Movements, so I think, do not reincarnate as do individuals. They rather resemble palingenesis in the animal kingdom, with genera and species, monadic not individual. But enough for the present on this subject; we can draw our deductions when the facts are before us.

If it were only possible!—cries Mr. Kipling in his graphic review of the situation. Aye, but it is possible, and possible in that Society of which he has written so wittily: "Once upon a time some people in India made a new heaven and a new earth out of broken tea-cups, a missing brooch or two, and a hair-brush." That was in the Simla days when the Theosophical Society was an infant; when it was a child it thought and acted as a child, but now that it is nearing manhood it is striving to put away childish things. Its

old nurse made playthings for it, and it gradually and with pain discovered that the doll-idols it hugged and fondled were stuffed with sawdust, that the sound of the humming-top was not the hymn of the "sacred word," and that the mirror in which it saw its own smudgy face was not the light-life of the heaven-world. Some foolish people call the old nurse a horrid old woman, but the parents of the child know how to reward her faithful services.

* * *

But why call to Remembrance the Past?

But why call to remembrance the past? Is it not better to forget, as Schelling says? What is the good of passing the finger of recollection along the thread that runs through the web of our destiny? There is good in it, and evil in it—good if the achievements of the past are used as incentives whereby we may be spurred to equal, to surpass, the best we have been—good if we see in the failures the seeds of our present impotence, and cheerfully submit to the justice of our lot; but evil if we boast of past success or lament past failure.

As with individuals so with movements and associations, races and creeds. Of one thing we should be very sure, that the past cannot scale with the future; that what has been is but a feather's weight against much gold compared to what will be; that the earth has only just begun to produce, as it were, and that she is destined to be prodigal of children of great renown. The first of the children of earth who reached full manhood lived only some 2,400 years ago. There were other mighty ones of great renown ere then, but they were not of earth.

Let us not then turn the records of the past into fetiches, for greater records will be written; do not let us turn the past into an idol and worship it. Religions and their revelations have their day and die. One sure sign of death in any religion is bibliolatry. It is the mark of the beast. No existing religion is without it, and therefore no existing religion will live.

The Hindu and his Shruti, the Christian and his Gospel, the Buddhist and his Tripitaka, are all rank bibliolaters; they have had their revelation, it is over, finished, ended. Shruti finished at such and such a date; since then we have had to be content with Smriti;

revelation is ended, hearsay is the best we can produce. This may be true as far as the adherents of these creeds are concerned, for they dare not imagine anything greater than their several revelation-fetiches, but it is miserably false if asserted of the living religion of the world. For that, there is a perpetual revelation, grander ever and nobler as the years shall roll onward, a flood that the bibliolatry of no creed shall be able to dam.

Therefore must we deal wisely with the so-called world-scriptures. Their decrepitude is amply apparent from the crutches of commentary that scarce support their tottering footsteps. True we can always learn much from the aged, but they can give us no life. They can tell us of life and how it should be used, but for life itself we must look elsewhere. Let us take an example, one of the best. The Upanishads are Shruti—revelation. But how much of them can really claim to be a revelation for all time? Translate them into a foreign tongue, and how far will you get before note and commentary are absolutely imperative? Even in their original language commentary is necessary; and not only commentary, but commentary on commentary, each less luminous than its predecessor. But then they are Shruti, and Shruti is not to be easily understood, especially when a commentator has the management of it. Shruti to be worth anything—such apparently is the idea of a commentator—must be so mixed up with the endless ritual and elaborate ceremonial of some particular race or caste, in which no other race takes any interest, that its fire shall be speedily banked down into much smoke.

Now I firmly believe that the days of such obscurantism are numbered. There is a new method abroad in the world, a method slowly evolved from 2,400 years since. It showed itself clearly in the early centuries of the Christian era and it has showed itself still more clearly in the West during the last 250 years. There is a feeling of revolt even in the heart of the bible-enthusiast if he hears himself whisper to himself, "Look at the world-scriptures, you that seek after God—the Word of God to men. There you shall find wisdom. But first you will have to translate them out of dead languages, and then when you have done so, you will find them full of allegory and symbol, and of so much overgrowth of myth and legend and ceremony that you will despair, or think that God is

fooling you, or that even when the interpretation is given by a qualified interpreter, it is not worth the having."

Now the new method is not new; only whereas but very few in the past were able to use it, and then could share it with only a few because the many could not understand, to-day many more can understand and it is the common method, and therefore, as common, is new. That method has so far been used only for the grosser things of the world, for so far it has been in its childhood, and a child is mostly body. But now it must be used for worthier objects. We have heard enough of the science of the body, and we can now spare a little time to hear of the science of the soul.

In plainer words, the priests of the future will have to give the people something more than dark sayings and vague generalizations obscured in fantastic imagery. For instance, with regard to the great fact of re-birth, the world will require something more than the poetical allegories of past births in the Mahâbhârata and the insipidities of the Buddhist Jâtaka tales, both manifestly the children of the imagination instead of being drawn from the life-record of the world. Why, oh, why, if there were Rishis and Arhats of old who could see the record, who had the Punarjanmânusmriti Siddhi, or the power of seeing past births, why did they not draw their lessons from the actual record of human life and action instead of allowing compilers and commentators to crowd the pages of scripture with the brood of imagination? Let us hope that the time is not far distant when the "seers of the truth" shall apply their seeing to humanity as it is in the body, tell us of men as men, and not of the hosts of gods and spirits and excarnate entities which their several theologies clothe in their several motley.

G. R. S. M.

* * *

Mr. Howard Collins, in *Nature*, draws attention to Mr. Pillsbury's *résumé* on colour measurements, and asks:

> Can it possibly be that those compound colours which occur with such profusion in nature are the result of simple colours being combined in definite multiple proportions? Can there be a law of multiple proportions here, similar to that which holds good in the domain of chemistry?

The data are not yet sufficient for absolute proof in the affirma-

tive, but they certainly suggest the existence of such a law. Mr. Collins proceeds:

If we take all the foliage greens given, raise the percentage of black to 100 in each case, and proportionately increase or decrease the yellows and greens, then the amount of yellow in each case divided by the amount of green in each case will give a ratio which, the black being equal, may be said to represent in figures the colour of the particular foliage. Now what do we find on examining the resulting ratios? They are all divisible into groups of multiples of 2, which may be represented as in the last column of the table by 1-Y, 2-Y, 3-Y. It will be noticed that while the figure in the second decimal place is not exactly a multiple of 2, yet it tends very much in that direction.

	Black.	Yellow.	Green.	Yellow. ÷ Green.	Yellow.
Hemlock-Spruce	100	2·25	10·1	·22	1-Y
White Pine -	,,	2·9	12·8	·22	
Apple -	,,	6·25	3·75	·48	2-Y
Hornbeam -	,,	6·8	15·3	·45	
Hickory -	,,	5·3	11·1	·47	
White Birch -	,,	6·8	14·1	·48	
White Oak -	,,	9·3	14·3	·65	3-Y

A numerical relation seems to appear in these cases, and if it exist it will serve as one more proof of the truth of the occult statement that number underlies all in Nature.

[A reply by Mr. Cuffe to Dr. Wells' criticism of "Madame de Guyon and the Quietists," has been unfortunately crowded out of this number owing to lack of space.—EDS.]

ORPHEUS.

(*Continued from p.* 387.)

Diana and Minerva.

Diana is the Chaldæan Hecate, but her three aspects so closely resemble those of Core that it would take too long to explain the niceties of distinction in this place. Of Minerva, again, much could be said, but it is only necessary here to refer to two of her characteristics, the "defensive" and "perfective," thus explaining why she is armed and a warrior goddess, and why she is also the goddess of wisdom. "For the former characteristic preserves the order of wholes undefiled, and unvanquished by matter, and the latter fills all things with intellectual delight" (Proc., *Crat.*, *loc. cit.*).

Thus Plato in *Timæus* calls her both "philo-polemic" and "philo-sophic." And of the three aspects of Minerva the highest is noëric, the second supercosmic, and the third liberated. In the first she is with Zeus, in the second with Core, and in the third "she perfects and guards the whole world, and circularly invests it with her powers, as with a veil" (*ibid.*). In her guardian capacity she is called Pallas, but in her perfective Minerva.

Now "Orpheus says that Zeus brought her forth from his head—'shining forth in full panoply, a brazen flower to see'" (Proc., *Tim.*, i. 51).

And in so far as she "circularly invests the world with her powers," Minerva is the revealer of the "rhythmical dance" of the celestial bodies (Proc., *Crat.*, p. 118). Moreover "while she remains with the demiurgus [Zeus] she is wisdom, but when she is with the 'leading' Gods [the supercosmic demiurgic powers], she reveals the power of virtue" (Proc., *Tim.*, i. 52).

Neptune and Pluto.

The "Marine Jupiter" (see Chart) is the reflection of Ocean, the "separating deity" who remained behind with Father Heaven

when Saturn and the others revolted. As already explained so often these gods have their aspects on every plane. Thus in the sublunary sphere we are told that "Heaven terminates, Earth corroborates, and Ocean moves all generation" (Proc., *Tim.*, v. 298). Here we see the reason why Neptune is between Zeus and Pluto, a middle and not an extreme. The kingdom of Neptune extends as far as the sublunary regions, all below that properly belonging to Hades or Pluto. But there is yet another reflection of Ocean and his consort Tethys ("who imparts permanency to the natures which are moved by Ocean") in the sublunary regions themselves, so that "their last processions are their divisible allotments about the earth: both those which are apparent on its surface, and those which under the earth separate the kingdom of Hades from the dominion of Neptune" (Proc., *Crat.*; Taylor, *Myst. Hymns*, p. 189)—a mysterious depth that I must leave to the reader to fathom.

It may be of advantage, however, to point out that the Earth was imagined as surrounded on all sides by Ocean, that Heaven was above and Tartarus below. Now of the three, Jupiter, Neptune and Pluto, "Jupiter subsists according to *being;* but Neptune according to *power;* and Pluto according to *intellect.* And though all these divinities are the causes of the life of all things, yet one is so *essentially*, another *vitally*, and another *intellectually*. . . . Neptune is an intellectual demiurgic God, who receives souls descending into generation [earth-life]; but Hades is an intellectual demiurgic God, who frees souls from generation [Kâma Loka and Devachan]. For as our whole period receives a triple division, into a life prior to generation ['plane of reincarnation'] which is Jovian, into a life in generation, which is Neptunian, and into a life posterior to generation which is Plutonian; Pluto, who is characterized by intellect, very properly converts [this being the characteristic of intellect] ends to beginnings, effecting a circle without a beginning and without an end, not only in souls, but also in every fabrication of bodies, and in short of all periods; which circle also he perpetually convolves. Thus for instance, he converts the ends to the beginnings of the souls of the stars, and the convolution of souls about generation and the like. [He is Lord of the Cycle of Generation and the Cycle of Necessity, and the Guardian of the 'Ring

Pass Not,' on every plane.] Whereas Jupiter is the guardian of the life of souls prior to generations" (*loc. cit.*, *ibid.*, pp. 190-192).

Socrates in the *Cratylus* denies that Pluto has anything to do with the wealth of the earth or that Hades is "invisible, dark and dreadful." He refers the name of Pluto, as intellect, to the wealth of prudence, and that of Hades to an intellect knowing all things. "For this God is a sophist [in a good sense], who, purifying souls after death, frees them from generation. For Hades is not, as some improperly explain it, evil: for neither is death evil; though Hades to some appears to be attended with perturbations [ἐμπαθῶς—of a passional nature, a state of emotion]; but it is invisible [Hades meaning the Unseen] and better than the apparent; such as is everything intelligible. Intellect, therefore, in every triad of beings, convolves itself to being and the paternal cause, imitating in its energy the circle" (*ibid.*).

But indeed the kâmalokic aspect of this Unseen is dreadful for the evil; still Socrates preferred to insist more on the devachanic aspect, and, therefore, Proclus continues: "Men who are lovers of body badly [erroneously] refer to themselves the passions of the animated nature, and on this account consider death to be dreadful, as being the cause of corruption. The truth, however, is, that it is much better for man to die and live in Hades a life according to nature, since a life in conjunction with body is contrary to nature, and is an impediment to intellectual energy. Hence it is necessary to divest ourselves of the fleshly garments with which we are clothed, as Ulysses did of his ragged vestments, and no longer like a wretched mendicant, together with the indigence of body, put on our rags. For, as the Chaldæan Oracle says, 'Things divine cannot be obtained by those whose intellectual eye is directed to body; but those only can arrive at the possession of them who stript of their garments hasten to the summit'" (*ibid.*, p. 193).

And so we are finally told that: "Neptune, *when compared with Jupiter* [the *one*], is said to know *many* things; but Hades, *compared with souls to whom he imparts knowledge*, is said to know *all* things; though [in fact] Neptune is more total than Hades" (*ibid.*).

And thus we bid farewell to the demiurgic triad of the Supercosmic Order, or Jupiter, Neptune and Pluto, the Creator, Preserver and Regenerator, or Celestial Jove, Marine Jove and Subterranean Jove.

APOLLO.

We next pass to Apollo, who is said, conformably to Orpheus, to be in the Supercosmic Order what Jupiter is in the Noëric Order (Taylor, *Myst. Hymns*, p. 83, n.). This is Apollo as a monad. But just as Jupiter has three reflections in the Order immediately below him (see Chart of Orphic Theogony), so Apollo has also his triple reflection in the Liberated Order. (Compare also Chart of Chaldæan Theogony.)

In Hymn XXXIV, Apollo is said to "fix his roots beyond the starry-eyed darkness." Now Apollo, the Sun, is something vastly different from the visible orb of day, according to this theology. For this "starry-eyed darkness" is the sphere of the fixed stars, the region immediately beyond which consists of the ethereal worlds, which according to the Chaldæans are three. "For they assert that there are seven corporeal worlds, one empyrean and the first; after this, three ethereal, and then three material worlds, which last consist of the inerratic sphere, the seven planetary spheres and the sublunary regions." (Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 78; see also Chart of Chaldæan Theogony, and also Chart of the Muses, *supra.*)

It is somewhat difficult to make out precisely what these Ethereal Worlds are. The worlds, however, are apparently in triads, just as the Powers are. Thus there seem to be three triads, Heaven, Earth and Sea, each reflecting the other, with an all-containing Æther encompassing all, and thus we get the scale:

ÆTHER.

Empyrean	Heaven	Uranus
	Earth	Gæa
	Sea	Oceanus
Ethereal	Heaven	Triple
	Earth	Upper Solar
	Sea	World
Material	Heaven	Inerratic Sphere
	Earth	Planetary Worlds
	Sea	Sublunary Regions

Thus we read in Orpheus, quoted by Proclus (*Tim.*, i. 96), that the Demiurgus was counselled by Night to "surround all things with Æther; and in its midst to place the Heaven; and in that, the

boundless Earth [Earth Proper, Prima Materia, that which Eugenius Philalethes assures us, on his honour, no man has seen]; and in that, the Sea [Astral Envelope]; and in that all the Stars wherewith Heaven crowns his head."

"We also learn from Psellus, that according to the Chaldæans there are two Solar Worlds; *one of which is subservient to the ethereal profundity;* the other zonaic, being one of the seven [planetary] spheres" (Taylor, *ibid.*). From which I deduce that this Upper Solar World belongs to the Azonic or Liberated Order.

And Proclus (*Tim.*, i. 264) informs us further, that "the most mystical of the logia have handed on that the wholeness [monadic essence] of the sun is in the supercosmic order; for there is the [true] Solar World, and the totality of light, as the Chaldæan Oracles say." From which I further deduce that the Sun is a monad, and a triad, and a hebdomad, respectively on the supercosmic, liberated and cosmic planes. For by "wholeness" Proclus means "the sphere in which the visible orb of the sun is fixed, and which is called a 'wholeness,' because it has a perpetual subsistence, and comprehends in itself all the multitude of which it is the cause" (Taylor, *ibid.*). That is to say, that sphere which gives the solar power to all the stars, which are equally suns with our own sun.

And thus it is that Julian, the Emperor (*Orat.*, v.), says: "The orb of the [true] Sun revolves in the starless [spheres, which transcend the visible stars], much above the inerratic sphere. Hence it is not the middle of the planets, but of the three [ethereal] worlds, according to the telestic hypothesis."

And so we can understand the meaning of Apollo being "rooted beyond the starry-eyed darkness." For in symbology these "roots" signify his divine origin. The "heavenly trees" have all their roots upward, and branches below; compare this with the Ashvattha Tree in the Upanishads and Gîtâ. And Proclus (*Parmen.*, vi) finely explains the symbology by writing:

"As trees by their extremities are firmly established in the earth, and all that pertains to them is through this earthly; after the same manner are divine natures by their extremities *rooted in the one*, and each of them is a unity and one, through an unconfused union with the one itself."

But we must leave this interesting subject, and put off the symbology of Apollo's Lyre till a later chapter. With Apollo is closely associated Hermes (Mercury) who is also said to have invented the lyre. But, indeed, we must hasten to bring our Orphic Pantheon to a conclusion, for it has already run into greater length than was intended. Many other names could be introduced, and many interesting side-paths of mythology entered into, but these must be reserved for another occasion. Of Venus, Mars, and Vulcan, however, we must say a few words.

Vulcan, Venus, Mars.

There are three main aspects of Venus, one connected with Uranus, the second with Saturn, and the third with Jupiter. The name of the middle Venus is Dione. Venus is said to be produced from sea-foam, the creative energy of the father being cast into the sea. And the highest and lowest Venus are said to be "united with each other through a similitude of subsistence: for they both proceed from generative powers; one from that of the connectedly containing power of Heaven, and the other from Jupiter, the Demiurgus. But the sea signifies an expanded and circumscribed life; its profundity, the universally extended progression of such life; and its foam, the greatest purity of nature, that which is full of prolific light and power, and that which swims upon all life, and is as it were its highest flower" (Proc., *Crat.*, Taylor, *Myst.*, *Hymns*, p. 194).

And Venus is married to Vulcan, who, the theologists say, "forges everything" (Proc., *Tim.*, ii. 101), that is to say, Vulcan is the formative power, and Venus the vivific.

"Venus, according to her first subsistence, ranks among the supermundane divinities. She is the cause of all the harmony and analogy in the universe, and of the union of form and matter, connecting and comprehending the powers of all the mundane elements" (Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 113, n.).

As to Mars, Proclus (*Plat. Rep.*, p. 388) tells us that he "is the source of division and motion, separating the contrarieties of the universe, which he also perpetually excites, and immutably preserves in order that the world may be perfect and filled with forms of every kind. . . . But he requires the assistance of Venus that

he may insert order and harmony into things contrary and discordant."

Thus we see that, in the Sensible World Vulcan is the Creator, Venus the Preserver, and Mars the Regenerator. And so the myth exhibits Vulcan as the legitimate husband, but Mars as the lover of Venus.

As to Mars, the God of War, this is a vulgar conception; in reality, as says Hermias (*Phædr.*), "the 'slaughter' which is ascribed to Mars signifies a divulsion from matter through rapidly turning from it, and no longer energizing physically, but intellectually. For slaughter, when applied to the Gods, may be said to be an apostacy from secondary natures, just as slaughter in this terrestrial region signifies a privation of the present life."

And finally Taylor tells us (*op. cit.*, p. 129 n.) that: "Vulcan is that divine power which presides over the spermatic and physical productive powers which the universe contains; for whatever Nature [the psycho-physical forces] accomplishes by verging to bodies, that Vulcan effects in a divine and exempt manner, by moving Nature, and using her as an instrument in his own proper fabrication."

In order finally to complete the subject, we must add a few more notes on the Constructive and Preservative Powers.

The Cyclopes and Centimani.

In this connection I would refer the reader to what has been already said of the Titans, and especially of the Cyclopes and Centimani, the Primal Architects and Guardian Powers. Now Hermias (*Phædr.*, Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-14) tells us that:

"Theology says that figure is first unfolded into light in these, and that the divinities, the Cyclopes, are the first principles and causes of the figures which subsist everywhere. Hence theology says that they are 'manual artificers.' For this triad [Cyclopes] is perfective of figures, 'And in their forehead one round eye was fix'd' (Hesiod., *Theog.*, v. 145). [This has reference to the 'third eye' and the creative force of the power which energizes thereby.]

"In the *Parmenides*, likewise, Plato, when he speaks of the straight, the circular, and that which is mixed [from both these], obscurely indicates this order. [The 'straight' (1), or diameter, or 'bound' is the paternal creative power; the 'circular' (o), or cir-

cumference, or 'infinity,' is the maternal vitalizing power; and the 'mixed' (all numbers) is the resulting universe, or the son.]

"But these Cyclopes, as being the *first causes* of figures, taught Minerva and Vulcan the various species of figures. . . . For (1) Vulcan is the cause of *corporal* figures, and of every *mundane* figure; but (2) Minerva of the *psychical* and *intellectual* figure; and (3) the [triple] Cyclopes of *divine*, and the *everywhere existing* figure."

This is the line of the Architects and Builders. But closely united with them is the triad of the Centimani, both triads being in the Noëtic-noëric Order, for as Hermias tells us (*ibid.*), "the triad of the Centimani is a guardian nature."

Curetes and Corybantes.

The reflection of this Guardian Triad is found on both the noëric and supercosmic planes, in the triads (and also hebdomads) respectively of the Curetes and Corybantes.

The Curetes and Corybantes are frequently confused; they are the Guardians of the Creative Power, while it is yet too weak to defend itself. Therefore they watch over Zeus when a child. Now as the Guardians are closely associated with the Formative Powers, we naturally find the appropriate Minervas associated with both the Curetes and Corybantes, they being armed as she is armed (Proc., *Polit.*, p. 387). These Guardian Powers are also given the dragon-form (Nonnus, vi. 123).

So much for the Orphic Pantheon, an apparent chaos of unmeaning verbiage, but on closer inspection, a marvellous procession and return of divine and nature powers, ever revealing similar characteristics in orderly sequence, and affording an example of permutation and combination according to law, that it will be difficult to find paralleled elsewhere. But the most stupendous thought of all is, that all this multiplicity is, after all, One Deity; emanating, evolving, converting and reabsorbing itself; creating and preserving, destroying and regenerating itself; the Self, by itself, knowing itself, and separating from itself, and transcending itself.

VIII. ON THE MYSTERIES AND SYMBOLISM.

I have no intention in this Chapter to do anything more than touch in a most superficial manner on the general subject of the

Mysteries, of which Orpheus is said, traditionally, to have been the founder. The distinction between the various kinds of Mysteries, their history and development, and the nature of their rites and observances, pertain to the very heart of the Grecian theology; but the treatment of this grandiose and marvellously interesting subject must be reserved for greater leisure and opportunity for research than are mine at present. The Eleusinian, Orphic, Bacchic, Samothracian, Phrygian, Egyptian, Chaldæan and other Mysteries all came from a common source. In Greece these rites became in time mostly identified with the name of Bacchus, who was the son of Zeus and Core in the Supercosmic Order. (See Chap. VII., "Vesta-Ceres-Juno.")

"India in Greece"?

In later times it was believed that the Cult of Bacchus was introduced into Greece from India. This was owing to the fact that the Greeks in the army of Alexander the Great, having observed similar rites among the Indians, came to the erroneous conclusion that the Bacchic Mysteries were introduced directly from India, and this view was all the more insisted on by the writers of the time in order to flatter Alexander who was said to have been worshipped as Bacchus himself by the oriental nations whom he reduced to his sway.

The truth of the matter is that the Mystic Rites of both the Greeks and Indians, as has been shown above, came from the same archaic source.

The theory that the legend of the conquests of Bacchus in India was nothing more than a bastard mythical adulation of Alexander was first brought forward by Fréret (*Mém. de l'Acad.*, xxiii. 255). But Bacchus was far older in Greece than the time of Alexander; for as Gail says (*Rech. sur la Nat. du Culte de Bacchus*, p. 14); "Bacchus was recognized as a god *before the Hellenes had driven out the Pelasgi*." In the same passage the writer proves that the date of the Bacchic rites in Greece must be pushed back at least as far as 1,500 B.C.

The general consensus of opinion among the later mythological writers, therefore, that Bacchus was born in India, must be received with the greatest possible caution. The wild comparative

Grecian and Hindu mythology and Greek and Sanskrit philology, attempted by such writers as Wilford, Sir William Jones, and Pococke, must also be received with the greatest possible caution; for they all went on the theory of *direct* borrowing, instead of tracing both lines of descent up to a common source.

Apollodorus (I. iii. 2) tells us that "Orpheus discovered (εὗρε) the Mysteries of Dionysus." That is to say, that he found them elsewhere and introduced them into Greece; in other words, these Mysteries came from a remote antiquity. And so Lactantius (*Instit.*, i. 22): "Orpheus was the first to bring the Mysteries of Dionysus into Greece . . . and these Mysteries are called Orphic to our day." And so also Diodorus (iii. 64) and Herodotus (ii).

The Perfections of Virtue.

These Mysteries were looked upon as the Perfections of Virtue, the blossoming of the flower and promise of manhood. Thus Charondas (Stob., xliv. 289) speaks of "initiation into the greatest and most perfect rite, meaning thereby the flower of perfect manhood" (τελεῖσθαι τὴν μεγίστην καὶ τελεωτάτην τελετὴν, ἀνδραγαθίαν μυούμενος). And thus also they were called "the efflorescence of virtue" (τὰ ὄργια τῆς ἀρετῆς)—*orgia* signifying "burstings forth" or "efflorescence."

These Mystic Rites were guarded in the greatest secresy and had nothing to do directly with the public worship and sacrifices. The punishment for revealing their secret was death.

It is interesting to set down here one of the oaths taken by neophytes. It is attributed to Orpheus and cited by Justin (*Cohort.*, xv. 78), and Cyril (i. 33, A): "So help me Heaven, work of God, great and wise; so help me the Word (αὐδὴν) of the Father which he first spake, when he established the whole universe in his wisdom." (See also *Chron. Alex.*, p. 47, D, where the same oath is attributed to Hermes Trismegistus.)

That these rites were designed for the welfare of mankind and the perfection of the highest virtue is borne out by the note of Taylor (*Myst. Hymns*, p. 131), who tells us that: "In the hymn to Apollo, Orpheus, or, as he wrote those hymns for the Mysteries, the initiating priest, *prays for the welfare of all mankind.*"

The Fantasies of Scholarship.

The perfection of the highest virtue and the opening of the real spiritual senses constituted the highest degree of the Mysteries; another and most important part of the discipline was the training in the interpretation of myth, symbol, and allegory, the letters of the mystical language in which the secrets of nature and the soul were written, so plainly for the initiated, so obscurely for the general. Without this instruction the mythical recitals and legends were unintelligible. They were and are still unintelligible. Every interpretation has been attempted, the favourite rendering being the "sun-myth theory"—interpretations that are more fantastic than the mythical tales themselves. Of these perhaps the most naïvely grotesque are Faber's Noachian theory, as set forth in his *Cabiri*, and the strange conceit of Goropius Becanus who, in his *Thaumatoscopion Symbolicum*, says: "I therefore assert and proclaim that the Grecian fables contain neither Indian theosophy, nor Hermetic philosophy, nor physics, nor metaphysics, but simply the art of cookery!" All of which he proceeds to demonstrate at great length with a wealth of learned lunacy.

The symbols of the Mysteries and the mythical narrations summed up and explained the workings of occult nature and the powers, faculties and nature of the human soul. Mere rationalistic speculation, warped theological prejudice, and the grotesque perversions of diseased philology, are, therefore, all absolutely incompetent even to understand the nature of the problem they fondly imagine they have solved.

Let us, therefore, take a few more instances of this symbolical and mythological method.

The Lion's Cub.

Alcman, the famous lyric poet of Sparta, tells us (Welcher, Frag. xxv.), that Dionysus was fed on lion's milk. Further, Herodotus (v. 92) mentions an oracle which declares, "an eagle lays her egg on the rocks and gives birth to a lion," and Aristophanes, who frequently ventured to jest concerning the Mysteries, says (*Eqq.*, 1037), "There is a woman who shall give birth to a lion in Holy Athens." Compare this with what has been said above

concerning the mystical birth at Eleusis, and the Egg and triple-formed God, with the heads of a lion, etc. Dionysus was the perfected candidate, he was fed on lion's milk, the spiritual influx of the higher mind, born from the Egg of the Great Bird, the Cosmic Mother.

The Fawn Skin.

In the Mysteries, the Mystæ were clad in a fawn skin (*νεβρίς*), as we are told by Aristophanes (*Ran.*, 1242). Euripides (*Bacch.*, 138) calls this skin "the sacred vesture" (*ἱερὸν ἐνδυτὸν νεβρίδα*). The legend runs that when Bacchus came forth from the thigh of Jupiter, Mercury received him on a fawn skin (*Mus. Pio-Clem.*, tom. iv, pl. 19). In Hymn LII., Orpheus sings of Bacchus as clothed with fawn skins. Bacchus as conqueror in India is represented with a fawn skin spangled with stars (Nonn., xiv. 239). Diodorus (I. ii) calls it an emblem of the heavenly vault. Arrows could not pierce this "skin," and Nonnus (p. 1252, 8vo. ed.) tells us that "the hills burst asunder touched by the magic skin of Lyæus" (Comp. Gail, *Recherches*, pp., 111, 203, and 205). We sometimes also find mention of a leopard or tiger skin. In the *Mahâbhârata*, the great religious epic of India, directions are given for the practice of Yoga or Theurgy, and among other receipts the aspirant is instructed to lay a deer skin or tiger skin on kusha grass as a seat upon which to practise mystic meditation. From all of which it appears that the fawn skin was not only a symbol, but also of physical service. It appears to have been a symbol of that starry or "astral" vesture or envelope which is the storehouse of all forces and substances in each man's universe, and which must not be confounded with the so-called "astral body." Its physical use was for the purpose of assisting in the concentration of the magnetic aura. It was only apparently when the candidate had reached the first degree of outer initiation that he was clothed with this skin, the verb *νεβρίζειν*, the technical term for the investiture with the skin, being explained by Photius (*Lex.*, *sub voc.*) as *ὡς τοῦ τελοῦντος τοὺς τελουμένους τούτῳ καταζώννυντος*, where the technical word for initiation is twice employed.

G. R. S. Mead.

(*To be continued.*)

DEVACHAN.

(*Continued from page* 422.)

THE first impressions, then, of the pupil who enters the devachanic plane in full consciousness will probably be those of intense bliss, indescribable vitality, and enormously increased power. And when he makes use of his new sense to examine his surroundings, what does he see? He finds himself in the midst of what seems to him a whole universe of ever-changing light and colour and sound, such as it has never entered into his loftiest dreams to imagine. Verily it is true that down here "eye hath not seen, nor ear hath heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive" the glories of the devachanic plane: and the man who has once experienced them in full consciousness will regard the world with widely different eyes for ever after. Yet this experience is so utterly unlike anything we know on the physical plane that in trying to put it into words one is troubled by a curious sense of helplessness—of absolute incapacity, not only to do it justice, for of *that* one resigns all hope from the very outset, but even to give any idea at all of it to those who have not themselves seen it. Let a man imagine himself, with the feelings of intense bliss and enormously increased power already described, floating in a sea of living light, surrounded by every conceivable variety of loveliness in colour and form, the whole changing with every wave of thought that he sends out from his mind, and being indeed, as he presently discovers, only the expression of his thought in the matter of the plane and in its elemental essence. For that matter is of the very same order as that of which the mind-body is itself composed, and therefore when that vibration of the particles of the mind-body which we call a thought occurs, it immediately extends itself to this surrounding devachanic matter, and sets up corresponding vibrations in it, while in the elemental essence it images itself with absolute exactitude. Concrete thought naturally takes the shape of its objects,

while abstract ideas usually represent themselves by all kinds of perfect and most beautiful geometrical forms, though in this connection it should be remembered that many thoughts which are little more than the merest abstractions to us down here become concrete facts on this loftier plane.

It will thus be seen that in Devachan anyone who wishes to devote himself for a time to quiet thought, and to abstract himself from his surroundings, may actually live in a world of his own without possibility of interruption, and with the additional advantage of seeing all his ideas and their consequences fully worked out passing in a sort of panorama before his eyes. If, however, he wishes instead to observe the plane upon which he finds himself, it will be necessary for him very carefully to suspend his thought for the time, so that its creations may not influence the readily impressible matter around him, and thus alter the entire conditions so far as he is concerned. This holding of the mind in suspense must not be confounded with the blankness of mind towards the attainment of which so many of the Hatha Yoga practices are directed: in the latter case the mind is dulled down into absolute passivity in order that it may not by any thought of its own offer resistance to the entry of any external influence that may happen to approach it—a condition closely approximating to mediumship; while in the former the mind is as keenly alert and positive as it can be, holding its thought in suspense for the moment merely to prevent the intrusion of a personal equation into the observation it wishes to make. When the visitor to the devachanic plane succeeds in putting himself in this position he finds that although he is no longer himself a centre of radiation of all that marvellous wealth of light and colour, form and sound, which I have so vainly endeavoured to picture, it has not therefore ceased to exist; on the contrary, its harmonies and its coruscations are but grander and fuller than ever. Casting about for an explanation of this phenomenon, he begins to realize that all this magnificence is not a mere idle or fortuitous display—a kind of devachanic aurora borealis; he finds that it all has a meaning—a meaning which he himself can understand, and presently he grasps the fact that what he is watching with such ecstasy of delight is simply the glorious colour-language of the Devas—the expression of the thought or the

conversation of beings far higher than himself in the scale of evolution. By experiment and practice he discovers that he also can use this new and beautiful mode of expression, and by this very discovery he enters into possession of another great tract of his heritage in this celestial realm—the power to hold converse with, and to learn from, its loftier non-human inhabitants, with whom we shall deal more fully when we come to treat of that part of our subject.

By this time it will have become apparent why it was impossible to devote a section of this paper to the scenery of Devachan, as was done in the case of the astral plane; for in point of fact Devachan has *no* scenery except such as each individual chooses to make for himself by his thought—unless indeed we take into account the fact that the vast numbers of entities who are continually passing before him are themselves objects in many cases of the most transcendent beauty. If the visitor wishes to carry his analysis of the plane still further, and discover what it would be when entirely undisturbed by the thought or conversation of any of its inhabitants, he can do so by forming round himself a huge shell through which none of these influences can penetrate, and then (of course holding his own mind perfectly still as before) examine the conditions which exist inside his shell. If he performs this experiment with sufficient care, he will find that the sea of light has become—not still, for its particles continue their intense and rapid vibration, but as it were homogeneous; that those wonderful coruscations of colour and constant changes of form are no longer taking place, but that he is now able to perceive another and entirely different series of regular pulsations which the other more artificial phenomena had previously obscured. These are evidently universal, and no shell which human power can make will check or turn them aside. They cause no change of colour, no assumption of form, but flow with resistless regularity through all the matter of the plane, outwards and in again, like the exhalations and inhalations of some great breath beyond our ken. There are several sets of these, clearly distinguishable from one another by volume and by period of vibration, and grander than them all sweeps one great wave which seems the very heart-beat of the system—a wave which, welling up from unknown centres on far higher planes, pours out

its life through all our world, and then draws back in its tremendous tide to That from which it came. In one long undulating curve it comes, and the sound of it is like the murmur of the sea; and yet in it and through it all the while there echoes a mighty ringing chant of triumph—the very music of the spheres. The man who once has heard that glorious song of nature never quite loses it again; even here on this dreary physical plane of illusion he hears it always as a kind of undertone, keeping ever before his mind the strength and light and splendour of the real life above.

If the visitor be pure in heart and mind, and has reached a certain degree of spiritual development, it is possible for him to identify his consciousness with the sweep of that wondrous wave—to merge his spirit in it, as it were, and let it bear him upward to its source. It is possible, I say; but it is not wise—unless, indeed, his Master stands beside him to draw him back at the right moment from its mighty embrace: for otherwise its irresistible force will carry him away onward and upward into still higher planes, whose far greater glories his ego is as yet unable to sustain; he will lose consciousness, and with no certainty as to when and where and how he will regain it. It is true that the ultimate object of man's evolution is the attainment of unity, but he must reach that final goal in full and perfect consciousness as a victorious king entering triumphantly upon his heritage, not drift into absorption in a state of blank unconsciousness but little removed from annihilation.

All that we have hitherto attempted to indicate in this description may be taken as applying to the lowest subdivision of the devachanic plane; for this realm of nature, exactly like the astral or the physical, has its seven subdivisions. Of these four are called in the books the rûpa planes, while the other three are spoken of as arûpa or formless—the reason for these names being that on the rûpa planes every thought takes to itself a certain definite form, while on the arûpa subdivisions it expresses itself in an entirely different manner, as will presently be explained. The distinction between these two great divisions of the plane—the rûpa and the arûpa—is very marked; indeed, it even extends so far as to necessitate the use of different vehicles of consciousness. The vehicle appropriate to the four rûpa levels is the mind-body, out of the matter of which the Adept forms his Mâyâvirûpa, while that of the

three arûpa levels is the causal body—the vehicle of the reincarnating ego, in which he passes from life to life throughout the whole manvantara. Another enormous distinction is that on those four lower subdivisions illusion is still possible—not indeed for the entity who stands upon them in full consciousness during life, but for the person who passes there after the change which men call death. The higher thoughts and aspirations which he has poured forth during earth-life then cluster round him, and make a sort of shell about him—a kind of subjective world of his own; and in that he lives his devachanic life, seeing but very faintly or not at all the real glories of the plane which lie outside. On the three arûpa subdivisions no such self-deception is possible; it is true that even there many egos are only slightly and dreamily conscious of their surroundings, but in so far as they see, they see truly, for thought no longer assumes the same deceptive forms which it took upon itself lower down.

The exact condition of mind of the human inhabitants of these various sub-planes will naturally be much more fully dealt with under its own appropriate heading; but a comprehension of the manner in which thought acts in the rûpa and arûpa levels respectively is so necessary to an accurate understanding of these great divisions that it will perhaps be worth while to recount in detail some of the experiments made by our explorers in the endeavour to throw light upon this subject. At an early period of the investigation it became evident that on the devachanic as on the astral plane there was present an elemental essence quite distinct from the mere matter of the plane, and that it was, if possible, even more instantaneously sensitive to the action of thought here than it had been in that lower world. But here in Devachan *all* was thought-substance, and therefore not only the elemental essence, but the very matter of the plane was directly affected by the action of the mind; and hence it became necessary to make an attempt to discriminate between these two effects. After various less conclusive experiments a method was adopted which gave a fairly clear idea of the different results produced, one investigator remaining on the lowest subdivision to send out the thought-forms, while others rose to the next higher level, so as to be able to observe what took place from above, and thus avoid many possibilities of confusion. Under these

circumstances the experiment was tried of sending an affectionate and helpful thought to an absent friend. The result was very remarkable; a sort of vibrating shell, formed in the matter of the plane, seemed to be sent out in all directions round the operator, corresponding exactly to the circle which spreads out in still water from the spot where a stone has been thrown into it, except that this was a sphere of vibration extending itself in three (or perhaps four) dimensions instead of merely over a flat surface. It seemed as though these vibrations, like those on the physical plane, though very much more gradually, lost in intensity as they passed further away from their source, till at last at an enormous distance they seemed to be exhausted, or at least became so faint as to be imperceptible. Thus every one on the devachanic plane is a centre of radiant thought, and yet all the rays thrown out cross in all directions without interfering with one another in the slightest degree, just as rays of light do down here. This expanding sphere of vibrations was many coloured and opalescent, but its colours also grew gradually fainter and fainter as it spread away. The effect on the elemental essence of the plane was, however, entirely different. In this the thought immediately called into existence a distinct form resembling the human, of one colour only, though exhibiting many shades of that colour. This form flashed across the ocean with the speed of thought to the friend to whom the good wish had been directed, and there took to itself elemental essence of the astral plane, and thus became an ordinary artificial elemental of that plane, waiting, as explained in Manual No. V., for an opportunity to pour out upon him its store of helpful influence. In taking on that astral form the devachanic elemental lost much of its brilliancy, though its glowing rose-colour was still plainly visible inside the shell of lower matter which it had assumed, showing that just as the original thought ensouled the elemental essence of its own plane, so that same thought, plus its form as a devachanic elemental, acted as soul to the astral elemental—thus following closely the method in which Âtmâ itself takes on sheath after sheath in its descent through the various planes and sub-planes of matter.

Further experiments along similar lines revealed the fact that the colour of the elemental sent forth varied with the character of the thought. As above stated, the thought of strong affection

produced a creature of glowing rose-colour; an intense wish of healing, projected towards a sick friend, called into existence a most lovely silvery-white elemental; while an earnest mental effort to steady and strengthen the mind of a depressed and despairing person resulted in the production of a beautiful flashing golden-yellow messenger.

In all these cases it will be perceived that, besides the effect of radiating colours and vibrations produced in the matter of the plane, a definite force in the shape of an elemental was sent forth towards the person to whom the thought was directed; and this invariably happened, with one notable exception. One of the operators, while on the lower division of the plane, directed a thought of intense love and devotion towards the Adept who is his spiritual teacher, and it was at once noticed by the observers above that the result was in some sense a reversal of what had happened in the previous cases. It should be premised that a pupil of any one of the great Adepts is always connected with his Master by a constant current of thought and influence, which expresses itself on the devachanic plane as a great ray or stream of dazzling light of all colours—violet and gold and blue; and it might perhaps have been expected that the pupil's earnest, loving thought would send a special vibration along this line. Instead of this, however, the result was a sudden intensification of the colours of this bar of light, and a very distinct flow of magnetic influence *towards the pupil:* so that it is evident that when a student turns his thought to the Master, what he really does is to vivify his connection with that Master, and thus to open a way for an additional outpouring of strength and help to himself from higher planes. It would seem that the Adept is, as it were, so highly charged with the influences which sustain and strengthen, that any thought which brings into increased activity a channel of communication with him sends no current towards him, as it ordinarily would, but simply gives a wider opening through which the great ocean of his love finds vent.

On the arûpa levels the difference in the effect of thought is very marked, especially as regards the elemental essence. The disturbance set up in the mere matter of the plane is similar, though greatly intensified in this much more refined form of matter; but in the essence no form at all is now created, and the method of action

is entirely changed. In all the experiments on lower planes it was found that the elemental produced hovered about the person thought of, and awaited a favourable opportunity of expending his energy either upon his mind-body, his astral, or even his physical body; here the result is a kind of lightning-flash of the essence from the causal body of the thinker direct to the causal body of the object of his thought; so that while the thought on those lower divisions is always directed to the mere personality, here you influence the reincarnating ego, the real man himself, and if your message has any reference to the personality it will reach it only from above, through the instrumentality of the Kârana Sharîra.

If it be asked what is the real difference between the matter of the various sub-planes of Devachan, it is not easy to answer in other than very general terms, for the unfortunate scribe bankrupts himself of adjectives in an unsuccessful endeavour to describe the lowest plane, and then has nothing left to say about the others. What, indeed, can be said, except that ever as we ascend the material becomes finer, the harmonies fuller, the light more living and transparent? There are more overtones in the sound, more delicate intershades in the colours as we rise, and it has been poetically yet truly said that the light of the lower plane is darkness on the one above it. Perhaps this idea is simpler if we start in thought from the top instead of the bottom, and try to realize that on that highest sub-plane we shall find its appropriate matter ensouled and vivified by an energy which still flows down like light from above—from a plane which lies away beyond Devachan altogether. Then if we descend to the second subdivision we shall find that the matter of our first sub-plane has become the energy of this—or, to put the thing more accurately, that the original energy, plus the garment of matter of the first sub-plane with which it has endued itself, is the energy of this second sub-plane. In the same way, in the third division we shall find that the original energy has twice veiled itself in the matter of these first and second sub-planes through which it has passed; so that by the time we get to our seventh subdivision we shall have our original energy six times enclosed or veiled, and therefore by so much the weaker and less active. This process is exactly analogous to the veiling of Âtmâ in its first descent in order to energize the matter of the planes of the cosmos,

and as it is one which frequently takes place in nature, it will save the student much trouble if he will try to familiarize himself with the idea.

In speaking of the general characteristics of the plane we must not omit to mention the âkâshic records, which form what may be called the memory of nature, the only really reliable history of the world. Whether what we have on this plane is the absolute record itself or merely a devachanic reflection of it, it is at any rate clear, accurate and continuous, differing therein from the disconnected and spasmodic manifestation which is all that represents it in the astral world. It is, therefore, only when a clairvoyant possesses the vision of this devachanic plane that his pictures of the past can be relied upon; and even then, unless he has the power of passing in full consciousness from that plane to the physical we have to allow for the possibility of errors in bringing back the recollection of what he has seen. But the student who has succeeded in developing the powers latent within himself so far as to enable him to use the devachanic sense while still in the physical body, has before him a field of historical research of most entrancing interest. Not only can he review at his leisure all history with which we are acquainted, correcting as he examines it the many errors and misconceptions which have crept into the accounts handed down to us; he can also range at will over the whole story of the world from its very beginning, watching the slow development of intellect in man, the descent of the Lords of the Flame and the growth of the mighty civilizations which they founded. Nor is his study confined to the progress of humanity alone; he has before him, as in a museum, all the strange animal and vegetable forms which occupied the stage in days when the world was young; he can follow all the wonderful geological changes which have taken place, and watch the course of the great cataclysms which have altered the whole face of the earth again and again. Many and varied are the possibilities opened up by access to the âkâshic records—so many and so varied indeed that even if this were the only advantage of the devachanic plane it would still transcend in interest all the lower worlds; but when to this we add the remarkable increase in the opportunities for the acquisition of knowledge given by its new and wider faculty—the privilege of direct untrammelled intercourse not only with the great

Deva kingdom, but with the very Masters of Wisdom themselves—the rest and relief from the weary strain of physical life that is brought by the enjoyment of its deep unchanging bliss, and above all the enormously enhanced capability of the developed student for the service of his fellow-men—then we shall begin to have some faint conception of what a pupil gains when he wins the right to enter at will and in perfect consciousness upon his heritage in the bright realm of Sukhâvatî.

C. W. LEADBEATER.

(*To be continued.*)

THE SEVENFOLD UNIVERSE.

"THOUGH human knowledge could never rise to a knowledge of the absolute, it might show the way to a fellowship with it." This sentence, in which Max Müller describes the general drift of thought underlying the philosophy of Dionysius the Areopagite, may also be taken as describing the mental attitude of many students towards Theosophy; for though we are fully aware of the logical impossibility of realizing the true inwardness of that transcendent state of consciousness which we ascribe to the Logos, yet we believe that it is possible for man to conceive of the general scheme of universal evolution in such a way as shall bring him into close and permanent fellowship with the spiritual forces of which the phenomenal world is but the manifestation, so that we may in a very real sense build a bridge for ourselves which shall connect that which is human with that which is divine. Speaking of Divinity we place its highest manifestation in the Logos, using that word in the sense in which it was used by the Platonists, the Stoics, the Neo-Platonists and the Alexandrian Christians—namely, as the Word made manifest, or the mind and consciousness of the universe. We speak of three Logoi, the unmanifested Logos, the Second Logos and the manifested Logos, because we recognize the fact that before the Word became manifest it had to pass from absolute to definite infinity, a progress described by the Vedântins under the metaphors of Brahman, Mûlaprakriti, and Brahmâ. Here we have a definite conception of the nature of ultimate divinity. It is that of a universal mind, and we conceive it to be in the beginning perfect in itself, without parts or attributes, the one mysterious matrix in which are to be born those countless forms of life which glitter in the heavens as suns and stars, or absorb the divine fire thus focussed as life-bearing planets.

We also find in the *Secret Doctrine* that the mind of the universe has periodic changes of alternate rest and activity, just as its

microcosmic counterpart, the mind of man, alternately slee
wakes: and the analogy is emphasized by the Vedântins, v
these periods the days and nights of Brahmâ. But our con
of the universal mind does not stop here, for not only d
thinker or unmanifested Logos bring into existence a u
consciousness, but this consciousness is full of the latent
ledge which it has gained from evolution through previous
of universal activity, and it is the progressive awakening
thoughts to subjective existence, and their subsequent
formulation as solid objects of divine contemplation, that
the seven great planes of the universe, forming the seven-
ladder which nature and spirit have to climb in order t
Self of the universe and the self of man may recogniz
oneness.

Thus we see that the physical universe is the outward
sion of the thoughts of God, or the Logos, which thoughts
to the thinker or unmanifested Logos, the unknown being
wisdom is the perfected conceptions of other evolutionary
previous to our own.

Now though we may not be able to enter into the true
ness of all this, yet we may learn to understand somewhat
reason for the division of the universe into seven planes,
logical sequence and rational development are common bo
and to man. Bearing this in mind let us, starting with the
manifested Logos, develop it according to the laws which
a mind awakening to self-perception.

In the beginning, we are told, there was darkness: th
say, the mind of the universe embraced all space as one stup
and homogeneous perfection in which all thought was los
own unity.

But the universal mind, though lost in its own perfe
awakening to more definite perception, and its rising intuit
the universe with light, the subtle metaphysical light of i
the divine noumenon of phenomenal fire. This gives us the
plane, that on which the substance of consciousness become
fest as light. The third stage of the awakening of the u
mind is evidently that wherein it reaches to full perception
as a unit of positive mentality. By the light of awakened

gence it becomes conscious as a pervading wisdom, and at this stage the Logos is called by the Vedântins Mahat. These three planes represent the rousing of the universal mind to a full consciousness of its mentality, and it then becomes aware of itself as a compound unit, made up of countless ideas, each one of which represents a long heredity of changing forms, in which the idea has developed itself through the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms of some previous evolutionary period into a human soul, in order that it might pass on to its full perfection as a spiritual individuality or a perfected idea of the divine mind. These ideas are the archetypal ideas of Plato and the Neo-Platonists, the Logoi of the Stoics and the Gods of the *Secret Doctrine;* they are, as just said, the elaborations of a Manvantara previous to our own.

To return to the unfolding of the seven planes. The universe is now ready to manifest its inherent wisdom, which, as we have seen, consists in definite archetypal ideas. The next four planes are the gradual awakening of these ideas to formulated objectivity in the divine consciousness of the Logos. Its light being manifest, and also the mind which is to think, we have as a logical result the one defining the other, and each idea becoming clearly and distinctly defined.

The mind of the Cosmos is then conscious of them as creative forces, and this is the next phase of its awakening. It gives us the fohatic plane, where the archetypal ideas exist in a more concrete form as ideal entities of light, having each the force and character of a distinctive natural law. This generalization is not a mere assumption, but a logical deduction from the interaction of the two states of consciousness in which the universe now exists—an interaction which produces, as we see, the fourth or fohatic plane. If we wish to draw a parallel between the human and divine minds we should say that on this plane the divine thoughts—or the mental images which are the prototypes of the phenomenal universe—have been thrown off as thought-forms, and that these differ from the thought-forms thrown off by the human mind, in that because they are complete and perfect they possess the force and energy of a natural law, whereas our own, being incomplete conceptions, have no such value. A consideration of these thought-forms of the fohatic plane brings us in logical succession to the next stage of

the seven through which the consciousness of the universe must pass before the Logos, or Word, is made flesh. These active forms of light, ideas, forces of nature, or Gods (they are all synonymous terms), fill the universe with life, and thus bring on the fifth state or jaivic plane. The nature of this vitality may be better explained by reviewing the process by which the archetypal ideas—of which the Logos is the synthesis—acquired creative power. Each one is, as we have seen, an individual idea; each therefore possesses a character of its own. This character is the result of a previous evolution of the idea through the matter and substance of a former universe, so that a perfected idea of one universe becomes a creative idea of another. On the fohatic plane, in virtue of what we may call this ideal heredity, the now creative idea becomes an organizing agent in matter, and its powers of organization represent previously acquired capacities. The sequence of forms which mark the progressive development of one such idea will be the unfolding of these capacities. Passing through the three natural kingdoms below man (to say nothing of elemental kingdoms), the evolving idea eventually individualizes itself as a human soul, each soul thus possessing an ancestry which attaches it to a definite series of genera and species in the lower kingdoms of nature. But at this point, since the idea has developed individual will, the relation of itself as an archetype to itself as an evolving individuality undergoes certain changes. Without entering further into this subject I have said enough to show what I mean, when I say that life as growth seems to me to be the activity which comes from the unfolding of acquired characteristics (which are also explanatory meanings) of archetypal ideas, and the actual principle of vitality would then be the effort these characteristics make; they are, as we see, at different levels of evolution, and are to level up in a united act such as shall in the end reproduce the original and archetypal idea in perfection, *plus* the new meaning which it will have acquired by its evolution through this universe.

It follows from this way of looking at things that vitality as growth may be almost said to be the activity which accompanies and produces the recollections of a cosmic memory; and if this be so—and there are many collateral arguments to support such a contention—then simultaneously with the calling into existence of the

jaivic plane we have the cosmic consciousness recalling the appropriate forms which the wisdom of the Gods proclaims as necessary to give appropriate vehicles for their vitality. Thus we have the astral plane of the universe or cosmic consciousness, giving shape to its own vitality. And as the mind of the universe must proceed to objectify their unity, we have the material plane or that stage where the consciousness of the cosmic mind has become definitely fixed in its perceptions.

Here then we have deduced a connected sequence of unfolding states of consciousness for the universal mind, in which the first state is that of perfect ideal homogeneity and the last is concrete perception of its differentiations. The evolution of a universe is that of its archetypal ideas, and this generalization may with appropriate modifications be applied to the minor evolutions of solar systems, planets, etc. Thus in our world the biological evolution of modern science is, according to this reading of the riddle, the manifestation of the characteristics which belong to archetypal ideas composing the Logos of our planetary manifestation, which are themselves components in yet deeper and grander thoughts or archetypes belonging to the Logos of the universe. Environment and natural selection may play important parts in modifying the evolution of these ideas, and *adaptability* may be the method by which the Gods learn to develop new meanings from themselves, adapted to give expression to the new meaning attaching to the Logos of our universe—a meaning born from the evolution of a previous universe. But the types and classifications of natural life, and later on the intellectual development of individual souls must be, at least to my thinking, subject to the guiding influence of appropriate and archetypal ideas. The lower forms of earth-life will represent the earlier efforts of that process of levelling up, which we have seen to be necessary in order that the different levels of ideal development, through which each idea (or God) has had to pass to reach to creative power, may combine to express eventually the perfect meaning of the archetypal thought.

THOS. WILLIAMS.

RECURRENT QUESTIONS.

12. *Does occult science consider the nebular hypothesis commonly taught in the West to be accurate? And can any additional information be given as to the origin of the solar system?*

Some time ago we ourselves propounded almost the same question to one whose knowledge is infinitely greater than our own, and what follows is simply the substance of the reply we then received. It was premised that questions relating to the origin of chains or solar systems are excessively difficult to answer, and that the replies given to them are likely to prove somewhat misleading, since they must of necessity be extremely incomplete. Nor is the subject one to be approached lightly, for the working out of the plan of a system and its component chains of worlds requires the use throughout incalculable ages of forces of the most stupendous character, wielded by beings of ineffable glory and power—those spoken of in the *Secret Doctrine* as the Ah-hi or Builders. Now all the most important of these forces are as yet entirely unknown to mankind, and those who as they climb the steps of the Path gain theoretical and elementary knowledge of some of them, are not allowed to divulge even the little that they know. These considerations tend to show that the subject of cosmogenesis may be more profitably studied—as to its details at any rate—when more extended capacities of comprehension have been developed than those at present in the possession of the ordinary student, and in the meantime many reservations and limitations must be taken for granted in any attempt made to answer questions about it.

The exalted being who undertakes the formation of a system first of all forms in his mind a complete conception of the whole, with all its successive chains of worlds; and by the very fact of forming that conception he calls the whole into simultaneous existence on a certain high plane upon which his thought acts directly

—a plane from which the various globes descend when required into whatever state of objectivity may be respectively destined for them. This process of descent may often be gradually going on for many ages before the globes are used for human evolution—indeed, before they would seem to man to exist at all. But it is well to remember that the powers who direct the course of evolution invariably make the fullest possible use of every globe at all periods of its history—during its stages of preparation and decay, as well as in the time of its greatest activity. Several streams of evolution are usually flowing through a planet at any given time, and there is no part of its existence during which it is not a fit channel for one or more of these.

As to the nebular hypothesis, in its broad outline it is undoubtedly correct, and there are systems in which every detail, including even the origin by stellar impact, has been carried out exactly as modern science supposes. But the cosmic builders are not limited to one method, and though our own solar system commenced its existence in the form of a nebula, that nebula was not originated by collision. Its builder first set up a centre of what we must call inconceivably intense electric action—action not only upon the lower planes, in connection with which alone we know something of electricity, but upon all the higher ones as well. This produced a correspondingly intense electric field, the diameter of which was considerably greater than that of the orbit of Neptune. It must be borne in mind that though this is formed in what appears to us to be empty space, it is in reality in an absolutely solid block of etheric matter; and this intense action of that higher form of electricity transforms the whole of this vast sphere into a kind of vortex into which more and more of this etheric matter may be drawn, until, when sufficient condensation is secured, a shock of a different character causes this to change into a mass of glowing gas at a temperature of which it is impossible to have any conception. Thus, though by a different method, we arrive at the glowing revolving nebula which science postulates, and from this point the development of the globes follows the plan as ordinarily understood. This of course refers only to the matter of the physical globes; the majority of the worlds of any system are those on the astral and devachanic planes, and naturally the physical condition of the system

does not in any way affect the life upon them, so that the stages of evolution of many chains have made considerable before the glowing mass of physical matter is ready to be into even the most rudimentary worlds. The number and of the globes is, as before stated, part of the original plan, breaking up of the revolving nebula into rings is regulated ing to the requirements of the case. Such a ring of physica not yet aggregated into a single globe may be seen in called the asteroids. When a physical world is required locality, a minor vortex ring will be set up which will abs after another of those smaller bodies as they cross its orbit, generated by the numerous collisions welding the whole i nebulous planet. The earth and the moon were formed i the same way, though the latter was brought into objecti fitted for habitation before the former. The matter composi was originally one ring, first of nebulous and then of meteoric When the moon was required only so much of this ring was c in its vortex as was needed for it, the material of the futu still remaining distributed round the orbital ring.

C. V

13. *Is it not possible that at the close of our Manvantara t be some souls who have not attained to self-consciousness? If becomes of them?*

Every soul must have reached some degree of self-co ness, for self-consciousness, the recognition of the I, is the c of individualization. When we speak of an individual or a mean an entity that recognizes itself as "I." But the degree may be very small, and the "I" may still be identified wit other of the vehicles instead of with the true self. Such s pass into a state of rest and happiness, suitable to the stage lution which they have reached, and when, in a new Man some of the humanity of a fitting globe have reached th that these souls had previously attained, they will incarnate them, and continue the regular course of evolution.

14. *When we are told in* The Voice of the Silence *that so long as the soul feels either pain or pleasure it cannot begin to tread the Path, does it mean that the soul must lose its love of beauty? Is the joy that one feels in seeing, say, a snow-covered mountain, an illusion and something to be got rid of?*

Most certainly not. The soul must rise above both pleasure and pain in the ordinary sense of the words; that is to say, neither must have power to shake its resolution or to turn it aside from the straight way to its goal. Of course also it must have risen above the attachment to earth which would cause it to find either pleasure or pain in the mere trivial matters that engage the attention of the ordinary crowd, the things that please or pain Kâma. But the love of beauty is a far higher thing; it is an emotion into which a mânasic element enters, and which finds far fuller satisfaction on the devachanic plane than on the physical. The animal—except possibly as a constituent of sex-attraction—does not enjoy beautiful sights or sounds; delight in the colours of a sunset sky, in an exquisite landscape, in a range of snowy mountains, in harmoniously linked sounds—this is a human attribute, and is dependent on the development of Manas; it is therefore to be encouraged and trained. It is an illusion only as all manifestation is illusionary, but it is a manifestation of that which transcends all beautiful things, and is beauty in the self. Beauty of form, however, must not be so loved and sought that, say, a repulsive exterior in a human being should blind us to moral and mental beauty, or a fair form veil from us moral and mental ugliness. The vision should pierce through form to the life it conceals; it should not allow form to *hide* life, and so be deceived by appearance.

A. B.

LETTERS TO A CATHOLIC PRIEST.—NO. I.

My dear Friend,

We have so long and so freely communicated our ideas and wishes one to the other, that when you ask me to tell you why I cannot join you in your new venture, I feel that you are entitled to an answer.

There cannot, to my mind, be a nobler ideal of working for humanity than to do as you propose—to settle down actually in the very heart of the London poverty, and to try to deal with it, not as condescending to it from your height of "respectability," but living as far as possible as one of the poor themselves, to see what can be done to awaken in their minds the self-respect which is the main thing wanting, and without which neither education nor religion can do much for them. It is here, as you rightly discern, that the misery of the East End lies—not in the mere poverty and suffering, for which, in itself, I care as little as you. There are and always have been plenty of people in the world who keep body and soul together on less than the average yearly income of a dweller in the London slums, and keep their self-respect notwithstanding; and as far as regards mere squalor and dirt, the Polish and German Jews who fill the streets of Spitalfields have mostly come from dens to which Flower and Dean Street and the like—well cleansed, well drained, well lighted and well policed—are Paradise itself. The real horror of the London streets is that the poor souls who fill them at nights are the actual and the most truly characteristic product of our boasted nineteenth century civilization—that the wretched women who, finding it impossible to sell the work of their hands for mere bread to eat, have learnt, as a matter of course, to sell themselves for it and to drink to forget their shame—and the drink-sodden brutal men about them, at a stage of degradation even below theirs, are all simply the natural, inevitable outcome of generations of that

"struggle for life" which is all society has found for them. It is a hard saying, but a true one, that it is we ourselves who have made them and are responsible for them. All honour then to those who recognize their responsibility, and make honest efforts to undo their work, and to restore to their poor brothers and sisters that "image of God" which has been so cruelly trodden out of them by the hoofs of those who have recklessly ridden over them to wealth and power.

But how to set about this? Forty years ago, which is about the time when what you are undertaking first took shape in my mind as a dream of my own life's work, no one could have conceived any answer but one. We were to "preach the gospel" to the poor. Why did not I go and do it then—why don't I come with you to do it now? My answer will of course be unpleasing to your mind, but I have so much confidence in your toleration of views which you do not share that I venture to present it, only wishing to remind you at the outset that these things are matters of natural temperament more than of logic. Some who read it may feel it answer to their own needs. As so often said in the gospels—he that *can* receive it, let him receive it. To those who cannot I must be content that it should remain, if needs be, a foolishness.

My natural temperament showed itself early as somewhat different from the ordinary one. When quite a small child I was instructed in Watts's hymns, as the manner then was. I learnt "to thank the wisdom and the grace"—amongst other things—"that I had food whilst others starve, or beg from door to door." And I recall quite distinctly that even then there seemed to me to be something wrong about this. I *was* thankful to have food, but somehow it did not seem to enhance the enjoyment to reflect that others were starving. Nor have I ever learnt this; "to stand on a rock and see others drown" has never been a pleasure to me, and never can be. But this is, and must be, the Christian attitude. Dante puts it sharply and clearly, as he does everything. When Beatrice descends to hell to fetch Virgil for the rescue of her lover, he asks her how it is she is not afraid to come there, and she answers, "I am so made, thank God, that your misery does not touch me." Well, for my part, I am *not* so made, thank God! In these few words lies the key to our differences. In the midst of the

sorrow, pain and sin around me I have ever felt that even Christianity could not give me the right word to say. As I grew up, and became a student for the Dissenting ministry, I found my fellows in the presence of trouble repeating the regular topics of consolation—that all was for the best—that we must submit to the will of God—that we should see it was all right in heaven, and so forth. This done, they went away feeling they had said all that was necessary, satisfied equally with their faith and with themselves. But I could not. I always felt that in saying such things I was mocking the sufferer with words—words only; and even when the words *did* console, as words do with most people, I myself was unsatisfied—unhappy. It was the same in my own interior life—the pain of my failure to attain was aggravated to an inconceivable extent by the instinctive feeling that the end set before us was also a matter of words only, and that even if attained, it was not the perfection I really wanted. There was always within me a dim vague idea of something, I knew not what, above and beyond the highest Christian virtue. One aspect of this trouble is well put in words which I take from Richard Jefferies:—

"The ideal of nature (he says) requires of us something *beyond* good. The conception of moral good does not satisfy one. Pure unselfishness is the best we know. But how unsatisfactory! Even the saving of life is a little thing compared with what the heart would like to do. The works called good are dry and jejune—soon consummated, often of questionable value, and leaving behind them a sense of vacuity. You give a sum of money to a good object and walk away; but it does not satisfy the craving of the heart. You deny yourself pleasure to sit by the bedside of an invalid—a good deed; but when it is done there remains an emptiness of soul. It is not enough; it is casuistry to say that it is. I often think the reason the world is so cold and selfish is because it has never yet been shown how to be anything else. It listens to the prophets of humanity; and it sees much real benevolence actually carried out. But the result is infinitesimal. Nothing comes of it; it does not satisfy the individual heart. The world at large continues untouched and indifferent—first, because its common sense is not convinced, and secondly, because its secret aspirations are in no degree satisfied. If any real spiritual or ideal good were proffered,

crowds would rush to participate in it. Nothing has as yet been given but empty words. These so-called 'goods' have proved as tasteless, and as much Dead Sea apples, as the apples of vice; perhaps even more bitter than the regrets of vice." And, passing from exterior works to the prayers and meditations which should lift one higher, there must be many besides myself who can say with St. Martin, "As for me, I feel that something is still wanting to fill the boundless desires which devour me. The prayers and truths which are given and taught us here below are too little for us—they are prayers and truths of time only; we feel we are made for something better—for eternity!"

And if, leaving the interior life, we turn to the world around us and watch its movements, the case is still the same. No one can keep his eyes on it for long without feeling assured that it *does* move, and this by fixed laws. But if he is not, as so many are, blinded by his preconceived ideas, he will soon feel equally assured of another thing—that the law by which the universe is guided has absolutely no relation whatever to the teachings of the Christian religion. We laugh at the quaint Chauvinism of Artemus Ward when he tells us that "the world revolves round its axle-tree once in every twenty-four hours, subject only to the Constitution of the United States;" but the attempt to subject its revolutions to biblical theology would be equally amusing were it not tragedy so prolonged and so terrible. This is indeed practically admitted by all ranks of religionists; from the Catholic priest to the Salvation Army "lieutenant," all will tell you that "the world lieth in wickedness"—is ruled not by God but by the devil—and that the only chance of doing any good, of "saving souls," is to set yourself, strong in your convictions, right across the line of its movements, in the hope that the "grace of God" will give you strength to stop and turn back the resistless course of cosmic evolution!

This, and no less, is what you and your companions are proposing to yourselves to do. I will not press you with the evident impossibility of it—an impossibility of which no Mrs. Partington's broom against the Atlantic can be so much as a figure. The idea is only conceivable to one shut up within the narrow limits of his creed—his devout congregation—nay, the very four walls of his church or chapel. Come out into the world of which we speak,

leave your surroundings and go up and down the streets of Paris or Berlin, *feel* the great life around you, the breath and depth of its currents, watch the direction of their slow but irresistible march; and then think, if you can, of setting words out of an old book against it! How well do not I remember the almost physical cold, clammy terror which grew upon me day by day, in such circumstances, as for the first time I realized to myself how miserably small and inadequate for any such purpose was the religion in which I had been so confident and of which I had been so proud; as I perceived with what utter unconsciousness of it the great wheels moved on their round—mysterious, unhasting, unresting, as the stars in heaven. The Great Life of which we all form part is no more actuated by hatred of God than by love to Him; resist, struggle against the conviction as we may, the fact remains undeniable, that of all which we think *should* be, of all the hopes, desires, feelings, which make up what we have considered our religion, our spiritual life and our expectations for the hereafter, the powers which actually *do* rule the great world simply know nothing and care less.

Now I have always been used to require from my religion not only a hope for the future, but an intelligible explanation of my present life. As is recognized on the first page of every catechism, we have a right to know why and how we came into the world, what is our business in it, and what will come of it all. Hence to me this great fact of which I speak, once completely realized, is of itself and alone sufficient to condemn Christianity. Whatever the real purpose of our existence may be (and of this we will speak further on), one thing at least is even now clear, that the Christian statement that we are made "to know and love God and be happy with Him hereafter" is but a small portion of the truth, if even it be so much as that. However beautiful the sentiment may be, we must answer that the world is clearly *not* made for that purpose.

But as I have said, I do not press this upon you. You are a theologian, and can say, in case of need, "Credo *quia* impossibile," or in scripture phrase, "What is impossible with man is possible with God." Your religion, if it has no answer to the questions of its troublesome babies, has at least what in human households often takes its place—a plentiful supply of sleeping draughts to make them

forget them. You yourself in your heart of hearts must know that you and your fellows will, after all your laborious and unselfish efforts, pass from the scene leaving the world as you found it, still moving on its own way, not yours: and you will comfort yourself, as I have so long tried to comfort myself, with kaleidoscopic arrangements of the old phrases—the will of God—our unworthiness of His assistance—our sins against Him—and so forth; and finally, if all this is insufficient, you will put yourself and your troubles to sleep like a child with the time-honoured Daffy's elixir that "we shall see it was all for the best hereafter!" And so you will drift off into a hereafter in all probability as unlike your expectations as this life has been unlike your teachings.

Do I seem to speak hardly—harshly? If so, you will quickly recognize that the harsh feeling is not against you, whom I love and reverence, but in truth against myself. When I look back from where I stand now over the wasted years which I have spent trying to drug myself in this very way into unconsciousness of the actual facts of the world around me and my duties towards it—partly, it may be, from vulgar fear of hell, but mostly (I am certain of it) lest I should break that lovely dream (felt all the time more or less distinctly to be but a dream) of the "love of God," which was the sole hope or enjoyment I had, having nothing then to take its place—looking back thus I do feel indignant and ashamed. Talk of "saving my soul," I was taking the only possible way to ruin—to destroy it; trying to hold back its evolution, and keep, like any other idiot, the child's mind in the man's body! Nor is it in any way my own merit that I am at length awakened from my dream to nobler aspirations. There are amongst us those who, ages ago, were men like ourselves, but who have passed forwards to heights of knowledge and benevolence for which we have no measure; who remain in the world solely for the unselfish purpose of using their wisdom and their powers to help onward those of us who yet lag behind. The world disbelieves their existence—and naturally. Its whole scheme of life would be entirely overthrown if it were forced to admit any spiritual height beyond the sidesman of a fashionable church, or the deacon of a rich Dissenting chapel. But with you and me, who have lived so long in familiar intercourse, as one may say, with the saints of all ages, the case is different. I cannot give *you* proofs which would satisfy the

world, which knows nothing beyond the contents of the five senses; but to you, a fellow-seeker of the Path to the Higher Life, I can answer, with the certainty of not being misunderstood, *I have felt Their power!* And this is, in truth, why I dare no longer to keep the silence I should, for so many reasons, prefer to maintain. The Great Law is inexorable, that he who would receive help for himself must impart to others all he can: the sole claim upon the Masters is that we have already done our best in the service of humanity, and the only possible reward is the power to serve better.

But I must not linger over this point, for there is another which I must energetically press upon you before passing to the details of the questions between us; and I cannot help feeling as if I ought to be able to bring it home to you.

Let me, for the momentary purpose of the argument, assume the truth of the whole view of the world which a Christian takes. Let us do our best to realize all that this involves as to the character and the powers of the assumed Creator of the universe. Putting aside, as far as possible, all prepossessions either one way or the other, let us do this as a matter of pure metaphysics, not allowing any thought of consequences to interfere with our judgment; as we might discuss the history of what some writers have called Pre-Adamite Man. It is not an easy task thus to open our eyes and bid them tell us simply what they actually do see, disregarding everything we wish or expect or think they *ought* to see; many, perhaps most, men die without ever having done so; without having ever removed the coloured spectacles which they have been taught they must always wear lest the sun should blind them. But let us try what the pure, white light can show us; and then, when that is done, I will ask this one question: Is this Christian view in truth what it professes to be—a manifestation of the wisdom, power and goodness of the Creator—of His love for the souls of mankind? For many years I myself have taught this as an undoubted truth—was I right or wrong? Or, to put it in other words—the misery and *apparent* failure of the world is a positive fact; is it true that Christianity can show, as it claims to be able to do, that the world is better, not worse for it?

I will pass over, for the moment, the initial difficulties which beset the work of "creation." We will put by for future enquiry

such points as how it came about that—once and no more—the Unchangeable came to wish to "create"; where the Immeasurable found a place wherein to set His "creation" outside Himself; whence the Infinite produced the matter to form it, which did not form part of Himself; how the one Life brought forth *dead* matter, needing to have the life breathed into it from outside; how a soul could be framed which was no portion of the Universal Soul which framed it; and many another impossibility which the empty word "mystery" is day by day losing its old power to cover from men's awakened thought.

I will give you your almighty, all-loving, all-wise Creator and His creation as we find it. Let us not lose ourselves in generalities, but take a case, as the lawyers say. Thanks to the model lodging-house builder, the cleanliness enforced by the sanitary inspector and the education of the board-school the East End of London does not now show to a casual passer-by the exact stage of wretchedness I have in my mind, though by this time *you* must begin to know where to find it easily enough. But go back, say thirty or forty years ago, and try to recall the horrible filth and squalor of the slums then. Think how, if you were forced to pass through them, you had carefully to avoid touching the foul walls, and pick your way along the fouler pavements; how gladly you would have avoided seeing, and still more hearing, the fearful creatures, of all ages and both sexes, who crowded the narrow lanes, as far beneath the beasts around them as they should have been above; and how thankful you were if you at last emerged without having suffered actual violence or robbery. Then, with this horror in your mind, think of one of those wretched gutter children you would have seen then, base-born, starved, diseased, knowing nothing of life but curses and blows, parental care meaning to it only curses more frequent and beating more cruel; the sins of generation after generation seething within what we must call its mind—familiar with all possible depth of human bestiality by sight and hearing even before it is old enough to share in it. Think of the life stretching out before it—one horrible day of sin and shame and helpless suffering succeeding another, ended at last by a death very likely more shameful and more cruel, if it were possible, than the life—and then tell me how your Christianity proposes to show that *this*, too, is "all for the best!"

Let us see what it has to say. We are told that the almighty, all-wise God makes a human soul fresh, pure, and spotless—the one thing in all the boundless universe which, as we are told, He loves and which He desires to have with Him for ever in heaven, after its life on earth has taught it "by the means of evil, that good is best." Next, He looks round for a body in which it may learn its lesson, and, with perfect knowledge and full consideration of all the circumstances, this all-wise, all-loving Creator drops it into this miserable babe of which I have spoken, and says to it (in effect):

"Out of these surroundings, with such a physical and mental organization, learn to know and love Me, or be damned for ever! True, every sight and hearing about you all your life will be, must be, sin; but if ever you commit it yourself, one sin, one sin only, be damned for ever! True, never from the first breath you draw to your last, will anything suggest to your mind that there is such a thing as a God above the blinding whirl of misery in which you are caught and held; never mind, if you *don't* learn to know Me, be damned for ever! True, the suggestion that this God loves you, that He has power to do what He pleases, and yet leaves you such as you are and He has made you, would seem to you, if you could understand it, a more awful blasphemy than ever atheist was burned at the stake for—never mind; love Me, or be damned for ever!"

Pardon me, my friend; in the heat of argument I have misrepresented your case—I have dared to say that you believe that God *loves* this soul He has made and thus housed. I was forgetting my theology. Upon this innocent, unhappy soul is to be laid another burden worse than the disease, the cold and hunger—all the misery of its physical state, worse than the foul, sodden degradation of the mental organ it is forced to use. From the moment of its birth (He only knows why) God *hates* it! or as you put it, it is born under the wrath of God. There is no more dream of love for it in heaven than on earth!

And *this* is the first word of the "gospel"—the "glad tidings of the grace of God!" Let us pause here, and take breath—we need it.

In the meantime let me take the opportunity to ask you: Do you really seriously mean to tell me that the occurrence of certain

words so interpreted in a book said to have been originally written nearly two thousand years ago, but confessedly much altered since, is revelation enough to make you believe all this, and the more which remains to come? If you and I had not been brought up from our infancy to base our whole view of life and religion on this foundation without enquiry or consideration, do you think twenty bibles could have induced us to accept it? Of course, I know well enough the various ways in which theologians try to cover up the weak points with a cloud of words. My interest in your reply will be chiefly to see which of them your native honesty and clear head will permit you to think of using to *me!* The matter of tradition is a later question—so far we are on the ground of general Christianity—Catholic and Protestant alike, and I should be glad to keep the discussion there, as long as we can, for the sake of others.

With best wishes for your success, believe me,

Yours very affectionately,

ARTHUR A. WELLS.

THE BARON'S ROOM.

"It's very mean of you, Mr. Digby," said Miss Van Renslaar, of New York. "I want to learn all about your institutions, and you refuse me an introduction to your family ghost."

"Miss Van Renslaar," replied her host, "ask me anything else, and it's yours."

"You won't?"

"I'm sorry to use such a phrase to a lady. No—I won't."

It was Christmas Eve, and a small party of people were seated in the smoking-room of Hensham House. Now Hensham House was built in the sixteenth century, and, like all properly constituted country houses, it owned a haunted room, in which Miss Van Renslaar desired to spend the night. Her host being obdurate, she turned to her hostess.

"Won't you persuade him, Mrs. Digby?"

"I'm afraid I must join forces with him, dear. Of course there's nothing in the story; but after Mrs. Lesley was found fainting in that room when her maid went to call her, we've never put anyone there."

Miss Van Renslaar heaved a sigh; then she brought her palms together with a joyful clap, and spoke.

"Here's Colonel Vansittart," she cried. "He's a British soldier, and a V.C. You'll let him sleep in your haunted room, Mr. Digby, and tell us what he sees there?"

Digby laughed.

"Certainly," he said, "Vansittart shall sleep there if he wants to do so. I'm not afraid that he'll see the ghost."

"There!" cried Miss Van Renslaar, "you hear that, Colonel Vansittart. You'll sleep there to-night, won't you?"

Colonel Vansittart knocked the ash from his cigar, and made the following surprising answer:

"I'm sorry to refuse you, Miss Van Renslaar."

"You won't sleep in that room? Well! You're not afraid of the ghost?"

Colonel Vansittart glanced round the circle, and answered deliberately, "I think I am, Miss Van Renslaar."

The listeners laughed. Then, as the speaker's face remained perfectly serious, they glanced at each other, and were silent. Vansittart was a tough, bronzed soldier, aged between forty and fifty, and had seen many phases of life in most of the countries of the globe.

"You don't really believe there are such things as ghosts, Colonel Vansittart?" said Mrs. Digby.

Colonel Vansittart smiled. He did not speak immediately, and she repeated her question.

"I don't know," answered her guest slowly; "I don't say that I believe in ghosts. I say that I once spent the night in a haunted room, and no power on earth could make me sleep in another room with the same reputation."

"Why not?"

Vansittart paused; then he said slowly and gravely, "Because, though I've seen my share of horrors, I never saw anything that could compare with what I beheld there, and I don't want to see it again."

"It's Christmas Eve," said Mrs. Digby, "a good hour for ghost stories. Tell us what you saw."

Vansittart seemed to be a little averse to complying. A chorus of entreaty arose. He reflected for a few moments, and finally began, speaking slowly, and staring into the fire:

"It was in the autumn of 18—. I had been staying in Paris, and was about to return to England, when I met an acquaintance, Stanley by name. We were at Harrow together; I had not seen him since our school-days, when he used to be a queer silent fellow, rather impressionable and not over strong. He was rich and had never settled down to any occupation; he seemed to be inclined to moon about through life, just as he used to moon at school. We fraternized, as the stiffest Englishmen do when they meet abroad; he told me he was on his way to Touraine to see some property—vineyards and a wine manufactory, I believe—which he thought of buying from their

owner, the widow of an Englishman. He suggested that I should accompany him, partly because Touraine is one of the most interesting districts in France from the antiquarian's point of view; partly because I had recently returned from California and knew something of vine-growing. I consented, having nothing particular to do, and we started for Touraine together. The village whither we were bound was not far from Vouvray, and we arrived there on the morning of a November day. We put up at the inn, and Stanley went to call upon the would-be vendor of the vineyards. He was asked to dine with the family that night, and he accepted. Having done his business he returned to me, and we went for a stroll. Outside the village we came upon a quaint, picturesque old house, which was evidently uninhabited. We entered the grounds and were engaged in exploring them, when a voice behind us inquired politely whether we had come with a view of taking the house, which was to let. We turned and saw an old man who was obviously a gardener or caretaker. We explained matters to him and inquired who was the owner of the house.

"'Monsieur le Baron De ———,' he said. 'But Monsieur le Baron did not live there; he had never occupied the house since he had succeeded to the property; Madame la Baronne did not like the place.'

"'That is strange,' I remarked, wishing to find something to say, 'the house being charmingly situated.'

"The old man pursed up his lips and shook his head mysteriously. 'Perhaps,' said he, 'it is not so strange as monsieur thinks; a former Baron De ——— died there, in that room'—he pointed to a window on the first floor. 'He died by his own hand, monsieur, and though the good father has blessed the place, it is in vain. The room is frightful, monsieur. Ah! it is terrible.'

"'Haunted!' cried Stanley. 'Isn't it incredible how these beliefs persist? A fine old house empty, and all because of a childish superstition.'

"He spoke in English, and then addressing the man he asked for the story.

"The old fellow was by no means loth to talk. The house, he said, was very old, and, as we could see, an exceedingly fine one. The old Baron, who had been a notoriously evil liver, had committed suicide by cutting his throat. This had occurred some two hundred

years ago, but since that time the house—or rather, that particular room—had been uninhabitable. Four persons, in his memory, had watched therein; one of these had died in raging delirium; one was found dead in the room from apoplexy; another was now in a madhouse in Tours; the fourth had been found to have followed the evil example of the Baron, and taken his own life by cutting his throat with a knife from some Indian trophies on the wall. Connected with this last case there had been one circumstance which was inexplicable. The knife with which the deed was done was found lying at a considerable distance from the corpse, which was stretched on a couch at one end of the room—the face slightly distorted, the limbs apparently composed with care.

"Despite the elaborate evidence with which our informant supported his tale, we were of course disposed to laugh at the whole affair. Stanley was especially amused; and it was he who proposed that we should spend the night in the haunted room. He had always, he told me, taken a great interest in these manifestations of human credulity. I was not myself particularly attracted in that direction, but still I was prepared to fall in with the project, for the joke of the thing.

"The old man appeared to be genuinely terrified by our suggestion. At first he refused altogether to permit the experiment, and it was only when, after repeated solicitations, Stanley offered him a substantial bribe, that he very reluctantly yielded, declaring even then that our blood was upon our own heads, and that he absolutely washed his hands of the consequences. We left him crossing himself and praying to the saints, and returned to the inn. Stanley went to dine with the widow and the son of the late proprietor of the vineyard and wine manufactory, while I dined alone at the inn, wrote a couple of letters, and then went out to call for Stanley, as we had arranged.

"The widow's house was on the way to the haunted château, and as I approached it I saw Stanley waiting for me outside the gate. He was standing quite still, and as the moonlight shone on his face it seemed to me that he was unusually pale, and that his eyes looked strange and glassy.

"'There you are!' I said. 'Are you ready to tackle Monsieur le Baron?'

"'Yes,' he said, after a slight pause, 'I am ready.'

"His voice also seemed strange, I thought; it sounded muffled and hollow. I glanced at him, and could not help feeling slightly uncomfortable. Why had he grown so suddenly nervous—so much less confident than before?

"I whistled gently as we walked; he was silent, and his face seemed to grow more and more wild and startled. Sometimes he walked level with me, sometimes in advance, but he never lagged behind. Gradually as we went on I too became uncomfortably nervous; the sense of some horrible presence forced itself upon me; it was folly, and yet it was a feeling which it was impossible to shake off. I was conscious of an intense physical exhaustion such as I had never before experienced; it felt as though some unseen power were making a frightful demand upon my vitality.

"At last we reached the château, and were there met by the old man, who began to entreat us even now at the eleventh hour to abandon our enterprise.

"I should have wavered, but Stanley, throwing off his depression, insisted with a somewhat ghastly hilarity upon entering the house. Realizing presently that all his protests were useless, the old man at last relapsed into mournful silence and reluctantly conducted us to the haunted room, which we found to be large, solidly furnished, and hung with tapestry, which swayed and bulged out horribly with the draught—for it was a windy night—as though pressed by some hidden or spectral form.

"The room was fairly well lighted, but the corners were shadowy, and there were suits of armour in them; and again and again the gruesome idea thrust itself upon my imagination that the closed vizors of the helmets might be hiding grinning skeleton heads or livid, dead faces. There were chairs, a table, a couch, a cabinet of china; and the Indian knives and trophies of which we had heard were suspended on the wall. The wall at the end of the room was almost covered by a huge, dusty mirror, and facing this mirror was the chair in which the Baron had died—in which it was said that he still appeared nightly to repeat his awful act.

"The old man left us. I locked the door, examined the room and lit another candle.

"'Now, then,' I said, with an assumption of cheerfulness, 'we're ready for him, eh?'

"'Yes,' said Stanley; but I noticed that he spoke in a strange, mumbling voice, and began to pace to and fro. I really began to fear what might be the effect of fright upon the man's brain and nervous system; although it was only a senseless terror, yet it might have disastrous results.

"'Look here, Stanley,' said I, 'I don't relish this place much myself. If you don't like it either, let us go.'

"He did not answer, but ceased his walk, and stood staring into the mirror, as though he were watching something. It was certainly becoming decidedly ghastly, and my nerves were getting so unstrung that when a mouse squeaked and rushed across the room, I fairly jumped with the fright. I again became conscious of the horror of some dreadful unseen presence, and of that strange and fearful drain upon my physical strength. Unmistakably something in the room was trying to suck my life out of me. With all the strength remaining to me I strove to set my will against that of this invisible yet palpable diabolical presence, and gradually I felt the drain lessen; the effort slackened, and I was able to breathe once more.

"I looked at Stanley, and was overcome with horror at the pinched, drawn expression on his face. His voice was nothing but a low mutter when he spoke in answer to me.

"Suddenly he began to examine the trophies on the wall. He took down one of the knives with a strange, convulsive clutch, and looked earnestly at it. Then it slid from his hand, and fell on the table, and again he began that restless, unnatural tramping to and fro, like a prisoned tiger ever rushing up and down its cage.

"'For mercy's sake, man,' I cried, impatiently, 'sit down, and talk like a rational being.'

"He turned a pallid face and glittering eyes towards me, and continued his walk. Half-past eleven struck—and then the quarter to twelve.

"'The Baron is nearly due,' said I, trying to laugh.

"Stanley laughed too. If you can fancy the laugh of a dead man, galvanized for a moment into a ghastly semblance of life by a devil, you may perhaps be able to form some idea of what his mirth was like. I shuddered in spite of myself, and with the irresistible dread

that was beginning to steal over me, I felt the return of that tremendous drain upon my vitality which I had experienced twice previously. I never felt anything like it before or since, and the sense of overwhelming terror which it brought with it appeared to lessen my powers of resistance. The clock of the château began to toll midnight.

"Stanley made three long strides and sat down in the suicide's chair, close to the table where the knife had fallen. I felt a sickening thrill of horror. I sprang towards him, standing behind the chair, and caught him by the shoulders:

"'Great God! Stanley,' I cried, 'get up! That's the ghost's chair, and the time has come!'

"His hand went out towards the table. A swirl of wind shrieking round the house blew out the tapestry near the mirror, and as I involuntarily looked up,"—here Vansittart's voice grew husky with horror—"'my eyes fell on the mirror, in which I saw the whole room and its furniture reflected. I saw my own reflection, my hands clutching the figure in the chair. I saw what I clutched, and I swear to you that the thing I held was not Stanley. It was a man in the dress of the seventeenth century. It held in its hand the Indian knife which had lain on the table, and was drawing that knife across its horrible severed throat. The face was one I had never seen before, discoloured, ghastly, with fixed dead eyes and a horrible, grinning mouth, that sneered at me with a travesty of mocking, malignant life. The thing sat stiffly in the chair, sawing at its throat, from which the blood was flowing. I had just time to realize the full horror of my position—that I was alone in the house with this monstrous companion; that the friend, upon whom I had depended in undertaking this adventure, had not only left me in the lurch, but had in some inexplicable manner himself changed into this frightful object—before I fell to the ground in a faint.

"When I recovered consciousness I found the old gardener and two younger men beside me. The sun was shining, and the broken door, which had been forced open, lay on the floor. I compelled myself to rise, and cast a horror-stricken glance round. The knife lay on the floor with a red stain on the blade, but other stain there was none, and the horror of last night was there no longer. I began to question the men, who stated that they had found the door locked,

and the windows being too narrow to permit of their making entrance by them, they had forced the door and found me insensible.

"'Where was the other gentleman?' I enquired.

"'The other gentleman was not there,' they replied.

"'The door was locked? Was the key inside?'

"'Yes, the key was inside.'

"Evidently just as I had left it last night. My hair literally rose on my head as I made for the inn. Stanley had not returned, but I found a letter from the son of the lady with whom he had dined. It stated that my friend had been seized with a sudden attack of giddiness and faintness, which had persisted so long that by the doctor's advice he had passed the night beneath their roof. I started at once to the widow's house, and was met by her son, who appeared nervous and excited. He told me that Stanley had been assisted up the stairs with difficulty, and finally, as he seemed to be much better, was left for the night.

"He had been heard to lock his door, and his heavy breathing had been noticed at ten o'clock, when they had gone to rest. This morning they could not make him hear, and they were beginning to get very anxious about him, and indeed were just then considering whether it might not be advisable to break open the door.

"It had been just half-past ten when I met that appearance of Stanley outside the gate, and I already felt intuitively a horrible certainty as to what I should see as I accompanied the young man to the door of the room. It was locked, as he had said, and no reply came to our knocking; so we forced it open. Stanley lay on the bed. He was perfectly still, and the bedclothes were not in any way disarranged.

"His face, the eyes slightly open, was like a mask of yellow wax; all the colour had flowed away from it with that which stained the whiteness of the sheet, and curdled on the parqueted floor. Across the throat was a terrible wound. The young fellow who accompanied me gave a cry of horror and dismay. Presently he began a fruitless search for the weapon that had inflicted the dreadful injury; but I did not join him, for I knew that he would not find it. I knew that it hung with the Indian curiosities on the wall of the Baron's Room." IVY HOOPER.

MAN AND HIS BODIES.

(*Continued from p.* 401.)

I.—The Physical Body.

The Etheric Double.—Modern physical science holds that all bodily changes, whether in the muscles, cells or nerves, are accompanied by electric action, and the same is probably true even of the chemical changes which are continually going on. Ample evidence of this has been accumulated by careful observations with the most delicate galvanometers. Whenever electric action occurs ether must be present, so that the presence of the current is proof of the presence of the ether, which interpenetrates all, surrounds all; no particle of physical matter is in contact with any other particle, but each swings in a field of ether. The Western scientist asserts as a necessary hypothesis that which the trained pupil in Eastern science asserts as a verifiable observation, for as a matter of fact ether is as visible as a chair or a table, only a sight different from the physical is needed to see it. As has already been said, it exists in four modifications, the finest of these consisting of the ultimate physical atoms—not the so-called chemical atom, which is really a complex body—ultimate, because they yield astral matter on disintegration.*

The etheric double is composed of these four ethers, which interpenetrate the solid, liquid and gaseous constituents of the dense body, surrounding every particle with an etheric envelope, and thus presenting a perfect duplicate of the denser form. This etheric double is perfectly visible to the trained sight, and is violet-gray in colour, coarse or fine in its texture as the dense body is coarse or fine. The four ethers enter into it, as solids, liquids and gases enter into the composition of the dense body, but they can be in coarser or finer combinations just as can the denser constituents; it is important to notice that the dense body and its etheric double vary

* See an article on "Occult Chemistry," in LUCIFER, November, 1895.

together as to their quality, so that as the aspirant deliberately and consciously refines his dense body the etheric double follows suit without his consciousness and without any additional effort.*

It is by means of the etheric double that the life-force, Prâna, runs along the nerves of the body and thus enables them to act as the carriers of motor force and of sensitiveness to external impacts. The powers of thought, of movement, and of feeling are not resident in physical or etheric nerve-substance; they are activities of the Ego working in his inner bodies, and the expression of them on the physical plane is rendered possible by the life-breath as it runs along the nerve-threads and round the nerve-cells; for Prâna, the life-breath, is the active energy of the self, as Shrî Shankarâchârya has taught us. The function of the etheric double is to serve as the physical medium for this energy, and hence it is often spoken of in our literature as the "vehicle of Prâna."

It may be useful to note that the etheric double is peculiarly susceptible to the volatile constituents of alcohols.

Phenomena connected with the Physical Body.—When a person "goes to sleep" the Ego slips out of the physical body, and leaves it to slumber and so to recuperate itself for the next day's work. The dense body and its etheric double are thus left to their own devices, and to the play of the influences which they attract to themselves by their constitution and habits. Streams of thought-forms from the astral world of a nature congruous with the thought-forms created or harboured by the Ego in his daily life, pass into

* On looking at a man's lower bodies with astral vision, the etheric double (Linga Sharîra) and the astral body (kâmic body) are seen interpenetrating each other, as both interpenetrate the dense physical, and hence some confusion has arisen in the past, and the names Linga Sharîra and astral body have been used interchangeably, while the latter name has also been used for the kâmic or desire-body. This loose terminology has caused much trouble, as the functions of the kâmic body, termed the astral body, have often been understood as the functions of the etheric double, also termed the astral body, and the student, unable to see for himself, has been hopelessly entangled in apparent contradictions. Careful observations on the formation of these two bodies now enable us to say definitely that the etheric double is composed of the physical ethers only, and cannot, if extruded, leave the physical plane or go far away from its denser counterpart; further, that it is built after the mould given by the Lords of Karma, and is not brought with him by the Ego, but awaits him with the physical body formed upon it. The astral or kâmic body, the desire-body, on the other hand, is composed of astral matter only, is able to range the astral plane when freed from the physical body, and is the proper vehicle of the Ego on that plane; it is brought with him by the Ego when he comes to re-incarnate. Under these circumstances it is better to call the first the etheric double, and the second the astral body, and so avoid confusion.

and out of the dense and etheric brains, and, mingling with the automatic repetitions of vibrations set up in waking consciousness by the Ego, cause the broken and chaotic dreams with which most people are familiar.* These broken images are instructive as showing the working of the physical body when it is left to itself; it can only reproduce fragments of past vibrations without rational order or coherence, fitting them together as they are thrown up, however grotesquely incongruous they may be, insensible to absurdity or irrationality, content with a phantasmagoria of kaleidoscopic shapes and colours, without even the regularity given by the kaleidoscope-mirrors. Looked at in this way, the dense and etheric brains are readily recognized as instruments of thought, not as creators thereof, for we see how very erratic are their creations when they are left to themselves.

In sleep the thinking Ego slips out of these two bodies, or rather this one body with its visible and invisible parts, leaving them together; in death it slips out for the last time, but with this difference, that it draws out the etheric double with it, separating it from its dense counterpart and thus rendering impossible any further play of the life-breath in the latter as an organic whole. The Ego quickly shakes off the etheric double, which, as we have seen, cannot pass on to the astral plane, and leaves it to disintegrate with its lifelong partner. It will sometimes appear immediately after death to friends at no great distance from the corpse, but naturally shows very little consciousness, and will not speak or do anything beyond "manifesting" itself. It is comparatively easily seen, being physical, and a slight tension of the nervous system will render vision sufficiently acute to discern it. It is also responsible for many "churchyard ghosts," as it hovers over the grave in which its physical counterpart is lying, and is more readily visible than astral bodies for the reason just given. Thus even "in death they are not divided" by more than few feet of space.

For the normal man it is only at death that this separation takes place, but some abnormal people of the type called mediumistic are subject to a partial division of the physical body during

* See the articles on "Dreams" in LUCIFER, November and December, 1895 published also as Transaction No. 27 of the London Lodge.

earth-life, a dangerous and fortunately a comparatively rare abnormality which gives rise to much nervous strain and disturbance. When the etheric double is extruded the double itself is rent in twain; the whole of it could not be separated from the dense body without causing the death of the latter, since the currents of the life-breath need its presence for their circulation. Even its partial withdrawal reduces the dense body to a state of lethargy, and the vital activities are almost suspended; extreme exhaustion follows the re-uniting of the severed parts, and the condition of the medium until the normal union is re-established is one of considerable physical danger. The greater number of the phenomena that occur in the presence of mediums are not connected with this extrusion of the etheric double, but some who have been distinguished for the remarkable character of the materializations which they have assisted in producing offer this peculiarity to observation. I am informed that Mr. Eglinton exhibited this curious physical dissociation to a rare extent, and that his etheric double might be seen oozing from his left side, while his dense body shrivelled perceptibly; and that the same phenomenon has been observed with Mr. Husk, whose dense body became too reduced to fill out his clothes. Mr. Eglinton's body once was so diminished in size that a materialized form carried it out and presented it for the inspection of the sitters—one of the few cases in which both medium and materialized form have been visible together in light sufficient to allow of examination. This shrinkage of the medium seems to imply the removal of some of the denser "ponderable" matter from the body—very possibly part of the liquid constituents—but, so far as I am aware, no observations have been made on this point, and it is therefore impossible to speak with any certainty. What is certain is that this partial extrusion of the etheric double results in much nervous trouble, and that it should not be practised by any sensible person if he finds that he is unfortunate enough to be liable to it.

We have now studied the physical body both in its dense and etheric parts, the vesture which the Ego must wear for his work on the physical plane, the dwelling which may be either his convenient office for physical work, or his prison-house of which death alone holds the key. We can see what we ought to

have and what we can gradually make—a body perfectly healthy and strong, and at the same time delicately organized, refined, and sensitive. Healthy it should be—and in the East health is insisted on as a condition of discipleship—for everything that is unhealthy in the body mars it as an instrument of the Ego, and is apt to distort both the impressions sent inwards and the impulses sent outwards. The activities of the Ego are hindered if his instrument be strained or twisted by ill-health. Healthy, then, delicately organized, refined, sensitive, repelling automatically all evil influences, automatically receptive of all good,—such a body we should deliberately build, choosing among all the things that surround us those that conduce to that end, knowing that the task can be accomplished only gradually, but working on patiently and steadily with that object in view. We shall know when we are beginning to succeed even to a very limited extent, for we shall find opening up in us all kinds of powers of perception that we did not before possess. We shall find ourselves becoming more sensitive to sounds and sights, to fuller, softer, richer harmonies, to tenderer, fairer, lovelier hues. Just as the painter trains his eye to see delicacies of colour to which common eyes are blind; just as the musician trains his ear to hear overtones of notes to which common ears are deaf; so may we train our bodies to be receptive to the finer vibrations of life missed by ordinary men. True, many unpleasant sensations will come, for the world we are living in is rendered rough and coarse by the humanity that dwells in it; but on the other hand, beauties will reveal themselves that will repay us a hundredfold for the difficulties we face and overcome. And this, not that we may possess such bodies for selfish purposes either of vanity or of enjoyment, but in order that we, the men who own them, may own them for wider usefulness, for added strength to serve. They will be more efficient instruments with which to help the progress of humanity, and so more fit to aid in that task of forwarding human evolution which is the work of our great Masters, and in which it may be our privilege to co-operate.

Although we have been on the physical plane only throughout this part of our subject, we may yet see that the study is not without importance, and that the lowest of the vehicles of consciousness needs our attention and will repay our care. These cities of ours,

this land of ours, will be cleaner, fairer, better, when this knowledge has become common knowledge, and when it is accepted not only as intellectually probable, but as a law of daily life.

II. The Astral Body.

We have studied the physical body of man both as to its visible and invisible parts, and we understand that man—the living, conscious entity—in his "waking" consciousness, living in the physical world, can only show so much of his knowledge and manifest so much of his powers as he is able to express through his physical body. According to the perfection or imperfection of its development will be the perfection or imperfection of his expression on the physical plane; it limits him while he functions in the lower world, forming a veritable ring pass-not around him. That which cannot pass through it cannot manifest on earth, and hence its importance to the developing man. In the same way when the man is functioning without the physical body in another region of the universe, the astral plane or astral world, he is able to express on that plane just so much of his knowledge and his powers, of himself in short, as his astral body enables him to put forth. It is at once his vehicle and his limitation. The man is more than his bodies; he has in him much that he is unable to manifest either on the physical or on the astral plane; but so much as he is able to express may be taken as the man himself in that particular region of the universe. What he can show of himself down here is limited by the physical body: what he can show of himself in the astral world is limited by the astral body; so we shall find as we rise to higher worlds in our study, that more and more of the man is able to express itself as he himself develops in his evolution, and also gradually brings towards perfection higher and higher vehicles of consciousness.

It may be well to remind the reader, as we are entering on fields comparatively untrodden and to the majority unknown, that no claim is here put forward to infallible knowledge or to perfect power of observation. Errors of observation and of inference may be made on planes above the physical as well as on the physical, and this possibility should always be kept in mind. As knowledge increases and training is prolonged, more and more accuracy will be

reached, and such errors will thus gradually be eliminated. But as the writer is only a student, small mistakes are likely to be made and to need correction in the future. They may creep in on matters of detail, but will not touch the general principles nor vitiate the main conclusions.

First, let the meaning of the words astral plane or astral world be clearly grasped. The astral world is a definite region of the universe, surrounding and interpenetrating the physical, but imperceptible to our ordinary observation because it is composed of a different order of matter. If the ultimate physical atom be taken and broken up, it vanishes so far as the physical world is concerned; but it is found to be composed of numerous particles of the grossest kind of astral matter—the solid matter of the astral world.* We have found seven sub-states of physical matter—solid, liquid, gaseous and four etheric—under which are classified the innumerable combinations which make up the physical world. In the same way we have seven sub-states of astral matter, corresponding to the physical, and under these may be classified the innumerable combinations which similarly make up the astral world. All physical atoms have their astral envelopes, the astral matter thus forming what may be called the matrix of the physical, the physical being embedded in the astral. The astral matter serves as the vehicle for Jîva, the One Life animating all, and by means of the astral matter currents of Jîva surround, sustain, nourish every particle of physical matter, these currents of Jîva giving rise not only to what are popularly called vital forces, but also to all electrical, magnetic, chemical and other energies, attraction, cohesion, repulsion, and the like, all of which are differentiations of the One Life in which universes swim as fishes in the sea. From the astral world thus intimately interpenetrating the physical, Jîva passes to the ether of the latter, which becomes thus the vehicle of all these forces to the lower sub-states of physical matter, wherein we observe their play. If we imagine the physical world to be struck out of existence

* The word "astral," starry, is not a very happy one, but it has been used during so many centuries to denote super-physical matter that it would now be difficult to dislodge it. It was probably at first chosen by observers in consequence of the luminous appearance of astral as compared with physical matter. The student is advised to read on this whole subject, Manual No. V., *The Astral Plane*, by C. W. Leadbeater.

without any other change being made, we should still have a perfect replica of it in astral matter, and if we further imagine everyone to be dowered with working astral faculties, men and women would at first be unconscious of any difference in their surroundings; "dead" people who wake up in the lower regions of the astral world often find themselves in such a state and believe themselves to be yet living in the physical world. As most of us have not yet developed astral vision, it is necessary to enforce this relative reality of the astral world as a part of the phenomenal universe, and to see it with the mental eye, if not with the astral. It is as real as—in fact, not being quite so far removed from the One Reality it is more real than—the physical; its phenomena are open to competent observation like those of the physical plane. Just as down here a blind man cannot see physical objects, and as many things can only be observed with the help of apparatus—the microscope, spectroscope, etc.—so is it with the astral plane. Astrally blind people cannot see astral objects at all, and many things escape ordinary astral vision, or clairvoyance. But at the present stage of evolution many people could develop the astral senses and are developing them to some extent, thus enabling themselves to receive the subtler vibrations of the astral plane. Such persons are indeed liable to make many mistakes, as a child makes mistakes when he begins to use his physical senses, but these mistakes are corrected by wider experience, and after a time they can see and hear as accurately on the astral as on the physical plane. It is not desirable to force this development by artificial means, for until some amount of spiritual strength has been evolved the physical world is about as much as can conveniently be managed, and the intrusion of astral sights, sounds, and general phenomena is apt to be disturbing and even alarming. But the time comes when this stage is reached and when the relative reality of the astral part of the invisible world is borne in upon the waking consciousness.

For this it is necessary not only to have an astral body, as we all of us have, but to have it fully organized and in working order, the consciousness being accustomed to act *in it*, not only to act through it on the physical body. Everyone is constantly working through the astral body, but comparatively few work in it separated from the physical. Without the general action through the astral

body there would be no connection between the external world and the mind of man, no connection between impacts made on the physical senses and the perception of them by the mind. The impact becomes a sensation in the astral body, and is then perceived by the mind. The astral body, in which are the centres of sensation, is often spoken of as the astral man, just as we might call the physical body the physical man; but it is of course only a vehicle—a sheath, as the Vedântin would call it—in which the man himself is functioning, and through which he reaches, and is reached by, the grosser vehicle, the physical body.

As to the constitution of the astral body, it is made up of the seven sub-states of astral matter, and may have coarser or finer materials drawn from each of these. It is easy to picture a man in a well-formed astral body; you can think of him as dropping the physical body and standing up in a subtler, more luminous copy of it, visible in his own likeness to clairvoyant vision, though invisible to ordinary sight. I have said "a well-formed astral body," for an undeveloped person in his astral body presents a very inchoate appearance. Its outline is undefined, its materials are dull and ill-arranged, and if withdrawn from the body it is a mere shapeless shifting cloud, obviously unfit to act as an independent vehicle; it is in truth rather a fragment of astral matter than an organized astral body—a mass of astral protoplasm of an amœboid type. A well-formed astral body means that a man has reached a fairly high level of intellectual culture or of spiritual growth, so that the appearance of the astral body is significant of the progress made by its owner; by the definiteness of its outline, the luminosity of its materials, and the perfection of its organization, one may judge of the stage of evolution reached by the Ego using it.

As regards the question of its improvement—a question important to us all—it must be remembered that the improvement of the astral body hinges on the one side on the purification of the physical body, and on the other on the purification and development of the mind. The astral body is peculiarly susceptible to impressions from thought, for astral matter responds more rapidly than physical to every impulse from the world of mind. For instance, if we look at the astral world we find it full of continually changing shapes; we find there "thought-forms"—forms composed

of elemental essence and animated by a thought—and we also notice vast masses of this elemental essence, from which continually shapes emerge and into which they again disappear; watching carefully, we may see that currents of thought thrill this astral matter, that strong thoughts take a covering of it and persist as entities for a long time, while weak thoughts clothe themselves feebly and waver out again, so that all through the astral world changes are ever going on under thought-impulses. The astral body of man, being made of astral matter, shares this readiness to respond to the impact of thought, and thrills in answer to every thought that strikes it, whether the thoughts come from without, from the minds of other men, or come from within, from the mind of its owner.

ANNIE BESANT.

(*To be continued.*)

ON THE BHAGAVAD GÎTÂ.

OF all the scriptures of the Hindus the Gîtâ is perhaps the most widely known. Probably no religion has been split up into so many sects as Hinduism—so much so that it is almost impossible to state concisely what the religion of the Brâhmans really is, for, try as many definitions as we may, we shall find in the end that no one of them is sufficient to cover all the numerous divisions and subdivisions that shelter themselves under the name Hinduism. Yet though each sect has its own particular creed, its particular forms of worship or religious practices, there are two points at least on which they all agree: they all take their stand on the Vedas—though their explanations of them vary more or less—and they all accept the Bhagavad Gîtâ. There is no other book which commands the same deep respect among them all or can sway them equally. In fact, it may be regarded as a kind of viceroy in the religious empire of India, the Vedas being taken as the Emperor. Householders and ascetics, Shâktas and Vaishnavas, Brâhmans and Shûdras all equally bend the knee before this holy representative of the divine ruler—the revealed scriptures.

Nor is it only within the boundary lines of India, among the numerous sects of the Hindu community that the Gîtâ holds its loving sway. Even the mountain-walls of the majestic Himâlayas and the vast entrenchment of the mighty ocean with its rolling waves that break on the three other sides of the holy land of Âryâvarta, could not prevent the overflowing vibrations of this celestial lay from travelling over to foreign countries, to the farthest limits of the earth, to Europe, America, and Australia. Go wherever you may, you will everywhere smell the fragrance of this heavenly flower, though it may be but scantily. Europe sends her missionaries every year all round the world. She is rich, and spends enormous sums of money for the spread of her religion. America,

her daughter, equally rich and energetic, helps her to a large extent in this unhappy propaganda. It is therefore no wonder that her religious book should be translated into almost all the existing languages of the earth, and should thus reach every land, civilized or uncivilized. But what has India? She is exceedingly poor. Her missionaries and religious teachers, the Brâhmans, are but mendicants. She has no steamships and electric telegraphs to carry her messages to other countries. When, therefore, in spite of all these disadvantages, we find that her most popular religious book, the Bhagavad Gîtâ, has been translated into almost all the languages of Europe, and has found its way into every civilized country, we realize that there must indeed be some transcendent merit in these seven hundred verses.

Now, as is only natural, this widespread popularity of the Gîtâ has raised for it as many enemies as friends. Nobody, as a rule, takes much notice of a thing which has little to do with his interests, but when the appearance of a novel object brings him hope and comfort, or on the other hand, threatens to upset his selfish calculations, he comes forward to sing its praises or pronounce on it the verdict of condemnation. It happened exactly thus with the Bhagavad Gîtâ, this marvellous production of the contemplative Brâhman. The impartial hailed it with their whole heart, while the missionaries and others, whose interests lay in the propagation of Christian dogmas and in upholding the alleged superiority of the bible over all other scriptures, attacked it in every possible way. In their eyes it appeared as the production of the devil or as a plagiarism pure and simple—a mere copy of the New Testament. Others base their objections on different grounds. But we need not enter into any discussion as to their validity. Debate and argument have proved to be of little use, for prejudice will not give way, however sound one's reasonings may be. If the Rajas-born egoism of the ignorant missionary finds satisfaction in calling the Gîtâ inferior and posterior to the bible, let us, as Hindus, allow it to do so. Fortunate are we if we can give satisfaction to our fellow-men, even by being the objects of their attack! The only feeling that we have towards them is one of pity for their sad spiritual condition. All we can do is to explain the truth, and declare to the world the real meaning and history of our religion,

trusting to time to cure all diseases of prejudice and error, whether on our part or theirs.

One of their objections, however, may be considered here, for it rests on the very kernel of the Gîtâ, on that which it really is. It has been alleged that the poem represents so closely the life and actions of each individual, even in their minute details, that it cannot be considered as giving an account of a historical event at all. Its Krishna, appealing to every heart with the unrivalled instruction which he gives, surely cannot be anything but the divine nature in man; while Arjuna is another name for the struggling soul on the battle-field of life. Thus these ingenious critics have reduced the whole story into an allegory, a phantom of the poet's imagination. But the explanation of this close resemblance of the Gîtâ story to the daily life of man, of its wonderful representation of human nature, is not to be found in allegory. It lies far deeper in the mysterious recesses of Nature, and depends on the great fact that whatever is true of the universe is also true of an atom, for the same law rules them both, and in the same way we find the history of a nation reproduced in the daily life of its individual members, and in their every movement. What is an individual after all but the tiny reflection of the eternal sun of humanity, and what are the events of his life but the dim shadows of great epochs in the vaster life of a nation? The plain of Kurukshetra is only a magnified picture of the battle-field of life, and it is in this consideration that we find the reason why the Gîtâ presents itself as the picture of the unchanging type of ever-varying humanity photographed through the camera of the poetic imagination. It is not an allegory, but a fact in history, and it is for that very reason that it bears such a striking resemblance to the daily life of individual man, and thus tempts us to take it as a mere creation of some prehistoric romancer.

Now what is this human nature that we find so clearly expressed in the actions of Arjuna? What are the teachings of Krishna that appeal so powerfully to the human heart? What is the Gîtâ? The divine Keshava says to his sorrowful disciple:

"Even the man of knowledge acteth according to his own nature; beings follow nature; what shall restraint avail?

"Affection and aversion for the objects of sense abide in the

senses; let none come under the dominion of these two; they are the impediments in his way." (Chap. iii. 33, 34.)

"Abandoning mentally all works in me thy chief good, take shelter in Buddhiyoga and have thy thought ever on me." (Chap. xviii. 57.)

If we look round the world we shall find men of many and various types. Among them will be some to whom nature has given a disposition which is particularly suitable for calm and quiet, intellectual and spiritual work. The range that this class covers is very wide, for we find in it the highly developed spiritual man, the ordinary teacher of philosophy, science, law, and literature, the true and pure politician, and so on, all varying in degree in their possession of the higher qualities mingled in different proportions with the lower ones, varying also in their capacity for abstract thought. This class of people may be called the brain of society in its several functions. There are others whose very nature is to them as a trumpet-call to constant warfare and struggle, to various actions which require especially such qualities as bravery, strength, revengefulness and the like, blended with more or less of intellect. These represent the limited class of military men. On further inquiry we find a third class of men who are specially fitted for work which calls forth activity of the body and mind, but in a comparatively calm and quiet manner. We find in their nature the cunning of the fox rather than the kingly courage of the lion, which we saw residing in the hearts of the previous class. They form what we may broadly call the mercantile portion of the community. These two classes, the second and the third, are only occasionally capable of fixing their mind on things transcending the physical side of our nature; they live in the concrete. The concrete, indeed, is an absolute necessity to their consciousness; and their individuality is like a straw, devoid of any conscious connection with the whole, simply drifting on the mighty current of the vast ocean of humanity. Besides these there is yet another portion of society, of which the members are capable of doing but little work unless they are directed by others. Their intellect is dull and they understand the world around them so little that to them many things seem almost the opposite of what they really are. These can be identified with what is known as the working-class, —the least developed section of society.

This broad division into classes, called by the Hindus respectively the Brâhmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shûdras, may be noticed in any society, whether it be in Europe or Asia; and each of them possesses certain prominent characteristics, which the Indian philosophers and sages have named the Sattva, Rajas and Tamas Gunas, or the enlightening, dimming and darkening qualities, respectively. None of these *gunas* is found exclusively in any one class, for they cannot be separated one from the other: and it is only the prominence of one of them over the others that determines a man's position as a Brâhman or a Kshatriya, a Vaishya or a Shûdra. In fact it is these three qualities entering into different combinations which form the very being of man, the very foundation of individuality. The prominence of the first qualifies a man for the duties of the Brâhman, the second calls him to the functions of the Kshatriya, while his lot is cast as a Vaishya or a Shûdra by the prominence of the second and the third in different degrees.

No one can disregard these manifold aspects of the human character, for which the Gîtâ so carefully provides. You may reject this particular nomenclature, but you cannot make nature monotonous. Her music will always swell into a vast chorus of thousands of voices, which yet produce unrivalled harmony. Everywhere will be found men of different natures, some who are calm, quiet, contemplative, highly intellectual; others who are restless, leonine; others who are busy in earning money, always thinking of making a comfortable home and leaving a great fortune to their children; while others again are dull and stupid, knowing little even of their own selfish interests, and squandering money, if they have any, in drinking and riotous living. This variety is an unfortunate fact, and we must face it as it is. We may explain it in various ways, finding the reason of its existence in the will of God, tracing it back to what is known as heredity, or ultimately applying the infallible law of Karma—the only theory which affords a satisfactory solution of the question.

Now the Bhagavad Gîtâ, admitting this fact of variety and explaining it by the law of Karma, which we shall examine later on, declares to men, in no uncertain voice, "Each of you has a particular nature of his own from which he cannot escape." Free he may be, if you can call it freedom, but only within the narrow sphere of

the particular tendencies of his body and mind. For this life at least he cannot soar above them, he cannot be what he is not; he cannot be a Brâhman and live in the jungle on the charity of others, fixing his mind on abstract thoughts alone, if he possesses the nature of a Kshatriya like Arjuna. If he tries to do so through "aversion," and out of temporary dismay at the heartrending sights on the Kurukshetra of his life, then death is certain for him. "But if from egoism thou wilt not give ear, thou wilt be destroyed utterly" (Chap. xviii. 58). Nature calls him to his duty—to fight, and he cannot avoid it: "If, taking refuge in egoism, thou thinkest 'I will not fight,' to no purpose is thy determination: nature will constrain thee."

"O son of Kunti, bound by thine own Karma arising from thine own nature, that which from delusion thou desirest not to do, that even involuntarily (and forcibly) thou wilt perform."

Man cannot flee from his nature. Is he then nothing more than a mere slave, a bird in a golden cage, peeping in vain through its bars to the arched vault of the boundless blue sky? Are all his aspirations but dreams of fairyland, all his longings and hankerings after the infinite only mirages on the desert of life never to be realized? Surely not. The Gîtâ brings us hope and comfort. There is a secret gateway through which we all may escape from the prison house of nature, however strongly fortified it may be. True, nature binds us fast to the ever-revolving wheel of births and deaths; but she does so through the very support that we ourselves lend to her. As the machinery remains unmoved unless the steam is admitted, so nature remains unresponsive until our own action sets her forces in motion. So that he who is skilful enough may check her course at any moment he will. It is in his own hand.

But how can that be done except by escaping from her altogether? The Gîtâ answers "By not coming under the dominion of affection and aversion for the objects of sense" and "abandoning mentally all works in him," the supreme good of all. (Chap. iii. 34, and Chap. xviii. 57, quoted above.)

It is thus only that we can get rid of the Samsâra (comings and goings). We are to train and guide our nature as a master, and not to be a slave to it. But in order to do that we must first ascertain what our nature is, otherwise our labours

will be vain—nay, more than that, we shall hinder the progress of our Self (Âtman), and may bring "great destruction" upon ourselves. This we may see even from common experience. In our public schools hundreds of students learn together, but they do not all shine in the same department of knowledge. We find children who are very stupid in mathematics while their genius may display itself very brilliantly in literature. Now if we try to make a mathematician of a boy who has no talent for that branch of science, not only will our labours be in vain but we shall destroy the future career of the boy. Just so is it with a man who does not understand his own nature, his capabilities, and yet will not place himself under the guidance of a Guru (a teacher) who has the insight to see things exactly as they are; such a man simply ruins his prospects by applying his energies now in one department of human activity, now in another, under the spur of the impulse prevalent at the time, like a dry leaf driven hither and thither with every blast of wind. True, it will sometimes happen that thus drifting hither and thither we shall ultimately find our own nature, and thenceforward we shall never deviate from it, since it is the result of our own experience. But we waste time, like a boy who is anxious to learn a certain science but who is unwilling to accept assistance from the professor of that science who may be ready at hand. There are professors of the spiritual science also, always at hand and easy of access, requiring neither fee nor reward; so that if our desire be but earnest enough we may begin at once and so save much time. It is true the Guru does not compel his pupil to do his duty, to remain in the calling natural to him; much less therefore will he cause him to change it. But he will hold before the pupil's eyes his true nature magnified by the magic-lantern of his wisdom, and if the scholar be wise enough he will act up to it, just as the professor of science can only explain the laws of nature, and our acting up to them depending entirely on our prudence and will. The teacher holds before us what is good for us, and says, like Krishna:

"Thus hath wisdom, most secret of all secrets, been declared unto thee by me; having reflected over it fully, then act thou as thou desirest." (Chap. xviii. 63.)

It is here, however, that we find the basis of what we call the

Guru system in India—a system most wise and beneficial, though at the present day degraded in most cases to a very low level.

Thus we are to ascertain our nature first either from our own experience, or from the teachings of a Guru; and this is necessary not only in the West but at the present day even in India. In the West there never was, and in India there is not now, any sharp division of castes in the most philosophical sense of the term. Now with the spread of irreligion there prevails all over the world what is known in India âs "Sankara," that is, the "intermingling of castes," so much dreaded by Arjuna and the divine teacher (Chap. i. 40, 41; Chap. iii. 24). In ancient times when everything was in order and society was guided by divine teachers, it was possible to know without difficulty the tendencies of a child from its very birth. He was born in a Brâhman family because it was so determined by his Karma, and consequently he had the capacities of a Brâhman. But those halcyon days are gone; there are now but few pure Brâhman families, but few belonging to the Kshatriya class. Brâhman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shûdra are now all mixed together, and we find the children of a Shûdra family with the brilliant genius of the Brâhman. It is now therefore absolutely necessary first to ascertain the nature of the child, and then to cultivate it along its own line, and let it have its full play.

"Let it have its full play?" Shall we then let our nature indulge in its passions and emotions unrestrained? Surely not. The Gîtâ says: "Act abandoning mentally all works in me, thy chief good." Nature is passionless and emotionless. But it is our Ahankâra, the egoism, that takes pleasure in the playthings of nature. It is our own egoism that makes us like or dislike our nature and our duties. It is this that exhibits itself now under the form of affection, now of aversion. And the Lord says, "Give up all such ideas of egoism, do not come under the sway of affection or aversion, which involve you in sin."

But we must look upon everything, all our duties, all our property, as belonging to the divine in the same way as our very nature belongs to him. We are but instruments—servants in the field of the Lord, and we should not, therefore, call anything our own.

Let the pupil not grudge that he is a labourer and not a

preacher. The divine does not take into account the stage upon which he acts, but the spirit and the devotion with which he plays his part. For the divine Krishna says:

"By devotion he knoweth me fully, what I am and what my essence; having thus known my essence, he forthwith entereth into me." (Chap. xviii. 55.)

This is the teaching of the Bhagavad Gîtâ, "Worship the Lord with thine action, in thought, word, and deed; then liberation is close at hand. No matter whether thou art born in the highest or the lowest class of the community, there is salvation for thee through the very nature thou possessest, through the very capacities with which thou hast been endowed."

How grand is this teaching; how sublime the thoughts; how sympathetic with human nature! Can we wonder that such teachings should be so popular, should be found consoling by the human heart?

J. C. CHATTOPÂDHYÂYA.

THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITIES.

THE ADYAR CONVENTION.

The Convention of the Indian Section and the Anniversary Meeting of the Society was held at Adyar on December 27th, 28th, 29th and 30th, 1895. There was a large attendance of delegates and members, and the crowds who flocked to hear Mrs. Besant's daily morning lectures did not seem to be in the least diminished by the rain of the last two days of the session. A notable feature of the Convention was the presence of seven Americans representing the states of Michigan, Kentucky, New York and Vermont. The public meeting at Victoria Hall, Madras, on the evening of the 29th, commemorating the Twentieth Anniversary of the Society was crowded to overflowing, notwithstanding the downpour of rain. The President-Founder occupied the chair, and short addresses were made by O. L. Sarma of Southern India, E. S. Grece, an American lawyer, Bertram Keightley, and the chairman. All the addresses were heartily applauded. The chief speaker of the evening was Mrs. Besant, the immense audience giving her a most enthusiastic greeting as she stepped upon the platform. Mrs. Besant held conversaziones twice

daily during the session. The business transactions of the Society went on smoothly. A revision of the European Section Committee's draft of proposed amendments to the Society's rules was referred to a special Committee, and their report unanimously adopted by the Convention.

Mrs. Besant's Indian Tour.

Good news has been received from Mrs. Besant. Her voyage out was pleasant and well occupied with writing, talks to various fellow-passengers on Theosophy, and the usual lectures. She landed at Bombay on December 21st, and was met by Mr. Bertram Keightley and Mr. Upendra Nath Basu, with a crowd of friends and members. They drove to the Society's rooms, holding a meeting at 5 p.m.

In her letter written on arrival at Madras, Mrs. Besant says: "There have been some late and heavy rains, so that the country is very green, and Adyar is exceptionally beautiful. Many clouds are hanging, and the sky looks quite like an English one, though the heat is incongruous with the illusion. The programme for the next few days is full. I lecture on the 27th, 28th, 29th and 30th, the days of the Anniversary meeting and Convention. On these same days we have conversations to which anyone may come from 3.45 to 5.30. Every evening from 7.45 to 9, throughout my stay, there is an evening gathering for questions, restricted to members. Visitors come in for private talks, and the last thing is a little chat on the roof, just with two or three."

One change is noticeable. The missionaries in Madras made no opposition to Mrs. Besant this year, and raised none of their old clamours. It is also to be noted with pleasure that the Press is more friendly. Mrs. Besant writes: "A very good report appeared in the leading English paper, the *Madras Mail*, which is to Southern India what the *Pioneer* is to Northern; the Press is much friendlier this year, and the *Madras Mail* had a very liberal article on 'Hinduism in the West,' referring to the work of Max Müller, Deussen, Vivekananda and myself. The Editor sent it to me and asked me to write on the subject, so I squeezed out time for an article and sent it yesterday. The missionaries have made no attacks this year, either by pamphlets or placards. So as far as the outside public is concerned, we have done better than ever before."

This year Mrs. Besant is going to break new ground; a tour in Scinde has been arranged during March, and the first week in April she starts on her return voyage. On leaving Madras she went direct

to Poona, where meetings for members were held, besides a large public meeting in the Congress pandal to which between 3,000 and 4,000 people came. From there she went direct to Benares, arriving on January 6th, accompanied by various old members who joined her *en route*. The following week was entirely taken up with arrangements for and organization of work at the Benares Headquarters.

European Section.

Mr. Leadbeater at the end of January made a tour round the branches in the North of England, lecturing and holding members' meetings at each branch. The public lectures were well attended,

New lines of activity have been opened up in London by the starting of two series of afternoon meetings, on Mondays and Wednesdays. The first set is conducted by Mr. Mead and Mr. Leadbeater, and the second by Mr. Bertram Keightley, who has recently returned from India. Mr. Mead will give a course of six lectures at the Pioneer Club, 22, Bruton Street, Berkeley Square, W., on "The Lives and Teachings of the Later Platonists." The lectures will be delivered on Friday afternoons, 5.30 to 6.30, beginning February 14th.

The lectures at the Blavatsky Lodge have been of great interest, and the meetings have been well attended. Mr. Scott Elliot's paper, "On Recent Investigations concerning Atlantis," attracted a large audience, the illustrative maps adding to the interest of the subject, and helping considerably in its elucidation.

The other Lodges continue their round of lectures and other activities, but there is no special news to chronicle.

Australasian Section.

Some half-a-dozen or so of our members are settled in Western Australia, and from all the same story comes, the search for gold is the one interest of the people, so that for the present the prospects of Theosophy in that country are not so bright as we had hoped.

The graduated scheme of study is proving a great success in New Zealand, and in Sydney a class of twenty-two members has been formed to follow out the same lines.

The ordinary activities have been regularly carried on in all the branches. In the Auckland Branch, N.Z., Mr. W. H. Draffin, Miss Lilian Edger and others are lecturing weekly to good audiences. At Wellington, N.Z., there is little to report; the fortnightly meetings are held as usual as are the monthly students' meetings, but the departure of Mrs. Wickens has been a great loss to the branch. The branch at

Christchurch has also lost some valued members, but the earnestness of the group that remains makes up for the loss, and new members are coming in.

The Adelaide Branch has sustained a great loss in the resignation and removal of its hard-working Secretary, Mrs. Elise Pickett, who will shortly leave on a visit to Colombo, and, perhaps, later, to Adyar. The Vice-President, Mr. W. E. Cooke, has been promoted to an important Government appointment in Perth, W. A. He is the new astronomer for the Colony.

Melbourne and South Yarra Branches keep slowly increasing their numbers and are doing good work.

Sydney and its offshoot, the Dayspring Branch, also keep steadily at work with classes, weekly lectures, and Sunday evening meetings. The activities of the Queensland Branches have been largely absorbed by the Countess Wachtmeister's visit. The Countess began in Brisbane with five public lectures, at which there were steadily increasing audiences, and next proceeded to break entirely fresh ground in the surrounding towns of Ipswich, Sandgate, Zillmere, Toowoomba, Southport, Beenleigh, Gympie, and Maryborough; arriving eventually at Bundaberg, where there is a branch of the Theosophical Society. Here she gave a series of four public lectures, and held receptions and enquirers' meetings.

Whilst in Bundaberg the Countess's eyes, which had been troubling her for some time, became worse, and she found herself obliged to relinquish her work. The specialist who was consulted, after a careful examination stated that, owing to the affection having been attended to in time, after two or three weeks' rest, she could continue her lecturing tour in the cooler colonies.

The papers throughout the colonies have given excellent notices of the lectures.

American Section.

Mr. De Clifford, according to reports and cuttings which have reached us, has been making a successful tour in California, lecturing to good audiences in many parts. Considerable notice has been taken of his work by the local papers, and he appears to have interested many people in Theosophy.

The St. Paul branch, which previously had given no decision in the question of secession, has now officially joined the Section, thus adding a new branch to the list.

The general work of the lodges is being carried on in a satisfactory manner, but no detailed reports have been received.

In Chicago a club known as "The Search-Light Club" has been recently established, in which questions relating to mysticism, Oriental religions and other subjects are dealt with. A class is held on Saturday afternoons for "Occult Study," conducted by Mrs. Brainard, and an Oriental Religion Class meets every fortnight for the discussion of Buddhism, Hinduism and other forms of belief.

REVIEWS.

STELLA; and AN UNFINISHED COMMUNICATION: OR STUDIES OF THE UNSEEN.

By C. H. Hinton. [Swan Sonnenschein and Co. London. 1895. Price 3*s.* 6*d.*]

ANYONE who has read Mr. Hinton's wonderful series of *Scientific Romances* will welcome with eager anticipation a book of fiction from his pen; yet it must be confessed that in reading these two stories a sense of disappointment is the predominant one. Not but that there are many luminous passages in the book—many with which Theosophists will thoroughly agree; and in the first of the stories, at any rate, it may fairly be said that there is no lack of exciting incident. Nevertheless, it remains true that the author's previous performances would lead a reader to expect something of more thrilling interest than this; indeed, the theory of the Fourth Dimension offers such magnificent possibilities to the romancer, that one cannot but regret that the first effort in that direction should not have been more successful.

The author himself warns us in his preface that "one line, one feature of the landscape of the land to which these thoughts lead, and only one, has been touched upon," so there is still room to hope that the next feature upon which he dilates will prove more interesting. The central idea of the first story is the discovery by a metaphysically-minded philosopher that the human body is really intended to be transparent—indeed, that it originally was so in the garden of Eden, and that the fall consisted in the primeval invisible man taking upon himself "a coat of skin" and becoming visible—not so bad a symbol after all, perhaps, of the descent into matter! Our philosopher, having made up his mind that man is really transparent, casts about for the

reason of the obvious fact that he does not usually appear to be so, and decides finally that it is in consequence of the structure of the body, which "is composed of all manner of foldings and layers, so that the light gets turned and twisted and sent back, even if it is transparent." He therefore feels that the only way to restore to mankind their lost transparency is so to manipulate the different parts of the body as to make their coefficient of refraction in each case equal to unity, and after many experiments he succeeds in doing this in the case of his young ward, Stella.

All this is, so to speak, prologue, and the story commences with the adventures of a young man who, unaware of the existence of this invisible maiden, goes down to the house to examine the philosopher's manuscripts. Naturally, many things happen which he does not understand, but eventually he becomes persuaded of the actuality of the fair unknown, and of course promptly falls in love with her. She is, however, decoyed away on specious grounds by the "business manager" of a spiritualistic medium, who makes much money out of her in various ways. A characteristic remark of the author's in reference to the Society for Psychical Research is too good to be overlooked. Directly after Stella leaves Beechwood, they send down a committee to investigate her; but, "arriving, as they generally do, after the departure of that which they wish to observe, they were only able to amass some more of those negative observations which form so monumental a tribute to their industry." Of course the hero duly rescues his invisible inamorata and marries her, but their adventures do not end there. He takes her out to Hong Kong, and during a voyage in a coasting steamer they are attacked and conquered by pirates, though Stella's invisibility enables her to save the lives of the Europeans concerned. Eventually she consents, for her husband's sake, to forego her unique peculiarity, and allow her coefficient of refraction to be altered again, so that she becomes once more like the rest of the world.

An Unfinished Communication can hardly by any stretch of courtesy be regarded as a story at all, since the hero does practically nothing but prose through some fifty pages and then get drowned. In the act of drowning, however, he sees his past life as a whole, and feels that he is really living the whole of it simultaneously—and not that life only, but many lives which from the world's standpoint would seem lost in the mists of time.

"In this brief vision between life and life," he says, "in which the soul sees how from life to life events mould and shape themselves, I see that my life has not ever been as it was in this one course. All is slowly

altering from life to life, and in my higher consciousness I see whence-from, whereunto it moulds itself. I see how . . . I grasp the realized results of ages of the higher transverse growth."

This passage will show that though, regarded merely as stories, one cannot pronounce the contents of this little volume an unqualified success, they yet include many a sentiment with which Theosophists can heartily agree. Witness the following remarks, taken from *Stella*:

"To find your eternal self is not to find yourself apart and separate, but more closely bound to others than you think you are now. You learn yourself in finding yourself linked with others, so that even people who have quite a passing place in your thoughts you find to be deeply connected with yourself. If you feel eternity you will know that you are never separated from any one with whom you have ever been. You come to a different part of yourself each day, and think the part that is separated in time is gone; but in eternity it is always there. . . . The passing away in time is a delusion—the present just a concentration, like attending to one thing at a time."

Very sensible, too, is the view of our author as to the investigation of the worlds above the physical.

"There is scope for all our energies," he remarks, "in obtaining the necessary faculties of perception. Just as the study of the minute or the very large requires microscopes, telescopes, and other apparatus, so for the study of the Higher World we need to form within our minds the instrument of observation, the intuition of higher space, the perception of higher matter. Armed thus, we press on into that path wherein all that is higher is more real, hoping to elucidate the dark sayings of bright faith."

C. W. L.

ORIENTAL DEPARTMENT PAPERS, EUROPEAN SECTION, THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, 1893-1894.

Edited by G. R. S. Mead. [Theosophical Publishing Society, 7, Duke Street, Adelphi, W.C. Price 3*s.* 6*d.*]

THIS series of interesting papers, written mostly by members of the Indian Section, may now be procured in a neat cloth binding, with a full index, making a useful little volume of some 230 pages. Copies of the series are now very rare, only fifty copies being for sale. The Oriental Department of the Section is out of incarnation at present, storing up experience on the devachanic plane prior to reincarnation.

THE GREAT PROBLEM OF SUBSTANCE AND ITS ATTRIBUTES.

[London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., 1895. 5s.]

THE author of this work hopes to overthrow the "complicated" and "mischievous structures," "the *a priori* schemes of Kantian and Hegelian transcendentalism"! We wish him better success in his next attempt, and a better outfit for it. He himself regrets that he is unable to rewrite the work before us. May we, in all kindness, venture to suggest that to upset Kant and Hegel may require a work which not only does not require to be re-written, but which also must be one which is not easily to be improved upon? The philosophy here expounded is indeed of a novel description, for we are provided, at the start, with the generous allowance of three Absolutes! 1. *Absolute Substance.* 2. *Absolute Impersonality.* 3. *Absolute Personality.*

There is the further attempt made to philosophize Christianity. This is perhaps better worth making than the overthrow of Kant, but is no nearer accomplishment. Nevertheless, there are in this work many points which deserve attention, and will serve to make the embryo philosopher don his thinking-cap.

In a foot-note (p. 153) our author seems to think that he has overturned Sir William Hamilton (as well as Kant and Hegel) by drawing our attention to the fact that "his unconditioned was tantamount to annihilation, in as far as his unconditioned was the abrogation of all quality." Considering that "quality" implies "condition," and *vice versâ*, it needs no Socrates to tell us that, for of course, the unconditioned *must* mean the "abrogation of all quality" *as known to us.*

Our author's view of the atonement is one that will be shared by many Theosophists. "Hence, faith in Jesus Christ means, not the substitution of Christ for us, but the application of Christ to us; for hereby it is that we are made one with him, and become partakers with him."

In conclusion, we earnestly recommend a consideration of the Vedânta philosophy to our author.

O. F.

DIVINITY AND MAN.

By W. K. Roberts. [M. N. Roberts, Mexico, Missouri.]

A BOOK full of the most beautiful sentiments, expressed in the finest language Webster's Dictionary can furnish. To a student of character (if to no one else) it is not without interest. In its 250 pages a typical

middle-class American of 1895 has succeeded in expressing his whole mind on heaven and earth—and a good deal more; and the comparison with the views of the corresponding English member of the great *bourgeois* class is curious. His mind has, in a way, opened to spiritualism—nay, to Theosophy: in his sketches of what lies before, behind, and around us he has evidently intended to come much nearer to the occult view that he has, in fact, succeeded in doing; he denounces vicarious atonement, and sprinkles his pages with such words as Karma in a manner which would make our ordinary English "good people" gasp with horror. But when you look more closely, you will soon perceive that this, though change, is not progress; it has not widened his views nor enlarged his mental horizon one hair's breadth. Nay, his unsophisticated reverence for the constitution, for popular representation and public opinion as the panacea for all possible evils, strikes us English as old-fashioned—such as has not ventured to express itself here in public for fifty years at least.

Polonius-like, he is full of good advice. Advice do I say? Nay, "Commands and Admonitions to Sages and Leaders of the Âryan, the Semite, the Turanian and the Ethiopian Nations" and so forth down to "the Individual in Daily Life"; and all of a pure morality worthy of Martin Farquhar Tupper himself. But of one gleam of any idea of anything beyond the almighty dollar, of any dignity beyond the respectable, well-married elder of a church and superintendent of a Sunday School, the new *bourgeoisie* seems as free as the old. And it is just here that lies a lesson which may perhaps moderate our pride in the dissemination of certain of our words and phrases in modern English literature. After all, there are but few to whom it is possible for Theosophy now to give the new life and the new light which will not be the portion of humanity in general for generations to come; and, for the rest, whether they speak of Karma or divine providence, whether they pray to Almighty God or (like our author) write psalms in glorification of the Infinite, of the Infinite Soul, of Infinite Justice or of Infinite Love, is a matter of words—and words only.

W. B.

(Copies of the above books may be ordered from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 7, Duke Street, Adelphi, W.C.)

THEOSOPHICAL

AND

MYSTIC PUBLICATIONS.

THE THEOSOPHIST (*Adyar*).

Vol. XVII, No. 4:—The visit of Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott to Simla and some of the phenomena connected therewith, form the subject of this month's "Old Diary Leaves." The stories have all been told before, but Colonel Olcott gives one or two fresh details, and is, as usual, interesting. "The Astral Body and Diseases" is an article translated from the French, in which it is said that remedies act through the astral and not by means of their physical elements; a theory which is sadly in need of a little evidence. This paper is followed by a psychometrical reading of Madame Blavatsky's character. As Madame Blavatsky appears to have been present, the "psychometrical" aspect of the proceedings is not very apparent. The conclusion of Mrs. Oakley's lecture on "The Psychic Powers and Faculties of the Christian Saints" is given, and contains some interesting information, after which follows "The Legend of Dwârakâ," and a more or less occult interpretation of the same. The other articles are: "A Scientific Exposition of Purity of Thoughts, Words and Deeds as taught in Zoroastrianism," and "A Change of Personality," the latter being translated from the French of Colonel de Rochas. A hypnotized subject reaches other planets in her astral body! "Notes on Scientific Experiments" require much correction before they can reasonably be called "scientific."

A.

THE PATH (*New York*).

Vol. X, No. 10:—The letters of Madame Blavatsky to her family having concluded, a new set is now being published, some of which were written to Dr. Hartmann about ten years ago. The first deals with a psychometric vision derived from an "occult letter," and gives a description of the temple of the Teschu Lama. The second letter is concerned mainly with private matters, and with the writing of *The Secret Doctrine*. This is followed by an article on Yugas and "Some Views of an Asiatic," a letter published in *The Platonist*. "Theosophy and Modern Social Problems" is a paper by Mr. Neresheimer, attempting to give some methods by which the problems may be solved. Mr. Johnston still deals with the hymns of the *Rig Veda*..

A.

THE VÂHAN (*London*).

Vol. V, No. 7:—The question as to the sufferings of animals and reincarnation in the animal kingdom is admirably dealt with by F. A. The other questions relate to the leaving of the body in sleep, (answered by A. B. and C. W. L.), the evidence of an occult school in the early Church, a passage in *The Secret Doctrine*,

and thought transference—a sufficiently varied choice of subjects.

A.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE LONDON LODGE (*London*).

No. 28:—Comprises an address by Mrs. Besant, "The Future that Awaits Us," a sketch of human evolution through the stages that lie before the race. The opening portion gives a broad outline of the earlier evolution, the birth of the human ego and its gradual growth to its present condition. The main part of the lecture deals with the expansion of consciousness through the higher planes, and the characteristics and powers belonging to the different levels. The whole subject is treated in an admirable manner and clearly enough for even the most elementary reader to form some idea of the great scheme of evolution presented by Theosophy.

A.

MERCURY (*San Francisco*).

Vol. II, No. 5:—Opens with an article on "The Rationale of Hypnotism and Mesmerism," in which much information is condensed into a convenient form. The theories of Mesmer and the various hypnotic stages are discussed in the opening portion of the paper. "The Dream of Har-ma-akku," an exposition of Egyptian symbolism, is continued, and under the heading "Behind the Veil" a story of a dream is given. In the London Letter a curious mistake has crept in, probably through leaving out some part of the communication—the syllabus of the Blavatsky Lodge Sunday evening discussions being printed as that of Mrs. Besant's lectures at Queen's Hall.

A.

THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST (*Dublin*).

Vol. V, No. 4:—"Shadows and Substance" is a somewhat high-flown article by Æ., which contains a few neatly turned phrases. No. VI, of the "Songs of Olden Magic" is absolutely bare and without adornment in any sort of colour. The humorous reader will suffer keen disappointment. Other contributions are continued, and C. J. translates a portion of one of the Upanishads. The number concludes with a grotesque conversation, under the title "Round the Hearth."

A.

LE LOTUS BLEU (*Paris*).

Vol. VI, No. 11:—The first article treats of the relation between Theosophy and the Theosophical Society. M. Lecomte contributes a long and elaborate article on double personality, the case of "Mireille" being described in detail, and a theory of the phenomenon derived from a consideration of the incidents. As the subject is stated to go to different planets when in a trance condition, a little doubt as to the strict accuracy of the visions must be pardoned. Dr. Pascal's article on the "Kâma-Mânasic Elementals" concludes in this number, which also contains a paper on "Man according to Buddhist Teaching," letters on Materialism and Theosophy, and an interesting case of projection of the double.

SOPHIA (*Madrid*).

Vol. IV, No. 1—*Sophia* begins its fourth year with this number, and, as the editor says in his introductory remarks, the fact of such a journal having been able to exist in Spain for three years is a most encouraging sign. The translation of Mrs. Besant's articles on Karma is continued, and the paper on "Occult Chemistry," published in the November number of LUCIFER, is reproduced, the illustrative diagrams being included. The issue also contains another communication from Florencia Pol on the spiritism of Kardec and a reply by José Melián, and an article, also by the latter, on the conditional immortality of the human soul.

A.

THEOSOPHIA (*Amsterdam*).

Vol. IV, No. 45:—Opens with a New Year's greeting from the editor, which is

followed by a paper from "Afra," on the "Relations of Theosophists to Theosophy and the the Theosophical Society." The translations of *The Key to Theosophy*, *Through Storm to Peace*, *The Idyll of the White Lotus*, and *Light on the Path*, are continued, as is "India and her Sacred Language." A translation of *The Theosophical Glossary* is begun.

A.

ANTAHKARANA (*Barcelona*).

Vol. III, No. 25:—Opens with an editorial greeting on the beginning of the third year of its existence, in which the Karma of the nations and war as the unfortunate but necessary outcome are discussed. This is followed by an article on the women of India, translated from *The Theosophic Thinker*, and the ninth and tenth chapters of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*. The issue concludes with a translation of the *A B C of Theosophy* and some maxims from Epictetus.

A.

LOTUS BLÜTHEN (*Leipzig*).

No. 40:—Contains a metrical transcription into German of a portion of the editor's "Jehoshua," an unsigned article on the Sacred Syllable OM, and on the Elective Affinities of Spiritual Powers, and the conclusion of the translation of Mr. A. M. Glass's article from *Lucifer*, under the title "Resurrection."

A. A. W.

THEOSOPHY IN AUSTRALIA (*Sydney*).

Vol. I, No. 9:—"The Outlook" deals with the general signs of increased interest in matters occult. "Forging of the Blades," is an article on a symbolical tale published some years ago. An ill-advised interpretation is attempted. The questions this month relate to prayer and the Lama of Tibet.

A.

JOURNAL OF THE MAHÂ-BODHI SOCIETY (*Calcutta*).

Vol. IV, No. 9:—Professor Max Müller's ideas on the human soul are reprinted from *Borderland*, after which comes a continuation of the famous and wearisome Temple case. The correspondence includes an interesting account of St. Josaphat, an Indian prince, the story having a great resemblance to some of the incidents in the life of Buddha.

A.

THE BUDDHIST (*Colombo*).

Vol. VII, Nos. 47-50:—The editorial in one of these numbers is on the subject of Christmas, and compares the birth of Christ with that of Buddha, calling attention to the conspicuous signs at the latter's birth and the evil forebodings in the other case. Mr. Leadbeater's article on "The Aura" is reprinted from *The Theosophist*. Other papers deal with Hatha Yoga and the celebrated picture prepared for the German Emperor, the latter being by Mr. C. Jinarâjadâsa.

A.

THE THEOSOPHIC THINKER (*Bellary*).

Vol. III, Nos. 49-51:—The series of papers under the heading "Theosophical Reader" concludes in No. 49, the last contribution relating to matter and ether, some useful scientific information being given. *Tiru Mantra* and the articles on "The Doctrine of Grace" are continued, the other papers including "The Three Gunas," "Is Reincarnation Necessary?" and "Man and his Mission."

A.

THE THEOSOPHIC GLEANER (*Bombay*).

Vol. V, No. 5:—This number opens with an interesting paper from the Zoroastrian standpoint, "The Head and Heart Discipline." A report of a speech by Mrs. Besant is given, dealing with the present situation. "Mahâtmâs and

Saints" and "Uranian Appellation of the Lunar Orb" are reprinted from *The Theosophist*. A.

THE LAMP (*Toronto*).

Vol. II, No. 6:—"Five Minutes on the Harp of God" is the title that bursts upon our astonished eyes as we open *The Lamp*. The title is certainly striking, but we soon subside to the commonplace when we read further. The opening article is on "The Things that are Unseen," and the "Mystery of the Moon," which is termed "A Satire," still continues its erratic course. A.

THE PACIFIC THEOSOPHIST (*San Francisco*).

Vol. VI, Nos. 5 and 6: The article on the iron age is concluded, and presents a formidable array of questionable statements. This is followed by "The Adepts of the Bible," and judging from the meagre result, the book has not proved a very successful hunting-ground. Activities and reviews complete the issue. A.

BORDERLAND (*London*).

Vol. III, No. 1:—With the beginning of this volume extensive alterations have been made. The journal is considerably enlarged and the price has been increased to half-a-crown. If the future numbers are equal in interest to the present one, the higher price should not interfere with the circulation. The story of "A Modern Demoniac" is one of the most horrible we have read; it is especially unpleasant as it bears every sign of truth, and is simply an interview of Mr. Stead with an obsessed person. The new experiments in psychic photography are of much interest, a lady in one case being photographed along with her own double, faintly outlined. "Psychic Healing" gives a long account of Francis Schlatter, the extraordinary American healer. Large portions of the papers on dreams and occult chemistry have been reprinted from LUCIFER, and the interesting proceedings of the Society for Pyschical Research supply a good deal of the matter. A.

RELIGION FROM A MYSTIC STANDPOINT.

This, we are informed, is a paper read before a philosophical society by a clergyman of the Church of England. It is a defence of the mystical view of religion, a mystic being defined as "one who has come into conscious fellowship with the inner significance of things." The definition of religion is curiously narrow and crude. "Religion I understand to be a theory of personal agency in the universe, belief in which is strong enough to influence conduct." On the whole, there is a distinct advance beyond common orthodoxy, but we hope that mystic religion will not stop there. A.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS.

We have also received the following: *Modern Astrology*, with a leader on the Astronomer Royal's opinion of Astrology, a paper on "Sex Affinity" and many answers to correspondents; *The Brahmavâdin*, the new Hindu fortnightly journal, dealing with Vedântic philosophy; *The Prasnottara*, the journal of the Indian Section; *The Seen and the Unseen*, the new Australian spiritualistic magazine; *The Metaphysical Magazine*, with articles on "The Sub-Conscious Mentality," "Hypnotic Suggestion and Crime," "Early Greek Philosophy on Being"; *Book Notes; Light; The Agnostic Journal; This World and the Next*, the Australian Spiritualistic and Mystical magazine; *La Revelación; The Theosophical Forum; Átmâ's Messenger*, which now announces that its policy has been changed, it no longer serving as an organ of fraternal societies; *Theosophie en Materialism*, a Dutch translation of a lecture by Mrs. Besant; *Premature Burial*, by Dr. Hartmann, an English edition, with some fresh matter added, of the American work reviewed some months ago in LUCIFER; *Earth to Earth Burial*, a small and eccentric pamphlet; American *Oriental Department Paper; The Mission of the Muses*, by R. B. Holt, treated symbolically; and the first number of *Isis*, a most disappointing production.

WOMEN'S PRINTING SOCIETY, LIMITED, 66, Whitcomb Street, W.C.